PA Lake Rules — Printable Edition

Motor, horsepower, PWC and speed rules for 154 Pennsylvania lakes

Data verified through Oct. 4, 2026; source texts machine-checked Nov. 1, 2026

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lakepennsylvania.org · Operated by WeldonPC

Sample: the Armstrong County section only. The full edition covers every county in the atlas.

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How to use this edition

Lakes are grouped by county. Each entry shows the motor rule, horsepower, PWC rule, speed limits with their conditions, the main lake rules, ramps with coordinates, and a QR code to the live page. Each rule carries its citation and verified date; the exact wording is on the website.

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Armstrong County

Crooked Creek Lake

No horsepower limit listed (in 58 Pa. Code §111.3(a)(1))
Max horsepower: None is listed in 58 Pa. Code §111.3(a)(1) · Electric boats: No lake-specific electric rule listed
PWCs: No lake-specific PWC rule found (statewide PWC rules apply)
Speed: No mph limit listed

- A boat may tow only one boat-towed device on weekends and holidays. *(weekends and holidays; Saturday preceding Memorial Day to Labor Day)* — 58 Pa. Code §111.3(a)(1)
- Boats with inboard engines that use over-the-transom or straight exhausts (wet or dry) are not allowed. — 58 Pa. Code §111.3(a)(2)
- Airboats are not allowed. — 58 Pa. Code §111.3(a)(3)
- Slow, no-wake from the dam to the buoy line above the swimming beach. *(From the dam to a buoy line crossing the lake above the swimming beach)* — 58 Pa. Code §111.3(a)(4)(i)
- Slow, no-wake from the shoal buoys to the headwaters. *(From the shoal buoys to the headwaters)* — 58 Pa. Code §111.3(a)(4)(ii)
- Life jackets must be worn at all times on boats under 16 feet and on any canoe, kayak or paddleboard. *(at all times)* — 58 Pa. Code §111.3(a)(5)

No PFBC-verified ramp listed.

Verified Oct. 4, 2026 · OK

Keystone Lake (Armstrong Co.)

20 hp max (≈ 14.9 kW, our conversion)
Max horsepower: 20 hp · Electric boats: Within 20 hp (≈ 14.9 kW, our conversion)
PWCs: No lake-specific PWC rule found (statewide PWC rules apply)
Speed: No mph limit listed

- Motors over 20 hp may not be used. — 58 Pa. Code §111.3(b)

Ramps (PFBC-verified):

- Atwood: 40.75772, -79.28348
- Numine: 40.75498, -79.27636

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Mahoning Creek Lake

10 hp max (≈ 7.5 kW, our conversion)
Max horsepower: 10 hp · Electric boats: Within 10 hp (≈ 7.5 kW, our conversion)
PWCs: No lake-specific PWC rule found (statewide PWC rules apply)
Speed: No mph limit listed

- Motors over 10 hp may not be used. — 58 Pa. Code §111.3(c)(1)
- Life jackets must be worn at all times on boats under 16 feet and on any canoe, kayak or paddleboard. *(at all times)* — 58 Pa. Code §111.3(c)(2)

Ramps (PFBC-verified):

- Milton Loop: 40.90415, -79.22601

Verified Oct. 4, 2026 · OK

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Indiana County

Mahoning Creek Lake

10 hp max (≈ 7.5 kW, our conversion)
Max horsepower: 10 hp · Electric boats: Within 10 hp (≈ 7.5 kW, our conversion)
PWCs: No lake-specific PWC rule found (statewide PWC rules apply)
Speed: No mph limit listed

- Motors over 10 hp may not be used. — 58 Pa. Code §111.3(c)(1)
- Life jackets must be worn at all times on boats under 16 feet and on any canoe, kayak or paddleboard. *(at all times)* — 58 Pa. Code §111.3(c)(2)

Ramps (PFBC-verified):

- Milton Loop: 40.90415, -79.22601

Verified Oct. 4, 2026 · OK

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Jefferson County

Mahoning Creek Lake

10 hp max (≈ 7.5 kW, our conversion)
Max horsepower: 10 hp · Electric boats: Within 10 hp (≈ 7.5 kW, our conversion)
PWCs: No lake-specific PWC rule found (statewide PWC rules apply)
Speed: No mph limit listed

- Motors over 10 hp may not be used. — 58 Pa. Code §111.3(c)(1)
- Life jackets must be worn at all times on boats under 16 feet and on any canoe, kayak or paddleboard. *(at all times)* — 58 Pa. Code §111.3(c)(2)

Ramps (PFBC-verified):

