



Lac Xavier – Agreement for Safe, Responsible and Courteous Boating

Lac Xavier is a lake of rare and natural beauty, belonging to the whole community. The quality of the water is the key to the lake's health. Those who use the lake must do so with respect to all residents, and consistent with the principles of sustainable development. This responsible boating guide outlines a series of recommendations to ensure safety, minimize or eliminate potential dangerous situations and irritants, and preserve the environment for all residents of the lake.

1. Recommended speeds, safe boating and other boating information

- Without exception, swimmers and non-motorized craft have priority over motorboats, and should stay within the protected zone within 50 meters of the shore.
- Motorboats must stay at least 30 meters from swimmers and non-motorized craft, unless one has been specifically asked to come closer. Similarly, motorboats must stay at least 30 meters from any animals and wild birds.
- Motorboats must operate within speed limits, creating as little wake as possible, and without creating any turbulence near a swimmer, another water craft, or any lakeside structures. The recommended maximum speed within 50 meters of the shore is 10 km/h.
- Buoys placed at the public launch are a reminder that the speed limit is 10 km/h within 50 meters of the shore. Given the configuration of the area and the power of the boats, a speed of 5 km/h is advised.
- Since 2009, any operator of a motorized craft must have completed a course and an exam to obtain a Pleasure Craft Operating Card. Having such a card and keeping it on board the vessel are mandatory and if not complied, subject to fines.
- Four stroke motors are preferable to two-stroke motors given that they pollute far less.
- It is strongly recommended that motorized craft be equipped with an absorbent pad to absorb transmission oil, gasoline, and anti-freeze. While this pad absorbs any oil-based liquid, it repels water. This absorbent pad can be installed on all motorized craft, with the exception of jetskis or sea-doo type craft.
- Consultation with members of the Corporation revealed that the vast majority does not want jetskis operating on the lake given the noise. In addition, jumping ramps and regattas are forbidden.

2. Shared use of the lake

At any time of the day, a boater must take into consideration the level and type of activity already being undertaken on the before engaging in activity itself.

- The following time sharing of the lake is recommended in that:
 - Early mornings and evenings be reserved for more relaxing activities such as fishing, canoeing, pedal boating and paddle boarding.
 - Afternoons, for more vigorous activities such as waterskiing and tubing.

3. Waves, wakes and motorized nautical activities

Waves are a major cause of erosion of our shores, disruption of wetlands and damage to fragile ecosystems, and a nuisance. Waves can also cause damage to other craft, docks, water intake pumps, etc. Every effort must be made to reduce waves from motorized water craft.

- Every effort must be taken to reduce the size of a boat's wake, and to reduce the turbulence under the water surface including:
 - Avoid filling ballasts with the intention of creating a large wake for acrobatics
 - Avoid the use of trim tabs for the same purpose
 - Larger boats, and those pulling skiers or undertaking in other towing activities, must operate in the middle of the lake. *Lac Xavier, at only 420 meters at its widest, is simply too narrow and doing otherwise risks damaging the shoreline, pulling naturally occurring phosphate on shore into the water, as well as disturbing naturally occurring phosphates on the lake bottom, all of which can contribute to algae blooms*
 - Please refer to the following studies for more information
<http://coalitionnavigation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Planification-U-Laval-Pr%C3%A9sentation.pdf> and
http://memphremagog.org/FCKeditor/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Centre_de_document_s/EN/Rapport-Vagues-Wakeboard-2014.pdf
 - Do not drive in circles or figure eights with the intention of creating even larger waves (double-up).
 - When pulling a skier out of the water, start in water deep enough so that the downward force of turbulence does not disturb the silt on the lake bottom or create waves and turbulence for those onshore or in the water nearby.
 - Weight in the boat should be distributed as to reduce the size of the wake.
 - Similarly, the motor of the boat should be proportionate to the size of the boat in order to ensure it is powerful to propel the boat over the water with a minimum of wake.

- Drivers must operate their boats respecting these priorities. In addition, federal Small Vessel Regulations stipulate that, when undertaking towing activities such as waterskiing or tubing, the driver must be accompanied by an observer (spotter).
 - Boats must have seating for every occupant, including those that may be being towed for water sports.
- All boats must carry on board, in good working order, the required safety equipment as outlined on the Surete de Quebec website.

4. Noise

Noise pollution can be a significant nuisance on and around the lake and must be kept to a minimum.

- Sound on boats with sound systems must be kept at a level as to respond to the needs of those in the boat and should not be heard by those onshore and around the lake.
- Erratic driving (tight turns, jumping waves, etc.), in addition to being potentially dangerous, is a source of unwanted noise.
- For higher horsepower boats, ensure that the craft is fitted with the appropriate muffler to reduce the noise created by the engine.

5. Boat launch and washing certificates

Tightly controlling access to the lake and encouraging and ensuring, to the extent possible, that all boats have been washed and issued a washing certificate is critical to the continued health of the lake. It is the responsibility of residents to ensure that boats belonging to guests, visitors or renters have been washed and have a valid washing certificate.

- The public boat launch is strictly reserved for those with an access key. All residents with access to the lake and authorized individuals are asked to prevent and/or report to the Municipality the launching of non-authorized craft or boats that have been inadequately washed and have no certificate.
- Parking cars, trailers of boats or any other vehicle at the launch is not permitted.
- Any time a boat has been on another lake, it must be washed by a qualified boat washer before being put into the lake, or any other lake in the Municipality of La Conception.
 - This measure is necessary to avoid the lakes being contaminated by various pollutants such as zebra mussels or parasite plants, specifically myriophyllum spicatum (a fine-strip aquatic plant that multiplies rapidly, feeds on oxygen from the lakes and by its concentrated growth, limits swimming and fishing)
 - As stipulated by Municipal By-law 07-2008, Article 5:
“All boat users must, before launching a boat in a lake covered by Article 3 of the present by-law, wash said boat, its motor and trailer in a washing station and carry a valid washing certificate.”

- This by-law carries a fine of \$300 to \$1000 for a first offence and up to \$2000 for a subsequent offence.
- The following businesses in the region offer boat washing and washing certificates:
 - Lave-Auto Mont Tremblant
 - Défi Sport
 - Lave-Auto Libre-Service Labelle

6. Dangerous and protected zones, and areas to avoid

There are a number of protected and dangerous zones in the lake that must be avoided when boating.

- There are a number of areas of the lake that encompass reefs, shoals and submerged logs. Each of these areas is highlighted below.
- Given the problems caused to pumps and the subsequent water quality for residents in the discharge zone of the lake – the Saint-Jean/Guilbault narrows – motor boats are not permitted in this area of the lake (with the exception of the four residents of the area).
- Similarly, motoring is not permitted between Chaput Island and the shore; the water is shallow, and waves could disturb the sensitive loon nesting area.
- Also to be avoided is the shallow zone at the south-east end of the lake marked by a buoy, as well as the area near the lake head.
- Avoiding the above noted areas will prevent naturally occurring phosphates on the lake bed to be stirred up, which can contribute to the creation of blue-green algae blooms.