



Water Sports

Merit Badge

WATER SPORTS SAFETY CODE

Water sports are fun and challenging but involve inherent risks of injury or death. To increase your enjoyment of the sport and to reduce your risks, use common sense and follow these guidelines:

- Familiarize yourself with all applicable federal, state and local laws, the risks inherent in the sport and the proper use of equipment.
- Know the waterways and always have a person other than the boat driver as an observer.
- The rider, observer, and driver should agree on hand signals.
- Never start out until the rider signals that they are ready.
- Always use caution and common sense.

Regarding your equipment and your towrope:

- Always wear a U.S. Coast Guard Type III (PFD) vest.
- Inspect all equipment prior to use. Check bindings, fins, and flotation device prior to each use and DO NOT USE if damaged.
- Towropes stretch during use. If a rope breaks or is suddenly released, it can snap back striking boat occupants or the user which could result in injury or death.
- Inspect rope before use and do not use towrope if frayed, knotted or damaged. Use proper toe rope for the activity.
- Ensure rope is free from all body parts prior to starting out or during use.
- Keep persons and ropes away from propeller when engine is running, even if in neutral. Should rope become entangled in propeller, SHUT OFF ENGINE AND REMOVE IGNITION KEY BEFORE RETRIEVING ROPE. Propellers are very sharp and can cut wet skin easily.