- Milton Loop: 40.90415, -79.22601

Verified Oct. 4, 2026 · OK

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Appendix A · Statewide rules

Every boat with a motor must be registered, including boats with only an electric motor.	PFBC: Register/Title a Boat Verified Oct. 4, 2026
In state parks and forests, motorboats must show a current PFBC registration.	DCNR: Boating in Pennsylvania State Parks and Forests Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Kayaks, canoes, SUPs, rowboats and sailboats without motors need a registration, a PFBC launch permit or a DCNR launch permit at PFBC lakes and access areas and at state parks and forests.	PFBC: Launch Permit vs. Unpowered Boat Registration Verified Oct. 4, 2026
PFBC launch (use) permit: $12 for 1 year or $22 for 2 years, effective January 1, 2019 (48 Pa.B. 7185), plus any issuing-agent fee.	48 Pa.B. 7185 (Nov. 10, 2018), sections C and D Verified Oct. 4, 2026
An issuing agent other than PFBC or DCNR may add an agent fee of up to $1 per transaction.	58 Pa. Code §53.27(f) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
PFBC's comparison chart lists $22.00 for a 2-year unpowered registration and $22.00 for the launch (use) permit, not counting agent fees.	PFBC: Launch Permit vs. Unpowered Boat Registration (chart) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Any boat using a Commission lake or access area must be registered, except unpowered boats with a valid PFBC use permit or DCNR launch or mooring permit.	58 Pa. Code §53.8(f) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
State parks: launching needs a DCNR launching or mooring permit, or a PFBC registration or use permit.	17 Pa. Code §11.219(i)(3) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
State parks: motorized boats may be launched or removed only at DCNR-designated launch sites.	17 Pa. Code §11.219(i)(1) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
At Pymatuning State Park, a valid Ohio launching permit satisfies the state park launching rule.	17 Pa. Code §11.219(i)(4)(ii) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
State forests: boats launched from trailers may be launched and removed only at designated launching areas.	17 Pa. Code §21.109(e) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
State parks: inflatable boats must be at least 7 feet long with more than one buoyancy chamber.	17 Pa. Code §11.219(e)(3)(vi) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
State parks: water skis only on lakes where unlimited-horsepower motorboats are permitted or where posting allows waterskiing.	17 Pa. Code §11.219(e)(3)(iii) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Where Chapter 111 sets a horsepower limit, it applies to gas and electric motors; a boat with a bigger motor may launch, but that motor may not be used.	58 Pa. Code §107.1 Verified Oct. 4, 2026
§107.2 applies on waterways owned or controlled by PFBC or DCNR, except as Chapter 111 provides.	58 Pa. Code §107.2 (opening words) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Electric motors are allowed wherever boating is; on Chapter 111 horsepower-limited waters, electric motors above the limit or its kilowatt equivalent may not be used.	58 Pa. Code §107.2(1) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Where gas engines are banned, electric-powered boats may go no faster than slow, no-wake.	58 Pa. Code §107.2(1.1) Verified Oct. 4, 2026

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A gas engine does not have to be removed from the boat, but it may not be run.	58 Pa. Code §107.2(2) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
§107.2 was last amended effective August 30, 2025 (55 Pa.B. 6278); earlier amendments took effect January 1, 2023 and March 2, 2024.	58 Pa. Code §107.2 (Source note) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Chapter 111 horsepower and motor restrictions are qualified by §107.1 and §107.2.	58 Pa. Code §111.71 Verified Oct. 4, 2026
In Chapter 111, holidays are federally recognized holidays, weekdays are Monday–Friday and weekends are Saturday and Sunday.	58 Pa. Code §111.72 Verified Oct. 4, 2026
On Fish and Boat Commission lakes no gas engine may propel a boat or power its motor.	58 Pa. Code §53.8(a) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
PFBC's Boating FAQ: all Fish and Boat Commission and Game Commission lakes are electric-motors-only.	PFBC Boating FAQs: horsepower question Verified Oct. 4, 2026
On State game lands: no gas motors; electric motors at slow, no-wake only, unless the water is posted closed.	58 Pa. Code §135.41(c)(8) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
On state forest waters, only electric motors may propel a boat.	17 Pa. Code §21.109(c) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
State parks: without DCNR's written permission, no gas engines totalling more than the posted horsepower, no gas engine on waters posted electric-only, and no PWCs unless the lake is posted open to motorboats without an hp limit.	17 Pa. Code §11.219(f) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
A Boating Safety Education Certificate is required to operate a PWC, and for anyone born on or after January 1, 1982 to operate a boat with a motor greater than 25 horsepower.	PFBC: Apply for a Boating Safety Education Certificate Verified Oct. 4, 2026
PWC operators need a Boating Safety Education Certificate.	58 Pa. Code §109.3(f) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
If you are required to have the certificate, you must carry it while operating.	PFBC: Apply for a Boating Safety Education Certificate Verified Oct. 4, 2026
A temporary PFBC certificate is valid for 60 days from issue.	PFBC: Apply for a Boating Safety Education Certificate Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Temporary certificates expire when the permanent one is issued or after 60 days, whichever comes first.	58 Pa. Code §91.6(d) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
The permanent certificate card fee is $10, as listed on pa.gov (some classroom courses charge extra; online course fees include the certificate).	PFBC: Apply for a Boating Safety Education Certificate Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Online course fees include the certificate.	PFBC: Apply for a Boating Safety Education Certificate Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Out-of-state boaters need a certificate from a NASBLA-approved course.	PFBC: Apply for a Boating Safety Education Certificate Verified Oct. 4, 2026

