

Key rules for boating in the Waikato

This summarises some of the key general rules in the Waikato Regional Council Navigation Safety Bylaw 2013. Breaking these rules can result in a \$200 infringement for each offence. Some rules are different in localised areas.

COLLISION PREVENTION RULES

Overtaking boats

All boats overtaking from astern are responsible for keeping clear until finally past the vessel being overtaken. Assume that the boat in front is not aware of your presence or intention.



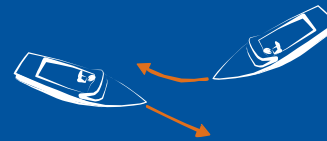
Head on situations

Powerboats meeting head on must each alter course to starboard and pass port to port (left side) of the other (opposite to the highway).



Crossing situations

For powerboats converging at an angle (crossing), the boat having the other to starboard (right) gives way (as on the road, give way to your right).



- Keep to the right of all channels and the river.
- Give way boats should cross behind.
- Always make a bold alteration as early as possible.
- Keep 50m apart and 200m from shore if speed is over 5 knots.
- Sailboats have different rules.

See Part 22 of the Maritime Transport Act

Lights

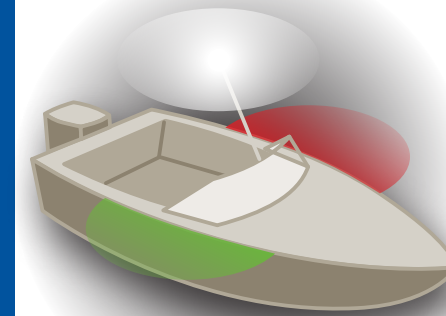
All vessels must display lights between sunset and sunrise. See Part 22 of the Maritime Transport Act.

Powerboats less than 12m

Must display:

- red and green side lights; and*
- either stern and masthead lights or one all round white light.

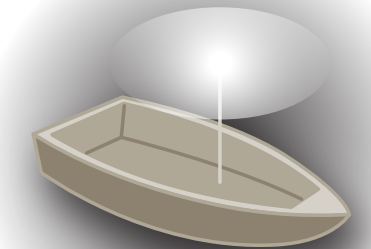
* Powerboats less than 7m with a maximum speed of 7 knots do not need to display red and green side lights.



Non-powered boats less than 7m

Must either:

- display a white light visible for 2 nautical miles; or
- carry a wide lens torch which can be displayed in sufficient time to signal another vessel to prevent collision.



Boat naming rules

Powerboats 4m and over, and non-powered boats 6m and over, must display a name on both sides of the hull. The name must be:

- a minimum of 90mm high
- above the waterline
- clearly legible at a distance of 50m
- at least two letters and/or numbers; this may not be a craft's brand/make/model.

Smaller vessels that do not fit the above criteria must be marked with emergency contact details including a name and number.

See clause 5.5

Personal water craft registration

All personal water craft operating in the Waikato region must be registered.

See clause 5.4

www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/navbylaw

Minimum age for operating a vessel

You must be 15 years or older to operate a vessel capable of going faster than 10 knots.

See clause 2.6

Swimming/diving around wharves, ramps

Avoid swimming, playing or diving in a boat channel, off a commercial wharf or jetty, and within 200m of a hydro dam structure.

See clause 3.2

Accidents

If you have an accident you must notify Maritime New Zealand at www.maritimenz.govt.nz and the harbourmaster on freephone 0800 800 401 as soon as possible.

See clause 2.3

LIFEJACKETS

Vessels 6m or less

Lifjacket must be worn, while underway. The lifjacket must fit securely and be well fastened.

Vessels greater than 6m

Appropriately fitting lifjackets must be carried in a readily accessible location for each person aboard.

Lifjackets must be worn in a situation of high risk including:

- 200m either side of a bar
- rough weather or sea conditions
- boating at night
- in an emergency.

See clause 2.7

SPEED

Coastal and harbour waters

Go no faster than 5 knots within:

- 50m of another vessel or person in the water
- 200m of the shore, structure, or a diver's flag.

Inland waters (rivers and lakes)

Go no faster than 5 knots within:

- 50m of another vessel or person in the water or a structure
- 30m of the shore.

See clauses 2.4 and 2.5

WAKE OF VESSELS

Your vessel's wake must not cause unnecessary danger or risk to swimmers, other vessels, or structures.

See clause 3.1

RIVER SAFETY RULES

- Keep starboard/right of the river
- Give way to vessels coming downstream
- Do not operate within 200m of a hydro dam, structure.

See clause 2.9

CARRY COMMUNICATIONS

You must carry at least one form of usable and waterproof communication. If you're carrying a cellphone, put it in a dry bag and ensure that it will have reception throughout your entire trip.

If you're carrying a VHF radio make sure you complete a course with Coastguard Boating Education (www.boatingeducation.org.nz).

See clause 2.8

BOAT RAMPS

You must not use engines to power on or off a boat trailer at any boat ramp.

See clause 4.4

TOWING

- If you are towing you must have an observer 10 years or older on board
- The person being towed must wear a lifjacket
- No towing between sunset and sunrise.

See clauses 3.3

CONDUCT IN TOWING ACCESS LANES

You must keep to the right or the starboard side of an access lane at all times.

See clause 3.4

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

0800 800 401

www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/navbylaw



MarineMate

Search for the nearest boat ramp, access tide times, and get local information.

Free app for smart phones

