



A vast majority of recreational vacations are water-related, and Arkansas is ready. With more than 600,000 acres of lakes, there's plenty of space for fishing, swimming, sailing, boating and more.

Before you head out on the water this summer, we want to remind you of a few of the laws we've passed to keep our lakes and rivers a safe place for you and your family.

Anyone born on or after Jan. 1, 1986, and of legal age to operate a motorboat or sailboat, must have successfully completed an approved Arkansas Game and Fish Boating Education Course and carry proof while operating a motorboat or sailboat on Arkansas water.

The traditional method is an instructor-led class. These classes may be a couple of hours each night for three to four nights or a full-day Saturday class.

In 2017, the General Assembly passed Act 1072 which ensured that the course may be taken on

line. Boat Arkansas is the official online course of Arkansas Game and Fish. You can study and take the test from the comfort of your own home at www.boat-ed.com/arkansas. There is a fee of \$24.50.

To operate a personal watercraft, a person must be 16 or older, be 12 to 15 years old and be under the direct supervision of a person at least 18 years old, or be under 12 and be under the direct supervision of a person at least 21 years old.

Personal watercrafts include brand names such as Jet Ski, Wave Runner, or Sea-Doo. The 87th General Assembly passed Rachel's law raising the minimum age for operating a personal watercraft without direct supervision from 14 to 16. The law is named after a 15 year old girl who was killed in an accident while operating a watercraft.

And finally, we want to remind everyone that it is mandatory for anyone under the age of 12 to wear a life jacket when they are in a moving boat. Act 517, which passed in 1995, also states there must be a life jacket on board for every single individual regardless of age.

We hope you enjoy everything the Natural State has to offer this summer. If you aren't certain of all of the rules and regulations check out the Arkansas Game and Fish website at www.agfc.com.