

# Boating Safety Tips 2023/24 Holiday Season

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## "Wake Up & Slow Down": Your boats wake can kill other boat users.

### The Dangers of Excessive Wakes

A wake is the disturbance caused by a moving boat's hull as it displaces water. Excessive wakes are often created by high-speed boating, can lead to various injuries and **DEATH**.

Prioritizing safety is not only a legal requirement but also a moral obligation to protect yourself, your passengers, and fellow boaters. Safe boating is the key to enjoyable and accident-free days on the water. This safety information is designed to educate boaters about the dangers of creating excessive wakes and the importance of responsible boating. Boating can be a wonderful recreational activity, but it comes with the responsibility to ensure the safety of everyone on the water. Excessive wakes can pose serious risks to other boaters, swimmers, and the environment.



**Watercraft Size:** Understand the influence of your boat's wake and its implications for smaller vessels with lower waterlines, and smaller human propelled boats such as kayaks, canoes, and paddleboards which are especially vulnerable to capsizing when hit by large wakes.

By following these guidelines, you can enjoy your time on the water while keeping everyone safe.

- **WAKE UP & SLOW DOWN:** When approaching smaller boats reduce your speed and create minimal wake.
- **Injury:** High-speed wakes can throw passengers overboard.
- **Environmental Impact:** Be mindful that excessive wakes erode shorelines and disturb ecosystems.
- **Property Damage:** Docked boats, buoys, and other structures can be damaged by large wakes.
- **Slow Down in Crowded Areas:** Reduce your speed when navigating crowded waters, where there is a lot of recreational boating activity.
- **Maintain a Safe Distance:** Keep a safe distance from other boats, especially smaller boats, swimmers, and anchored boats. A good rule of thumb is to stay at least 30m away from any stationary object or other boats.
- **Be Mindful of No-Wake Zones:** Respect designated no-wake zones and idle speed areas, where slow, controlled speeds are mandatory.
- **Wear Life Jackets:** Ensure that everyone on board has a properly fitting life jacket or buoyancy aid. The skipper of a vessel must ensure that an approved buoyancy aid or lifejacket of the kind required by these regulations is always worn by every child under 12 years of age on deck when the vessel is underway.
- **Boat Responsibly:** Avoid reckless behavior, such as sharp turns, abrupt speed changes, and weaving in and out of traffic.
- **Stay Sober:** Never operate a boat under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- **Understand the Rules:** Take the time to read both local and national boating regulations particularly local rules of NO WAKE ZONES and speed limits, and strictly adhere to these regulations and rules while on the water.
- **Alert your passengers:** The minute you realize you will be crossing a wake, let your passengers know. Make sure they are all securely seated and aware.
- **Move out of the way of another boat's wake:** The further you are away from the boat that is producing the wake, the smaller the wake becomes.
- **Balance Your Boat:** Be sure to balance the gear in your boat and don't overload it. You may capsize due to imbalance, or the wake generated from another boat may cause your boat to capsize if overloaded.
- **Communicate:** Tell people where you are going and when you plan to return.
- **Understand Right-of-Way:** Follow the rules of the waterway and yield to smaller boats.
- **Report Accidents:** Promptly report any accidents or incidents to the local SAMSA office.
- NB: Power-driven vessels not exceeding 15 horsepower, sailing dinghies and non-power driven vessels of less than seven metres in overall length do not require a skipper's ticket. All other boat operators require a certificate of competence commonly referred to as a Skipper's Ticket.



Your wake can have far-reaching consequences, so please **"Wake Up & Slow Down"** to make our waterways safer and more enjoyable for all. Remember, it's our shared responsibility to protect lives, property, and the environment.

**"Stay Safe - Reduce Speed!"**

