



Far Hills Association, Inc., 13 Blueberry Road, Ashburnham, MA 01430-1049

Boating on Sunset Lake

We love our lake and want everyone to be able to enjoy it safely. Last summer we had quite a few complaints about boaters related to safety issues, or environmental concerns. Please note the following important laws and association rules related to operating a boat. We encourage all boaters to take a boating safety course as well. Driving a boat is not the same as driving a car!



To understand many of the laws and regulations, you must understand the term “headway speed.” Headway speed is defined as the **minimum speed a vessel may be operated to maintain steerage way**, but not to exceed 6 miles per hour. You also need to have an idea of how far 150 feet is---which is approximately the length of 7.5 pontoon boats tied up end to end.

You must use headway speed:

- Beginning at the mouth of all coves and throughout all coves.
- Within 150 feet of ramps, floats, rafts, swimmers and shorelines
- During times of limited visibility, including fog, dusk and night time

***Make sure your wake is not rocking other boats, docks, etc. Your wake is considered a part of your boat, and you are responsible for any damage or injury caused by your wake.**

General Safety

- Sailboats have right of way
- Slow down to headway speed when near swimmers, kayaks, canoes and paddleboards
- Water-skiing and tubing regulations: An observer, at least 12 years of age, other than the operator, must be constantly observing the person being towed. The boat must be equipped with a ladder, or some similar device, so that the person being towed can be pulled from the water. Persons water-skiing or being towed in any manner must wear a Coast Guard-approved type 1, 2, or 3 lifejacket. Waterskiing and tubing are not allowed between sunset and 9:00 am.
- “Cruising” and towing traffic circles the lake in a *counter-clockwise direction*.
- Navigational lights must be used between sunset and sunrise.



- Operating any vessel under the influence of alcohol or drugs is against the law. A blood alcohol concentration of .08 BAC is the current standard of intoxication in Massachusetts. Penalties have increased substantially and may include the loss of a motor vehicle driver's license.

This is only a summary of boating laws. All boaters must know and observe all local, state, and federal laws. For further information on boating laws, boating education, or to obtain accident report forms contact the Massachusetts Environmental Police at (508) 564-4961



Source: MA Boating Law. Retrieved from: https://www.usps.org/e_stuff/documents/massachusetts-boating-law.pdf