



OTSEGO LAKE ASSOCIATION WELCOMES YOU TO OTSEGO LAKE

To All Motel Guests, Bed & Breakfast Guests, Camp Renters, Dreams Park Guests, Opera Guests, Seasonal Lake Residents, and Other Visitors

The Otsego Lake Association (OLA) would like to welcome you to beautiful Otsego Lake! Our mission is to educate, advocate, and actively participate in helping to protect and preserve the health, beauty, and well being of Otsego Lake. We also wish to ensure that everyone who uses Otsego Lake (either by boating, fishing, or swimming) has a safe and enjoyable experience. Therefore, we would like to point out some laws, rules, and regulations in place to help you.

EMERGENCY IN THE BOAT

- First, put on your life jacket (Personal Floatation Device - PFD).
- Second, call 9 - 1 - 1 or call for help on Channel 16 on your marine radio if you have one.

ALWAYS LOOK AROUND – BEWARE OF CONDITIONS

- Watch the weather. Otsego Lake's location, long narrow shape, and deep water can produce sudden storms with strong winds and waves.
- Whether moving or not, always be on the lookout for marker buoys, kayaks, other boats, swimmers, fallen water skiers, dropped water skis, and debris.

LIFE JACKETS (PERSONAL FLOATATION DEVICES – PFDs)

- All persons under 12 years old are required to wear a PFD at all times.
- You are required to have one PFD for each person in the boat.

BOATING SAFETY CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS

- Operators of boats born after May 1, 1996 must have a boating safety certificate and be at least 10 years of age.
- Operators of boats younger than 18 years old must be accompanied by a person who is at least 18 years old and has a boating safety certificate.
- Persons 18 years old or older may rent a motor boat without a boating safety certificate provided that the operator of the livery holds a boating safety certificate, demonstrates the use of the boat and safety equipment, and the person renting demonstrates their understanding of the boat's operation and safety equipment.

PERSONAL WATERCRAFTS (“JET SKIS”)

- All persons operating a personal watercraft (i.e. “jet ski”) must have a boating safety certificate or be accompanied on board by someone at least 18 years old who has a boating safety certificate.
- The operator must be a minimum of 14 years old and have a boating safety certificate or be accompanied on board by someone at least 18 years old who has a boating safety certificate.

RULES OF THE ROAD (BOATING)

- Boat being passed has the right of way.
- Boat on the right has the right of way.
- Boats meeting head on keep to the right of each other.
- Sail boats or non-motorized boats have the right of way unless they are the overtaking boat.
- If you are not a strong swimmer, it is highly recommended that you wear a PFD at all times.

NAVIGATION BUOYS

- Large White Cylinder Buoys (with orange strips, numbers, letters): No wake zone - slow to 5 MPH or less when less than 200 feet from shore so that boat does not create a wake or wave; it reduces shore line erosion and protects properties, swimmers, and other boaters. Other buoys denote dangerously underwater objects.
- Small Slender Spar Buoys: Identify obstructions in the water; stay clear.

BOAT SOBER – BOAT SAFE

- It is illegal to operate any motorized watercraft while intoxicated (blood alcohol level of 0.08 or higher) or under the influence of alcohol or drugs; these can affect your balance, coordination, and judgment.
- NYS law prescribes heavy fines, imprisonment, and the suspension of operator privileges for violators.

BOAT CAPACITY

- Check the capacity of your boat (see on board capacity plate) or ask your rental company.
- Don't overload your boat.

IT TAKES THREE TO WATER SKI OR TUBE

- One person must focus on driving the boat.
- One person (age 10 or older) must continuously observe the person(s) water skiing or tubing.
- The person(s) water skiing or tubing must wear a Type 3 PFD.

SCUBA DIVERS

- Stay at least 100 feet from a SCUBA “diver down” flag (red rectangular flag with a white diagonal strip).

OTSEGO LAKE IS DRINKING WATER

- Otsego Lake is the source of drinking water for the Village of Cooperstown and for hundreds of lakeside residents.
- Don't put anything in the lake that you wouldn't put in your own well or water supply.

LAKE PATROLS

- Otsego Lake is patrolled regularly by the Otsego County Sheriff's Department and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. You may contact the Sheriff's Department at (607) 547-4271.

LAKE INFORMATION AND MAP

- A hydrographic map of Otsego Lake may be downloaded from the SUNY Oneonta Biological Field Station's website (www.oneonta.edu/academics/biofld/ - click on Otsego Lake Information then scroll down to Otsego Lake). Additional detailed information about Otsego Lake can also be found in this section of the website.

BOAT INSPECTION AND WASHING STATION

- If you bring your own boat, please have it inspected (and hot water power washed if necessary) at the Village inspection station at the north end of Fair Street in Cooperstown – to keep invasive species out of the lake!!

CLEAN BOATS – CLEAN WATERS

- **CLEAN:** Clean any visible mud, plants, fish, or organisms from the boat, trailer, and equipment before you leave.
- **DRAIN:** Drain all water from the boat and equipment and disinfect with a 10% bleach solution.
- **TREATED:** Dry anything that has come in contact with the lake water or treat remaining water to kill invasive species.

Additional Information about the Otsego Lake Association may be obtained by visiting our website at www.otsegolakeassociation.org or on Facebook at Otsego Lake Association, Cooperstown, NY.

Credit: Much of the above information is taken from the Lake George Association, Lake George Park Commission, and New York State Boater's Guide.