

Cherokee Village Watercraft Regulations

The Cherokee Village Suburban Improvement District encourages all authorized watercraft operators to enjoy the recreational activities offered on the lakes of Cherokee Village. However, like driving an automobile, operating a watercraft on the lakes of Cherokee Village is a privilege and not a right. In order to ensure that persons and property are protected, watercraft operators on the lakes of Cherokee Village must comply with all Arkansas laws and the rules and regulations of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and U.S. Coast Guard. In addition, the following regulations apply specifically to the lakes of Cherokee Village.

1. Definitions

- a. “Watercraft” means any vessel operated upon the lakes of Cherokee Village and includes but is not limited to motorboats, sailboats, pontoons, paddleboats, stand up paddle boards, canoes, and kayaks.
- b. “Personal Watercraft” means a motor powered vessel which is designed to be operated by a person sitting, standing, or kneeling on the vessel rather than in the conventional manner of sitting or standing inside the vessel. Personal watercraft include but are not limited to Jet Skis, Water Bikes, Seadoos, Wave Runners and Hydro Planes.
- c. “Operate” means to navigate or otherwise use a watercraft.
- d. “Operator” means a person who is controlling the speed and direction of a watercraft.
- e. “Water Sport Activity” means any activity that involves a person being towed behind a watercraft whether by tie line or by wave action and includes but is not limited to skiing, tubing, knee boarding, wake boarding, or wake surfing.
- f. “Water Sport Activity Area” means the interior portion of a lake

bounded by buoys.

- g. "Wake Boat Activity Area" means that area on Lake Thunderbird bounded by solid red buoys.
- h. "Wake" means the wave created by the movement of any watercraft.
- i. "Wake Boat" means a boat designed and intended to create an enlarged wake with a filled ballast.
- j. "No Wake Area" means all areas outside the water sport activity area on lakes Thunderbird and Omaha and lakes specifically designated as no wake lakes. Lakes Aztec, Chanute, Cherokee, Navajo, and Sequoia are no wake lakes.
- k. "White Cap" means a wave which rolls over creating a visible white crest.

2. Limitations on Operation of Watercraft on the Lakes of Cherokee Village

No person

- a. Shall operate any watercraft or conduct any water sport activity in a manner that endangers the life, limb or property of any person.
- b. Shall operate a personal watercraft on any lake in Cherokee Village.
- c. Shall operate any wake boat in any area other than the area set on Lake Thunderbird by solid red buoys. Wake boats must operate only in the center of the designated area and must travel in a straight line. Wake boats may not make 180 degree turns with a person being towed and must stop the boat, turn the boat, and return in the same straight line. Wake boats may not have ballasts filled in any part of the lake other than the wake boat activity area, including approaching and departing the wake boat activity area. Wake boats may operate on any lake with empty ballast as long as they are in compliance with all regulations.
- d. Shall operate any watercraft in excess of thirty (30) miles per hour in the water sports activity areas on lakes Thunderbird and Omaha. Lakes Aztec, Chanute, Cherokee, Navajo, and Sequoia are no wake

lakes.

- e. Shall operate any watercraft in a clockwise manner. All watercraft must operate in a counterclockwise manner.
- f. Shall operate a watercraft in such a manner as to create a wake that causes other watercraft to take on water
- g. Shall operate a watercraft in such a manner as to create a wake sufficient to toss occupants of other watercraft about in a manner to cause injury or the risk of injury.
- h. Shall operate a watercraft in such a manner as to create a wake sufficient to toss persons in the lake or on a dock about in a manner to cause injury or the risk of injury.
- i. Shall operate a watercraft within one hundred (100) feet of a buoy, dock, pier, raft, float, anchored boat, dam, or other watercraft when engaged in a water sport activity.
- j. Shall engage in a watersport activity such as skiing, tubing, or wake boarding outside the water sport activity area. All watersport activities must be inside the water sport activity area buoys.
- k. Shall engage in a water sport activity unless there is in the watercraft a person twelve (12) years of age or older in addition to the operator in a position to observe the progress of the person or persons being towed or has a watercraft equipped with a wide angle mirror.
- l. Shall operate a watercraft of ten (10) horsepower or more unless the operator is fifteen (15) years of age or older.
- m. Shall engage in a water sport activity at any time before 9:00 a.m. or at any time after sunset.
- n. Shall swim inside the water sport activity area unless attributed to engaging in the water sport.
- o. Shall swim within one hundred (100) feet of any Suburban Improvement District marina or dock, any launch ramp, or any spillway.
- p. Shall operate a watercraft unless property lighted as prescribed by Arkansas law.
- q. Shall operate any watercraft while intoxicated or under the influence of any drug or medication which impairs the operator's ability to safely operate the watercraft.

- r. Shall load any watercraft with passengers beyond its safe carrying capacity as indicated on the manufacturer's capacity plate.
- s. Shall engage in a water sport activity unless one U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device is on board for each person on board.
- t. Shall engage in a water sport activity unless wearing a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device.
- u. Shall move the buoys marking the water sport activity area. The Suburban Improvement District shall accurately measure the location of the water sport activity area and ensure that buoys remain in their current positions. The Suburban Improvement District may move buoys closer to the interior of the lake to decrease the area of the water sport activity area but shall not move buoys closer to the shore.
- v. Shall operate any watercraft in such a manner as to create a white cap beyond the buoys establishing the water sport activity area.
- w. Shall operate any watercraft so as to create a wake in a no wake area.
- x. Shall operate any watercraft unless a current authorization sticker is affixed to the hull and to any affiliated trailer if applicable.

3. Aircraft

No aircraft of any type is permitted on any Cherokee Village lake.

4. Right of Way

Power watercraft must yield right of way to sailboats, anchored watercraft, hand-powered watercraft, paddleboats, and watercraft powered under 6 horsepower.

5. Lake Safety Patrol

- a. It is the duty of Lake Safety Patrol to enforce the provisions of these regulations.
- b. All persons operating watercraft agree to be bound by the authority of the Lake Safety Patrol and to comply with all directives issued by the

Lake Safety Patrol.

- c. Individuals observing a violation of these regulations should contact the hotline number provided on the Suburban Improvement District web page as soon as the violation is observed. Individuals should provide a description of the violating watercraft and hull number if possible.

6. Enforcement

- a. Watercraft violating these regulations will be engaged by Lake Safety Patrol.
- b. Options for enforcement include but are not limited to issuing written warnings, ordering watercraft from the water, revocation of authorization stickers, making arrests by duly deputized officers, and engaging appropriate law enforcement officials.
- c. Watercraft receiving three warnings within one calendar year will have their authorization stickers revoked immediately upon issuance of the third warning. The revocation shall be effective for twelve months from the date of issuance of the third warning and the Suburban Improvement District shall not issue a new authorization sticker until the twelve month revocation has ended.
- d. Watercraft displaying a revoked sticker will be considered trespassing and addressed as set out in Section 7 below.
- e. All enforcement actions taken by Lake Safety Patrol will be reported to and recorded by the Suburban Improvement District.

7. Trespassing

- a. All watercraft operated on Cherokee Village lakes must display a current authorization sticker.
- b. Watercraft not displaying a current authorization sticker will be considered trespassing.
- c. Trespassing watercraft will be directed to leave the lake by the Lake Safety Patrol. Noncomplying operators will be subject to arrest by the appropriate law enforcement officials.

The Suburban Improvement District reserves the right to amend these regulations at any time.