

# Boat Smart, Mississippi!

## Why should I take a boating education course?

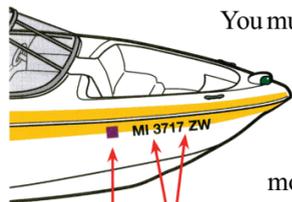
All persons born after June 30, 1980, must have passed a boating education course approved by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks to legally operate a vessel. In addition, to operate a motorboat or a personal watercraft, a person under 12 years of age must also be accompanied onboard by someone who is at least 21 years old. The boating education certificate must be carried onboard the vessel whenever it is operated by someone required to have a certificate.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources Marine Patrol offers **free** approved boating education classes to the public along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. To pre-register, call (228) 523-4134.

A boating education certificate is awarded upon successful completion of an approved boating education course.



## How do I register my boat?



You must have a Mississippi Certificate Number and validation decals to legally operate your vessel on public waters in Mississippi if your boat is motorized or if your boat is a sailboat. The validation decal must be affixed on both sides of the vessel, preceding the prefix letters of the registration number and within six inches of the registration number. If your vessel requires registration, it is illegal to operate or allow others to operate your vessel unless it is registered and numbered as described above.



The Certificate of Number must be onboard and available for inspection by an enforcement officer whenever the vessel is operated.



If a registered vessel is sold or otherwise transferred to another person, the "buyer" must apply for the Certificate of Number to be transferred to his or her name within 10 days of the date of purchase. Owners of new or used boats may obtain a registration form at any local county tax collector's office, most places where boats are sold or serviced, the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources office, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks district and Jackson offices, or online at [www.mdwfp.com](http://www.mdwfp.com).

## What equipment is legally required on my boat?

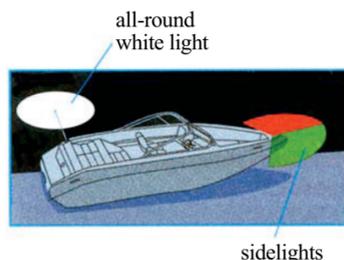
The following is a listing of equipment required while boating in Mississippi waters.\*

### ✓ Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)

- All vessels must carry one wearable U.S. Coast Guard-approved PFD for each person onboard.
- In addition to the above requirements, vessels 16 feet in length or longer must have one Type IV U.S. Coast Guard-approved PFD onboard and readily accessible.
- Anyone who has not reached their 13th birthday must wear a Type I, II or III U.S. Coast Guard-approved PFD whenever underway in a vessel under 26 feet in length.
- Each person riding on or being towed behind a personal watercraft must wear a Type I, II or III U.S. Coast Guard-approved PFD.
- Besides being U.S. Coast Guard-approved, all PFDs must be:
  - > In good and serviceable condition;
  - > Readily accessible, which means you are able to put the PFD on quickly in an emergency; and
  - > Of the proper size for the intended wearer. (Sizing for PFDs is based on body weight and chest size.)

### ✓ Navigation Lights

Boat lights help you and other boaters determine which is the give-way boat when encountering each other at night. These lights should be displayed from sunset to sunrise and during periods of restricted visibility such as fog.



### ✓ Fire Extinguisher

- All vessels are required to have a Type B fire extinguisher onboard if one or more of the following conditions exist:
  - > Closed compartments under seats where portable fuel tanks are stored;
  - > Closed storage compartments in which flammable or combustible materials are stored;
  - > Closed living spaces;
  - > Permanently installed fuel tanks.
- Approved types of fire extinguishers are labeled "Marine Type USCG Approved," followed by the size and type symbols and the approved number.

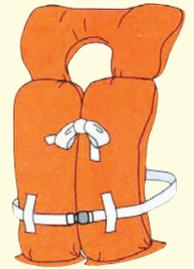
## Types of Personal Flotation Devices

Boating experts agree that wearing a PFD is the most important safety step you can take.

Type I



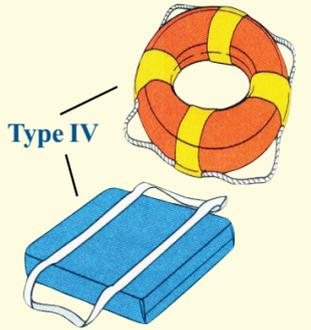
Type II



Type III



Type IV



### ✓ Sound Producing Devices

Any vessel less than 39.4 feet (12 meters) in length is required to make an efficient sound signal (horn, whistle or bell) to signal your position in periods of reduced visibility. Vessel operators are required to carry some type of horn or whistle capable of a four-second blast audible for one-half mile for all boats. (Athletic whistles are not acceptable on boats over 39.4 feet.)

