You are responsible to operate your boat in a safe manner and prevent damage caused by your wake or wash, even if no signs are posted. If your boat or its wake damages property or injures people, you may have broken the law in many jurisdictions (Canada Shipping Act, Maritime Law, provincial laws). The person who suffers damage must be able to identify the boat and the operator and prove it caused the damage (witnesses are helpful)

The **Small Vessel Regulations** section on "Careless Operation" reads, "No person shall operate a small vessel in a careless manner without due care or without reasonable consideration for other persons." An operator can be charged with Careless Operation, if, as a result of excess speed, their wash adversely affects a number of water activities such as docks, shoreline and an anchorage. You are responsible for any damage or discomfort your boat causes to wildlife, people, objects and the shoreline.

**1996:** The federal government's Contraventions Act came into effect. Law enforcement officials can issue tickets and fines for offences under the Transport Canada Small Vessels Regulations or the Boating Restriction Regulations. Typical offenses include failing to carry[required safety equipment](https://boating.ncf.ca/equipment.html) or committing other infractions on the water. **Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island** adopted it as law. The Coast Guard expect B.C., Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Yukon, Nunavut, and N.W.T. to adopt it in 2000. Quebec was not expected to regulate boaters for safety issues.

Sample of fines (1996):

* License numbers marked incorrectly; Unlicensed boat $55
* Speeding $100
* When fueling, failure to: use funnel, close doors or ports, switch off electricals $105
* Not enough flares, oars, paddles, anchor $155
* Competency requirements (operator license) $100-250
* Age/horsepower restrictions $250
* Missing bailer or manual pump (boat not over 5.5m) $200
* Not enough PFDs, lifejackets, bailer, manual pump, fire extinguishers $205
* Careless operation $200
* Failure to switch off electrical equipment when refueling $200
* **Enforcement:**
* The RCMP, CCG, and local Police are all empowered to write traffic tickets for many boating offenses such as a broad "careless operation" and not having mandatory safety equipment on board.

#### Water-skiing:

* New regulations include wakes, ski boards, bare-foot skiing, tubes, and surfboarding. Tow boats must have room for driver, spotter, AND the person(s) being towed (a 3-seat PWC is minimum) and towing is not permitted at night

**Boat Operator** by September 2009, all boat operators will need PCOC or other proof of competency to operate any boat with motor.

**Speed Limits** In most provinces there is a 10 kph speed limit within 30 meters (100 feet) from shore. Fine is $125, with maximum fine $500- or six-months imprisonment. (Canada Shipping Act: Boating Restriction Regulations)