

Citizen Resolution # 640922

(For Hearing Officer completion)



Hazardous Wakes, new laws

A hazardous wake is a boat wake that is intentionally magnified through the use of ballast, design features or operational procedure to amplify the wake's height and generate rogue waves. Neither current Statutes nor DNR Regulations adequately protect the environment, personal property or public safety from hazardous wakes. Newly designed wake surfing boats can comply with existing laws and still present profound risks to public safety, the environment and private property from 4 feet rogue waves they create. Recent studies of the effects of hazardous wakes have been conducted in Wisconsin, Minnesota and New Hampshire. The impacts cited include transport of invasive species, sediment resuspension, damage to aquatic habitat, shoreline, water quality and private property. Numerous public safety wake surfing boat incidents have occurred in Vilas County in the last year. Only one was reported to the DNR and no action was taken. Wake surfing boats operating in high wake mode produce waves greater than 4 feet high, have substantially more wave energy and are far more damaging than waves from conventional motorboats. The 100-foot distance specified on the existing statute was created when boats were designed to plane, not plow, at high throttle. A wake surfing boat can create hazardous waves from distances beyond 600 feet. Impacts are a function of wave height and depth of scour with the degree of impact increasing with the displacement volume of the watercraft and operational speed. One wake surfing boat can scour the bottom of a 200-acre lake in 20 boating hours.

Would you support the WCC and legislature creating a new Statute that prohibits operation of a boat that intentionally creates a hazardous wake on lakes of a specific physical characteristic defined by size, depth, length and width?

Additional Information provided by author:

The existing Statutes for boating regulation are found in Wis. Stat. Ch 30, Navigable Waters, Harbors and Navigations. The specific sections are 30.66 (3)(a), (3)1 and 30.68 (2), (4)(a), (4)(b) and (5).

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Please print typed resolution on 8 ½ X 11 white paper (one-sided) and provide the WCC County Chair with TWO COPIES at the spring hearing. Only the individual author or designated representative may present the resolution. The author or designated representative must be present at the time the resolution is introduced. No more than two resolutions may be introduced by any person during the Congress portion of the spring hearings.

Contact one of your [local WCC delegates](#) with questions or for assistance with writing your resolution.