



## LEXINGTON PONTOON RENTAL LLC SAFETY GUIDELINES

The following are the safety guidelines we require you to read. Part of the rental contract will be these safety requirements with your initials.

### Safety starts with you. Let's start with the heavy stuff first.

- Grossly negligent operation is considered a criminal offense. State Law calls for the impose a civil penalty; an operator may be fined up to \$5,000, imprisoned for one year or both.
- In addition, should we observe negligent operation it will result in the immediate cancellation of your rental agreement with no refund.
- Negligent operation may include:
  - Operating a boat in a swimming area.
  - Operating a boat under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
  - Excessive speed in the vicinity of other boats or in dangerous waters.
  - Hazardous practices while tubing or engaging in other tow sports.
  - Bow riding or riding on seat back, gunwales, or transom.
  - Diving or jumping off of a moving boat.
- Boating accident statistics show that operator inattention, carelessness, reckless operation, excessive speed and the lack of a lookout are primary contributing factors in all reported injuries and accidents.
- All of these things are under your complete control as operator of this boat and as the renter.
- That's why Lexington Pontoon Rental company reminds you, You're in Command. Boat Responsibly. We want you and others to enjoy a long life.

### BOATING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

- You know how serious it is to be arrested for driving a car under the influence. Operating this boat under the influence of alcohol or drugs is just as illegal and the consequences are just as severe.
- State law enforcement agencies work together to enforce stringent federal and state laws against operating a boat while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- It is our policy to cooperate fully with those agencies, because again, we want you and others to enjoy a long life.
- Alcohol, illegal drugs and even some prescription medications may impair judgment, balance and reaction time. They can also increase a boater's fatigue and susceptibility to the effects of cold water.
- Sun, wind, noise, vibration and motion, all the stuff that makes boating fun, actually can intensify the effect of alcohol and drugs.
- These factors apply not only to you as operator, but to your passengers as well. Passengers impaired by alcohol or drugs are at risk of falls overboard and other dangerous accidents.



# LEXINGTON PONTOON RENTAL LLC

## SAFETY GUIDELINES

### LIFE JACKETS

- Each of you will have access to a life jacket that is the right size for you. We can make sure you know how to put it on and help you adjust it for a proper fit.
- We strongly recommend that you and all your passengers wear life jacket at all times while boating. We do not breathe well under water, especially when unconscious, so it may be that you weigh the risk of not wearing life jacket and act accordingly.
- Wearing the life jacket is the single best thing you can do to prevent drowning while boating.
- Close to two-thirds of those killed while boating – including many who think of themselves as strong swimmers – drown while not wearing a life jacket.

### CHILDREN ON BOARD

- Children deserve special attention as passengers while boating. Their inexperience – as well as their smaller size and weight – place them at risk from collisions or falls overboard.
- Life jackets sized for adults are unsafe for children under 90 pounds. We have life jackets for you to use on your passengers. It is your responsibility to ensure they are worn and fit properly.
- In Michigan, boat passengers 6 years of age and under are required to wear a Coast Guard-approved, Type I or Type II life jacket when on the open deck of any boat, while the boat is underway.
- Always do a head count – especially with children – to make sure all passengers are safely inside the boat before starting the motor and post a lookout to make sure there is no one around or behind the boat.

### SPEED AND CONTROL

- There are no brakes on this boat.
- This boat with its passengers is heavy and has momentum. It takes time to reverse the motor to slow or stop.
- You must operate this boat at a speed where you can maintain control at all times.
- Never try to stop a boat by putting your arms or legs between the boat and a dock.
- Always ensure that there is even passenger distribution along the boat while under way. Too heavy in the front (bow) or rear (stern) can result in dangerous handling and loss of control.

### BASIC NAVIGATION

- Just like driving on a road in Michigan, if another boat is coming at you head on, you should steer to the right (starboard).
- If you are overtaking or passing another boat, you should pass on its left (port).
- If you are crossing the path of another boat, you should yield to a boat on your right (starboard).
- You are required to yield to all boats that are not under power, including sailboats under sail, canoes and kayaks.
- You should stay out of the way of commercial or working boats.



