

During the lock-widening project, boat traffic in and out of our community is being compressed into shorter time frames. It may be a good idea to remind all boaters of the following Inland navigation rule.

DHS/USCG Navigation Rules and Regulations Handbook

Rule 34 (e) A vessel nearing a bend or an area of a channel or fairway where other vessels may be obscured by an intervening obstruction shall sound one prolonged blast [horn or whistle]. This signal shall be answered with a prolonged blast by any approaching vessel that may be within hearing around the bend or behind the intervening obstruction.

A prolonged blast is defined as four to six seconds in duration. An “answer” signal is acknowledgement ***and agreement*** - “you’re telling me you are approaching the lock now and I will give you access.” If a boater is already in the lock, or if there is any other reason the signaling boater should not proceed, the response sound signal is five or more rapid blasts. As we approach the lock area it would be beneficial to turn down the volume on Jimmy or Zac and have everyone on the boat listen for signal blasts. Boats approaching from either side of the lock should be signaling, as sight distances and maneuverability are restricted on both sides.

We are all in this congested situation for the next few months, but with a little effort on everyone’s part we can keep boating safely and enjoyably.