

## Recent Georgia Boating Law Changes

**Boating Under the Influence** – The legal limit has been reduced from .10 to .08 for individuals 21 years of age and older and .02 for those younger than 21 stayed the same. In addition to alcohol prohibitions it includes the intentional influence of any glue, aerosol, or other toxic vapors. Penalties and suspensions will mirror DUI except you will not lose your driver's license for a BUI.

**Personal Flotation Devices** - Any child under the age of 13 must wear an appropriately sized PFD while the boat is in motion. Exemption to this is if the child is in a fully enclosed cabin.

**Class A Vessel\*(includes PWC's)**—Operators 12 – 15 must complete an approved boater education course or be accompanied by an 18 year old sober adult. Operators under the age of 12 may not operate a PWC or Jet Ski, however they may operate a Class A vessel\* with mechanical propulsion that does not exceed 30 HP when accompanied by a sober adult 18 years of age or older.

**Class 1, Class 2 or Class 3 Vessels\*** – Operators 15 years of age and younger shall not operate any Class 1, 2 or 3 vessel\* on the waters of the state.

**Navigational Lights**—all motorized Class A and Class 1 vessels\* operated during hours of darkness or low visibility are required to display a 32-point white stern light visible for two miles plus a 20 point combination red and green bow light or a 10 point combination red and green side light visible for one mile and displayed lower than the white stern light.

**100 Foot Law** – Prohibits people from operating any vessel at a speed greater than idle speed within 100 feet of any vessel which is moored, anchored or adrift outside normal traffic channels or within 100 feet of any wharf, dock, pier, piling or other structure, person in the water, or shoreline of any residence or public use area. It is also illegal for watercraft operators to jump the wake of another vessel within 100 feet.

**Rentals** – boat operators 16 years of age or older may rent or lease any vessel if such person has completed a boating education course approved by the department or has completed a NASBLA approved boater education from another state.

**Mandatory Boater Education** - Anyone born on or after January 1, 1998 who operates any motorized vessel on the waters of the state shall complete a boater education course approved by the department or an approved NASBLA boater education course from another state.

**Vessel Classes:** A less than 16 feet in length

- 1 16 to 26 feet
- 2 26 to 40 feet
- 3 41 to 65 feet