## LEXINGTON PONTOON RENTAL LLC SAFETY GUIDELINES

- If there is the threat of a collision, it is your responsibility to slow down, steer away or stop.
- We do not allow this boat to be operated at night or when visibility is poor. If this occurs, you must turn the lights on.
- Five short blasts on a horn is the universal signal for danger or need for assistance.

### LOOKOUTS

- It is your responsibility as the renter and driver to appoint a lookout.
- You may need a lookout both in front (fore) and behind (aft).
- There may be times where you cannot clearly see everything around you.
- Parts of the boat or other passengers may obstruct your view of what is in front of this boat, behind this boat or near the propeller.
- Make sure your lookouts are in place before you start the motor.
- The lookout must alert you to the presence of swimmers in the water, obstacles, boats, or anything else you might not be able to see.

### ACUTE DANGER ZONE AND PROPELLERS

- The acute danger zone includes the bow, sides, stern and swim platform. It extends 30 feet behind and all around the boat.
- No passenger should be in the acute danger zone until the boat motor is turned off, the boat has stopped moving, the keys are removed, and you have counted to ten.
- The propeller on a boat can spin for several seconds after the motor is off and can cause serious or fatal injuries to anyone who comes in contact with it. Hence, why you count to ten.
- Swimmers in the water can be hit by the propeller.
- Remember that it is grossly negligent – and prohibited – for passengers to sit on the bow, gunwales, stern or swim platform while the boat is moving. They can easily slip into the water and be hit by the propeller. We strongly urge that no passenger sit on the bow, gunwales, stern or swim platform when the motor is on.
- We recommend that you do a “head count” and post a lookout to make sure all passengers are safely inside the boat before starting the motor.
- Pay particular attention to the acute danger zone while tubing.

### TOW SPORT SAFETY

- By law, you must make sure that each person engaged in tow sports wears a properly fitted and properly adjusted life jacket.
- Make sure that you have a lookout dedicated to watching the skier and that no one is anywhere near the propeller, front or sides of the boat before you start the motor.
- The lookout watches the skiers. The boat operator looks ahead to watch for other boats and obstructions.
- Use a tow rope that is at least 30 feet long to help keep skiers or tow sport participants out of the acute danger zone.
- Use these procedures for reboarding to recover anyone in the water:
  - Make sure that the operator or lookout always keeps the person in view.
  - Turn the bow of the boat toward the person in the water.



## LEXINGTON PONTOON RENTAL LLC SAFETY GUIDELINES

- Turn the motor off well before approaching the person and leave it off until the person is safely back in the boat.
- Keep the person away from the propeller blades.
- Never step on the propeller in order to reenter the boat!
- It is unlawful to engage in tow sports at night or when visibility is poor.
- Be sure to stow all tow sport gear securely when not in use. Improperly stowed tow ropes and tubes can be caught by the wind and cause injuries to boat operators and passengers.

### OVERLOADING AND STOWAGE

- This boat has a maximum weight allowance. Do not exceed that limit.
- Overloading this boat – with people or gear – can cause it to swamp, capsize or be difficult to control.
- Ensure people and gear are distributed evenly, front to back and side to side. Uneven weight could also cause the boat to swamp, capsize or be difficult to control.
- Also ensure to carefully stow any gear you bring aboard. Improperly stowed fishing equipment, coolers and tow sports equipment can slide about or be caught by the wind, causing injury and loss of control.

### ANCHORING

- First, always anchor in a place where you can be seen clearly by the operators of other boats.
- Never beach the pontoon boat as this will damage it and cost you to forfeit your damage deposit.
- Second, always anchor from the bow – not the stern or any other part of the boat.
- If you are anchored at night, and you shouldn't, as your rental ends *before* dark, you must turn on the white anchor light which gives visibility all around the boat.

### FIRE/EXPLOSION

- Fire and explosions are rare – but serious. You must be prepared.
- If there is an emergency, first make sure all passengers are in life jackets and are ready to leave the boat. Only then should you attempt to put out a fire.
- Use the fire extinguisher provided on board.

We recommend all boaters take a National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) approved safe boating course. These courses are available through the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, United States Power Squadrons® or individual states. These courses are available in classrooms, online or as a home study. And it is FUN for the whole family!

**WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO FORBID TOW SPORTS WITH INEXPERIENCED OPERATORS.**