



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 31, 2019

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Northern Idaho agencies remind public about wakes and illegally placed buoys

(SANDPOINT) – Bonner County Sheriff's Office, Bonner County Parks and Waterways Department, and Idaho Department of Lands (IDL), remind boaters to follow local no wake zone laws and remind waterfront property owners to keep illegal buoys out of the water.

Bonner County ordinances create a no wake zone 200 feet from shore or structures on most public waters in the county. Bonner County Sheriff's Office can issue citations to boaters violating the no wake zone ordinance, which may result in a fine of up to \$150 for the first offense and \$300 for a second or subsequent offense.

In addition, the Water Sports Industry Association recommends staying at least 200 feet from shoreline, docks, and other structures.

Lieutenant McGeachy of the Bonner County Sheriff's Office stated, "Operating a boat within 200 feet of shore, docks, or structures can increase the likelihood of damage to the shoreline and property. Large wakes also have the potential to injure people in the water or on a dock. It is important that everyone operate their boats in a safe and responsible manner to avoid injuries or damage. Boat owners should also be reminded that they could be held civilly liable for damage caused by their wake."

In response to boaters coming too close to docks and shorelines, some waterfront property owners have placed unpermitted buoys in the water to mark the no wake area.

Only governmental entities have the legal authority to put buoys in place. Buoys placed by private individuals are illegal and present navigational hazards. The Idaho Department of Lands may issue Notices of Noncompliance, seek a court injunction, and assess penalties up to \$2,500 against individuals placing buoys on navigable waterways without a permit.

Boaters and waterfront property owners are encouraged to comply with state and local regulations, which is ultimately the key to ensuring everyone can safely enjoy the County's beautiful lakes and rivers.

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