



101 Critical Days of Summer



Safety Tip #2 – Jet Skiing



Jet skiing may be fun. But just like any other motor vehicle on water, it can impose great danger if used improperly. Most Jet Ski injuries happen when the Jet Ski operator has little experience riding their personal watercraft. Those with less than twenty hours of experience in watercraft operation are considered particularly high risk. Also, people who rent jet skis for an occasionally are much more likely than Jet Ski owners to be involved in an accident. Jet skis take skill to ride, and inexperience combined with speed can be a recipe for disaster. Other risk factors include excess speed, reckless operation, and driver inattention.

Jet skis are the only recreational vehicle in which the leading cause of death is not drowning; most fatalities result from blunt trauma. Injuries usually happen from the Jet Ski being driven into docks, other watercraft, or tree stumps. As funny as that might sound, crashing a jet ski is very risky business. Jet Ski collisions are much more likely to result in injury or death than any other water vehicle accident. So parents beware and use good judgment when it comes to your kids. Riding a jet ski is serious stuff.

It is vital to be in good control of the Jet Ski at all times. Hence it is a good idea to avoid quick turns that may result in your being thrown head first into the water. And although it may seem like fun to spray people around you with water from your jet ski, this is a very dangerous prank and should be avoided. Keep in mind the operating characteristics of jet skis. Remember, you have no brakes and cannot steer if you are slowing down. You need to maintain or increase your speed to steer away from an object. Stopping is done only by cutting the throttle and coasting. And while you are coasting, you cannot steer. The potential for disaster is obvious.

To assure that you will get a 100% fun while eliminating the possible danger, here are some safety tips you should follow:

Learn how to operate the machine before hopping on...

It may be pretty basic but the simplicity of its looks combined with your excitement to take the waters keep people from neglecting this. It may operate the same as a motorcycle or a snowmobile but it is still advisable to learn how to use the Jet Ski.



Wear life preservers...

This is a must. Like helmets when you ride a motorcycle, the Law requires anyone who uses a jet ski to wear life jackets. It doesn't matter if you know how to swim or not. If you are going to drive or ride a jet ski, you must wear life jacket. Aside from life jacket, you should be in proper attire when riding jet ski. These are wet suits, goggles/sunglasses, gloves, and footwear/deck shoes

Never operate a powered watercraft (PWC) while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

They impair reaction, timing and judgment. In waters that are overseen solely by the states, the states have the authority to enforce their own BUI statutes. In state waters that are also subject to U.S. jurisdiction, there is concurrent jurisdiction. That means if a boater is apprehended under Federal law in these waters, the Coast Guard will (unless precluded by state law) request that state law enforcement officers take the intoxicated boater into custody.



Never ride close to another watercraft...

Most Jet Ski accidents are caused by collisions, so in order to prevent this from happening, stay at least 100 feet away from another watercraft, divers, rafts, and swimmers. Most beaches and lakes have set of rules with regards to the use of jet skis so you should know them first.

Never use the Jet Ski at night...

You might wonder why this riding at night should be avoided. Well, here is the main reason: open sea/lake is dangerous at night. Never attempt ride on pitch-black waters. You will never know if there are other watercrafts on your way and you will never know the behavior of the water at night. And another thing: in case you get in the middle of the ocean, you have to wait for the sun to rise before anyone can see you.

Never ride a jet ski without lanyard...

What is a lanyard? A lanyard automatically cuts the engine in case you fall from the Jet Ski. It will spare you from swimming back at the shore and at the same time save your machine from stowing away alone.

Be conscious on the rights of others...

Never let your jet ski becomes annoying to others. Pay close attention to your speed around swimming areas, beaches, marinas, docking areas, and waterfront areas. Many of the areas are posted with minimal speed limits and "No Wake" signs. Keep a constant watch for swimmers, other vessels, and objects at all times. Never operate your PWC in or near surf zones.

Check fuel levels before starting. Make sure you have enough fuel to return to shore. Watch the oil, temperature and other gauges for signs of problems. Ignoring warning signs can result in costly repairs.

Operators and passengers should always keep both feet on footrest floor. Keep your hands, feet, hair, and clothing away from the pump intake. Don't stand in or on a vessel while it is in motion.

Make sure an approved fire extinguisher is aboard and in proper working order.

Never operate your PWC in less than 2 feet of water.

Never go out alone. Use the buddy system.

Know your limitations and those of your PWC.

Always follow markers and signs, and observe the navigational rules (NAVRULES).

Web sites to look thru.....

http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/28533/how_to_ride_a_jet_ski_safely.html?cat=11

<http://www.yachting-n-boating.com/Jet-Ski-Safety.html>

PWC Operating Laws for New Hampshire, Maine and Mass.

http://www.boat-ed.com/nh/course/p4-12_reqspectopwc.htm

<http://www.mainerec.com/boating1.asp?Category=22&PageNum=22>

<http://www.boat-ed.com/ma/handbook/whomayoperate.htm>



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Your Risk Management Staff**

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