

Implementation of Vermont's New Wakesports Rule

What to know about Vermont's new Use of Public Waters Rules in 2024

Overview

A new rule affecting wakeboats and wakesports became effective on April 15, 2024 (Vermont Use of Public Waters Rules, § 3.8). The Wakesports Rule regulates wakeboating and wakesports on Vermont's inland lakes. Under this rule, *wakesports* using a *wakeboat* shall only occur within defined *wakesports zones*. Additionally, wakeboats are required to decontaminate their ballast tanks when moving between waterbodies.

Summary

Definitions and More Information

“**Wakeboat**” means a motorboat that has one or more ballast tanks, ballast bags or other devices or design features used to increase the size of the motorboat’s wake.

“**Wakesports**” includes operating a wakeboat, as defined above, or to use a surfboard, wakeboard, hydrofoil, or similar device to ride on or in the wake behind a wakeboat.

A “**Wakesports zone**” is an area of a lake, pond, or reservoir that has a minimum of 50 contiguous acres that are at least 500 feet from shore on all sides, at least 20 feet deep, and at least 200 feet wide.

Wakesports may only occur in a wakesports zone (see *Wakesports Zones* below).

However, wakesports may occur in Lake Champlain, Wallace Pond, Lake Memphremagog, and the Connecticut River Reservoirs at least 200 feet from the shoreline and in accordance with other Use of Public Waters Rules.

Learn More: <https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds/vermont-use-public-waters-rules/wakeboats>

Wakesports Zones

Wakesports Zones maps

A list of all 30 wakesports eligible lakes and maps of the wakesports zones are available here: <https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds/vermont-use-public-waters-rules/wakeboats>

Download wakesports zone maps for free in the [Avenza](https://store.avenza.com/) app to use GPS-enabled maps offline. Download maps here: <https://store.avenza.com/>

Wakesports zone map data is available through the Vermont ANR Open Data Group ([link](#)).

<p>Decontamination Requirements</p>	<p>When moving between different bodies of water, a wakeboat must be decontaminated.</p> <p>There are three options available to decontaminate a wakeboat. This includes hot water rinsing/flushing, cold water rinsing/flushing, and requirements for when rinsing is not available.</p> <p>The Agency guidance on wakeboat decontamination is available at the following link: https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds/vermont-use-public-waters-rules/wakeboats/Decontamination</p> <p>For the 2024 boating season only:</p> <p>Provided a wakeboat has been decontaminated in accordance with the Agency-approved guidance, a wakeboat user will be presumed to be in compliance with Section 3.8.d. of the Wakesports Rule and will not be required to provide proof of decontamination at a public access area.</p>
<p>Home Lake Provision</p>	<p>The Agency is developing the process for Agency-issued decals for the Home Lake rule (Section 3.8.c.).</p> <p>For the 2024 boating season only:</p> <p>The Agency will not require that an Agency-issued decal be displayed on a wakeboat’s port side bow identifying the wakeboat’s Home Lake for the calendar year.</p>

Enforcement and Contacts

The Use of Public Waters Rules are enforced by the [Vermont State Police, Marine Division](#). Issues or concerns relating to violations of these rules should be reported to the Vermont State Police or a local game warden.

Vermont State Police Dispatch: 802-878-7111 (Northern VT) or 802-722-4600 (Southern Vermont)

State Police Marine Division: <https://vsp.vermont.gov/recreation/marine>

Vermont Fish and Wildlife Game Wardens: <https://vtfishandwildlife.com/contact/contact-a-warden> or 802-828-1483

Rule Implementation Questions: ANR.WSMDLakes@vermont.gov