### ✓ Visual Distress Signals\*\*

All boats less than 16 feet operating between sunset and sunrise must be equipped with visual distress signals such as flares. Boats larger than 16 feet must be equipped with visual distress signals at all times.

\*\*All boats used on federally controlled waters must be equipped with U.S. Coast Guard-approved (day and night) visual distress signals. All boats on federal waters are required to carry night signals when operating between sunset and sunrise. In addition, the following boats must also carry day signals:

- Recreational boats 16 feet or longer
- Non-motorized, open sailboats 26 feet or longer

## Personal Watercraft (PWC) and towing requirements

Each person riding on or towed behind a personal watercraft (PWC) must wear a Type I, II or III Coast Guard-approved PFD in Mississippi waters south of I-10. The PWC must be equipped with a self-circling device or lanyard-type ignition-safety switch with the lanyard attached to the operator's person, clothing or PFD. The PWC may not be operated at an excessive speed within 100 feet of another occupied vessel except in a crossing situation or overtaking in accordance with the navigation rules. The PWC may not jump, or attempt to jump, the wake of another vessel within 100 feet of that vessel and may not follow within 100 feet of a water skier. Every vessel towing a person(s) on water skis, a surfboard or a similar device must have a person older than 10 years of age, in addition to the operator, observing the towed person(s) at all times. If towing a person behind a PWC, the PWC must be rated for at least three people—the driver, the observer and the person being towed.

\*A backfire flame arrestor, ventilation system, and muffler may be required on your vessel. For further questions about Mississippi law or additional requirements, contact DMR Marine Patrol at (228) 523-4134. For requirements while operating on Federal waters, contact your nearest U.S. Coast Guard Station.

PFD and decal artwork courtesy of BoatED.

Michelle Marine provides a pump-out boat for vessels in the three coastal counties and the barrier islands.



Extensive studies prove that boat sewage dumped into our waters may affect aquatic plants, fish and other animals. By using a pump-out station to properly dispose of waste, you can help reduce overboard sewage discharge, resulting in cleaner waters and healthy fish and shellfish populations. A pump-out boat, purchased through the Clean Vessel Act program, is also available to provide mobile sewage disposal to boaters in the three coastal counties and barrier islands. Call Michelle Marine at (228) 875-1092 for pump-out services.

## Why use a pump-out station?

Under the Clean Vessel Act, \$40 million will be distributed to the states for funding of marine toilet pump-out facilities for sewage waste disposal. These funds come from boaters and anglers through taxes paid on fishing tackle and motorboat fuels under the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program. Federal funds can constitute up to 75 percent of all approved projects with remaining funds provided by the states or marinas.

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## What is the Clean Vessel Act?

Congress passed the Clean Vessel Act in 1992 to reduce pollution from vessel discharges after finding an inadequate number of onshore sewage disposal facilities and determining this to substantially contribute to localized degradation of water quality. Under the Clean Vessel Act, \$40 million will be distributed to the states for funding of marine toilet pump-out facilities for sewage waste disposal. These funds come from boaters and anglers through taxes paid on fishing tackle and motorboat fuels under the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program. Federal funds can constitute up to 75 percent of all approved projects with remaining funds provided by the states or marinas.



- Boating equipment requirements
- Pump-out locations
- Marine Litter Sticker



**For boating emergencies,  
call State Marine Patrol:  
(800) 294-5551**

Mississippi Department of Marine Resources  
1141 Bayview Ave.  
Biloxi, MS 39530  
(228) 374-5000  
dmr.ms.gov

Mississippi Department of Marine Resources  
Office of Marine Patrol  
(228) 523-4134



Look for this distinctive symbol where you buy fishing tackle or motorboat fuel, and where you fish or launch your boat. This symbol indicates that the manufacturer pays a special excise tax under the Sport Fish Restoration Act—and that your state fish and wildlife agencies are working to improve your fishing and boating.

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\*Some pump-out locations are still rebuilding due to Hurricane Katrina. For more information, call the DMR at (228) 374-5000.

