

7 Rules for Playing it Safe on the Water



- 1 Know the rules of the road.** A boater education class can bring you up to speed on the latest boating laws and rules in Texas. They're just \$13 and about six hours. They may save you money on boater insurance.
- 2 Never swim alone.** Most drowning victims don't yell for help; instead, they panic and slip quietly under water. Ask friends and family to keep an eye on one another in and around the water and learn to recognize the signs of someone in trouble.

- 3 Always wear a life jacket.** These days they come in really cool styles and colors. They float, even when you don't.
- 4 Boat safely.** Know where you are on the water and be aware of your surroundings at all times. Know how to read and follow buoy signs.
- 5 Know when to say when!** A keg is not a personal flotation device. Many drowning accidents involve alcohol, which affects your coordination and judgment—even more so when you're boating or swimming. Avoid alcohol on the water. If you do drink, do it responsibly. Designate a sober boat operator and keep an eye on those who are drinking. And always drink lots of water to stay hydrated—especially when drinking alcohol.
- 6 Have proper equipment onboard.** And make sure it works correctly! Some equipment is required by state law.
- 7 Use sunscreen.** Being called "Lobster Boy" can get old fast. Plus it hurts—the sunburn, that is.



Life's better outside.™

Go to www.tpwd.state.tx.us/boat for *Nobody's Waterproof*, boater education course details, and more information about invasive plants and animals.

Protect Texas Lakes and Waterways from Invasive Plants and Animals


Managing non-native aquatic plants and animals that have been introduced into Texas waterways costs millions of dollars annually. Non-native aquatic plants, such as common salvinia, giant salvinia, and alligator weed, can cause significant environmental harm. These invasive aquatic plants can overshadow beneficial native submersed plants and lower oxygen levels; hamper the feeding of sport fish; threaten human health by creating ideal mosquito breeding habitats; restrict water flow, resulting in flooding; and increase the sediment in waterways.



photo by Larry D. Hodges, TPWD

To curb the spread of these invasive species, you are required by law to remove harmful plants and animals from your boat and trailer. Before launching and before leaving a boat ramp, you must:

- Remove aquatic plants and animals from your boat, motor, and trailer. Check all underwater fittings and equipment.
- Dispose of vegetation properly. Empty your bait bucket on land.
- Drain your equipment, including the motor, bilges, live wells, bait buckets, and cooler.
- Rinse your vessel, propeller, trailer, and equipment, using a high-pressure washer if available. Dry everything for at least five days, if possible.

Help Protect Texas Waters! 

It's every boater's responsibility to keep Texas waters clean and free of trash, waste, and items that endanger both your health and the environment. For locations of pump-out stations near you, or more clean boater info, check out www.cleanmarinas.org/resources.htm

If you see a violation, call and report it to Operation Game Thief 1-800-792-Game