

**WE WANT
YOU**



**TO PROTECT OUR
★ LAKES ★**

CLEAN WATER. WILD PLACES. FOR GENERATIONS.

Lake Safety & Rules Reference

Boating · Invasive Species · Water Quality · Wildlife & Habitat
Chicog Citizens Lake Association

Chicog	Town of Chicog Ordinance — local laws enacted for township waters	WI State	Wisconsin State Law — enforced by DNR and County Sheriff
Washburn Co.	Washburn County Zoning & Ordinances — 715-468-4600		Enforcement: County Sheriff 715-468-4720 DNR: 608-266-2621

SOURCE	 BOATING — WHAT TO DO	WHY IT MATTERS
Chicog	NO Wake Surfing is allowed at any time. Artificial wake enhancement (ballast tanks, wave shapers, fins, uneven loading) is prohibited — enacted March 12, 2025	Amplified wakes uproot aquatic plants, destroy fish spawning beds, erode shorelines, and swamp small watercraft
WI State	No wake within 100 ft of shore, docks, piers, or rafts; 200 ft for personal watercraft (PWC)	Protects swimmers, paddlers, nesting wildlife, and eroding banks. Docks and rafts are treated the same as shoreline
Chicog	No wake before 10 AM and after 5 PM on the Lake	Quiet hours preserve the lake environment for non-motorized users
WI State	Boats towing skiers, tubers, or wakeboarders must have a dedicated spotter	Prevents head-on collisions; operator cannot safely watch both the water ahead and the person being towed
WI State	Age 16+ born after 1/1/1989 must hold a boating safety certificate or ride with a certified adult	Young and untrained operators are disproportionately involved in boating accidents
WI State	Never operate a boat while legally intoxicated. Boats running at night must have navigation lights	BUI carries same penalties as DUI; night collisions with docks, rafts, and other boats are common without lights

SOURCE	 INVASIVE SPECIES — WHAT TO DO	WHY IT MATTERS
Washburn Co.	Inspect, decontaminate, clean, and drain ALL watercraft and trailers at the landing before launching and before leaving. Required by Washburn County	Zebra mussels and Eurasian milfoil spread on wet equipment. Once established they are nearly impossible to remove
Chicog	Report any suspected Zebra Mussels (tiny striped shells) or Eurasian Milfoil beds (feathery, dense mats) to MLA or DNR immediately	Chicog's Comprehensive Plan specifically names Zebra Mussels, Eurasian Milfoil, and Spiny Water Flea as top threats to its lakes
WI State	Don't import firewood; buy local. Choose native plants for landscaping; remove invasive plants from your yard	Emerald Ash Borer and other pests travel in firewood; invasive yard plants like Purple Loosestrife spread to shorelines and choke native habitat

SOURCE	 WATER QUALITY — WHAT TO DO	WHY IT MATTERS
Washburn Co.	Have your septic system professionally inspected every 3 years and pumped every 1–3 years. No chemicals, grease, wipes, or coffee grounds down the drain	the Lake is a seepage lake — septic failures leach directly into groundwater and the lake, spreading pathogens and fueling algae growth
Washburn Co.	All buildings must be set back at least 75 feet from the OHWM. Contact Washburn County Zoning before any construction near the shoreline	Impervious surfaces near water funnel runoff — containing oil, fertilizer, and sediment — directly into the lake
WI State	Keep fertilizer, pesticides, and herbicides away from the shoreline. Never mow within the 35-foot buffer zone; bag clippings; never wash vehicles in or near the lake	Fertilizer runoff feeds aquatic algae and weeds. Even small amounts accelerate eutrophication — the aging process that degrades lake quality
WI State	Install rain gardens, minimize paved surfaces, and divert runoff away from the lake through soil and vegetation	Lakes have limited tolerance for development stress — runoff from paved surfaces carries 10x more contaminants than natural forest floor
Chicog	Consider the Healthy Lakes DNR grant program for buffer restoration projects	Shoreline restoration projects qualify for 10-year funded grants; restoring native plants directly improves water clarity and fish habitat

Visit www.matthewslake.org for more information