

New Wakeboat Rule for 2024 Boating Season

June 04, 2024



A new rule impacting wakeboats and wakesports took effect on April 15, 2024 under Vermont's Use of Public Waters (UPW) Rules. The Wakeboat Rule regulates wakeboating and wakesports on Vermont's inland lakes. Vermont's Use of Public Waters Rules were developed to avoid and resolve recreational conflicts, to protect normal or designated uses on all lakes, ponds, and reservoirs, and to ensure that natural resource values of public waters are fully protected.

The rule applies to wakeboats (a motorboat that has one or more ballast tanks, ballast bags or other devices or design features used to increase the size of the motorboat's wake). It regulates where wakesports can occur and requires decontamination between waterbodies.

What is the wakeboat rule?

As of April 15, 2024, wakesports using a wakeboat may only occur in wakesport zones in Vermont's inland lakes. A wakesport zone is an area of 50 acres that is over 20 feet deep, at least 200 feet wide, and over 500 feet from shore. Additionally, the rule requires that wakeboat ballast tanks be decontaminated or cleaned before entering different waterbodies.

Who does the wakeboat rule apply to?

This rule only applies to those who operate a wakeboat in Vermont's lakes, ponds, and reservoirs. Traditional motorboats used for waterskiing, tubing, etc. are not impacted by this rule.

Where can wakesports occur?

Wakesports can occur in the wakesports zones of 30 inland lakes. Wakesports can also occur on Lake Champlain, Lake Memphremagog, the Connecticut River reservoirs, and Wallace Pond (all of which do not have a wakesports zone). When moving between lakes, all wakeboats must decontaminate or clean their ballast tanks.

Where can I learn more?

Find a list of lakes with wakesport zones, download wakesport zone maps, and learn more at <https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds/vermont-use-public-waters-rules/wakeboats>.

Questions?

Feel free to contact the Vermont Lakes and Ponds Program if you have questions at ANR.WSMDLakes@vermont.gov.