

Boaters, Know Your Lake

Barry Johnson, Chair, Recreation and Safety Committee

Unmarked Shoal Area in Haystack Bay

Lake of Bays is generally a safe lake for boating. The main travel routes of the lake are marked for day and night boating. However, there are dangers with changing water levels and unmarked hazards in out of the way areas of our lake.

A thoughtful member has informed us of an unmarked hazard in the northwest section of Haystack Bay. There were a number of boating incidents in this area during the summer of 2009. This hazard can be viewed on Chart 6023—CANADA, ONTARIO, LAKE OF BAYS available at many local stores and marinas. This chart shows the hazard but it is not marked on the lake as the Coast Guard only marks the lake's main channels.

It is the responsibility of the boater to be aware of local hazards. Study your charts and above all, be observant. Drive with caution if you are unfamiliar with the area and be aware of changing water levels over the course of the season.

Get your Card Online!

The deadline has passed. Everyone who operates a motorized pleasure craft must carry a Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC) or face a fine of \$250. Proof of competency is not required for pleasure craft without motors.

You can do your test online with BOATsmart Canada and be ready before the ice goes out. Go to www.loba.ca and click on 'Get the Card'

(under 'Quick Links' on our home page) to access the BOATsmart Exam:

- Free Online Study Guide
- Take your BOATsmart Exam online—\$49.95 + gst
- Free retries
- Transport Canada Accredited

The Lake of Bays Association receives a referral fee when you "click-through" from www.loba.ca, so be sure to access the BOATsmart Exam through our website.

More Savings—You are a member of FOCA (Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations) through the Lake of Bays Association. FOCA members receive an exclusive \$10 discount when taking the exam online. **Enter Discount Code FOCA219 to save!**

If you are not a resident of Canada, you only need a card if you are operating a motorboat in Canadian waters for more than 45 consecutive days or if the boat you are operating is registered or licensed in Canada (this includes rented boats). Cottagers who rent out their cottage with a boat, should be aware that renters must complete a "Rental Boat Safety Checklist" or show proof of competency before heading out on the water. For more information on these regulations, visit the Transport Canada website www.boatingsafety.gc.ca. A sample "Rental Boat Safety Checklist" can be found on the following link www.tc.gc.ca/media/documents/marine_safety/appendix-a.pdf.

NEW—Youth On Board Courses and PCOC Testing this Summer

The Lake of Bays Association is partnering with BOATsmart Canada to offer a safe boating course and PCOC testing opportunity specifically geared to youth 8 to 15 years of age. The day long course will include an on water component providing practical boat driving experience. Dates, locations and registration information will be posted on our website (www.loba.ca) shortly. Details will be sent to you via email in a Lake of Bays NEWSFLASH and published in the summer issue of Current Connection.

Adult Safe Boating Courses

We will also be running our Adult Safe Boating Courses again this summer. This program offers a two-and-a-half-hour seminar followed by an opportunity to write the Pleasure Craft Operating Card test. These courses are excellent for new boaters and a great refresher for experienced boaters. They cover the basics of safe boating and include discussion around boating on Lake of Bays. Susan Grant, an accredited power and sail instructor, will be the seminar leader for this popular program. Dates and locations will be posted on www.loba.ca as soon as they are confirmed.