**Coastal Pump-Out Locations\***  
HANCOCK COUNTY:  
• Bay St. Louis Marina, Bay St. Louis, (228) 467-4226

For more information about the Clean and Resilient Marinas Program, please visit the website at [www.j.mp/GOMA\\_CRMP](http://www.j.mp/GOMA_CRMP)  
MARINAS ARE MARKED BELOW WITH THE symbol.  
right to fly the Clean Marina flag, Certified Clean stewardship through a certified designation and the program are recognized for their environmental participation in the Clean and Resilient Marina used to prevent or reduce pollution. Marinas that boaters on best management practices that can be operators, local governments and recreational guidance and technical assistance to marina procedures. The program offers information, in environmentally sound operating and maintenance boaters to protect coastal water quality by engaging DMR that encourages marinas and recreational voluntary, incentive-based program promoted by the **The Clean and Resilient Marina Initiative** is a clean\_vessel\_program.htm. (228) 523-4150 or visit [dmr.ms.gov/sport-fish/](http://dmr.ms.gov/sport-fish/) install pump-out stations. For more information, call facilities may apply through the DMR for grants to 10. Owners of marinas, harbors and other boating Commission on Marine Resources in Title 22 Part disposal of all vessel wastes, as required by the functioning pump-out or dump stations for proper All designated Mississippi marinas must have fully Since that time, discharging raw sewage into state Act program was first authorized in Mississippi.

## How can marinas help?

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources has been committed to cleaning up the quality of coastal waters since 1994, when the Clean Vessel Act program was first authorized in Mississippi. Since that time, discharging raw sewage into state waters has been prohibited. All designated Mississippi marinas must have fully functioning pump-out or dump stations for proper disposal of all vessel wastes, as required by the Commission on Marine Resources in Title 22 Part 10. Owners of marinas, harbors and other boating facilities may apply through the DMR for grants to install pump-out stations. For more information, call (228) 523-4150 or visit [dmr.ms.gov/sport-fish/](http://dmr.ms.gov/sport-fish/) clean\_vessel\_program.htm.

## Inland Pump-Out Locations

- Diamondhead Marina, Diamondhead  
HARRISON COUNTY:  
• Biloxi Small Craft Harbor, Biloxi, (228) 436-4062  
• Biloxi Boardwalk Marina, Biloxi, (228) 432-2628  
• D'Iberville Marina, D'Iberville, (228) 392-9734  
• Gulfport Small Craft Harbor, Gulfport, (228) 868-5713  
• Keesler Marina, Biloxi, (228) 377-3160  
• Long Beach Small Craft Harbor, Long Beach, (228) 863-4795  
• Pass Christian Small Craft Harbor, Pass Christian, (228) 452-5128  
• Point Cadet Marina, Biloxi, (228) 432-0454  
• Schooner Pier, Biloxi, (228) 435-6320  
JACKSON COUNTY:  
• Mary Walker Marina, Gautier, (228) 497-3141  
• Ocean Springs Small Craft Harbor, Ocean Springs, (228) 875-0072  
Pascagoula Inner Harbor, Pascagoula  
ITAWAMBA COUNTY:  
• Midway Marina, Fulton, (662) 862-7306  
LAUDERDALE COUNTY:  
• Pelican's Cove Marina, Collinsville, (601) 626-8080  
LOWDES COUNTY:  
• Columbus Marina, Columbus, (662) 327-8450  
MADISON COUNTY:  
• Jackson Yacht Club-Ross Barnett Reservoir, Madison, (601) 856-8844  
• Harbor Walk, Ridgeland, (601) 856-5399  
PANOLA COUNTY:  
• Sardis Marina, Batesville, (662) 578-7922  
PRENTISS COUNTY:  
• Bay Springs Marina, New Site, (662) 728-2449  
RANKIN COUNTY:  
• Sportsman's Marina, Brandon, (601) 992-8400  
TISHOMINGO COUNTY:  
• Aqua Yacht Harbor, Iuka, (662) 423-2222  
• Eastport Marina, Iuka, (662) 423-6972  
• Grand Harbor, Iuka, (662) 667-5551, or (888) 689-5551  
• JF Coleman State Park, Iuka, (662) 423-6515  
TUNICA COUNTY:  
• Bordeaux Point, Tunica

## How can I help put a stop to marine debris?

Don't throw trash overboard. The Marine Litter Act of 1989 prohibits the dumping of wastes, garbage and other debris from vessels within Mississippi state waters. This includes any types of plastics, including synthetic ropes, fishing nets, garbage bags and other garbage including paper products, glass, metal, dunnage, lining and packing materials.

## It's the LAW!

CMR Title 22 Part 10 requires all vessels on Mississippi marine waters (including personal watercraft) to have a clearly marked closed container for the proper disposal of waste, trash and other garbage. Throwing trash overboard is punishable with a fine of up to \$500 for the first offense and up to \$10,000 for the second offense. A marine litter sticker must be posted onboard vessels in marine waters in passengers' plain view.

Please peel and remove marine litter sticker above and post on your boat or personal watercraft.