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Age 11 and under: may not operate a PWC or a boat with a motor over 25 hp.	58 Pa. Code §91.4(a) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Ages 12–15: may not operate a PWC with any passenger aged 15 or younger aboard.	58 Pa. Code §91.4(b) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
PFBC's FAQ: PWC operators must be at least 12.	PFBC Boating FAQs: course age question Verified Oct. 4, 2026
From November 1 to April 30, everyone on a boat under 16 feet, or on any canoe, kayak or paddleboard, must wear a life jacket while underway or at anchor.	58 Pa. Code §97.1(i) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Children 12 and under must wear a life jacket while underway on any boat 20 feet or less and on all canoes, kayaks and paddleboards.	58 Pa. Code §97.1(h) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Carry one wearable life jacket per person aboard.	58 Pa. Code §97.1(b) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Boats 16 feet or longer also need one throwable device (canoes and kayaks excepted).	58 Pa. Code §97.1(c) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Slow, no-wake within 100 feet of shore, docks, launch ramps, swimmers, downed skiers, people wading, anchored, moored or drifting boats, floats, and other marked areas.	58 Pa. Code §103.3(a) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
No faster than is reasonable and prudent for the conditions.	58 Pa. Code §103.16(a) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
A PWC is a boat under 16 feet driven by an internal-combustion engine powering a water-jet pump, ridden on rather than in.	58 Pa. Code §109.3(a) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
No PWC operation between sunset and sunrise.	58 Pa. Code §109.3(d) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Everyone on a PWC must wear a Coast Guard approved wearable life jacket; inflatable ones do not count.	58 Pa. Code §109.3(b) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
If the PWC has an engine cut-off lanyard, the operator must attach it.	58 Pa. Code §109.3(c) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
No waterskiing or other towed watersports between sunset and sunrise.	58 Pa. Code §109.4(b) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
A competent observer must be aboard, in addition to the operator, when towing.	58 Pa. Code §109.4(c)(1) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Boats are registered in the state where they are primarily used.	PFBC: Register/Title a Boat Verified Oct. 4, 2026
A boat validly registered in its home state is treated as compliant while temporarily operating in Pennsylvania.	58 Pa. Code §93.11(c) Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Several DCNR park pages say motorboats must display a boat registration from any state.	DCNR Moraine State Park boating page Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Before the August 30, 2025 change, electric boats within the horsepower or kilowatt limit on Commission and DCNR waters were held to slow, no-wake.	55 Pa.B. 6278 (Aug. 30, 2025), E. Summary of Proposal Verified Oct. 4, 2026
Since August 30, 2025, the electric slow, no-wake limit applies only	55 Pa.B. 6278 (Aug. 30, 2025),

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on Commission and DCNR waters restricted to electric motors.	E. Summary of Proposal Verified Oct. 4, 2026
The 2025 amendment took effect when published on August 30, 2025.	55 Pa.B. 6278, A. Effective Date Verified Oct. 4, 2026
State forests: launching needs a DCNR launching or mooring permit, or a PFBC registration or use permit.	17 Pa. Code §21.109(e)(3) Verified Oct. 4, 2026

Safety certificate chart. Needed: anyone operating a personal watercraft; anyone born on or after January 1, 1982 operating a boat with a motor greater than 25 horsepower. Age 11 and under may not operate a PWC or a boat over 25 hp; ages 12–15 may not operate a PWC with a passenger aged 15 or younger (58 Pa. Code §91.4).

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Appendix B · Before you launch

- ☐ Registration or launch permit on board
- ☐ Safety certificate if required
- ☐ A wearable life jacket for everyone (worn Nov 1–Apr 30 on boats under 16 ft, canoes, kayaks and paddleboards)
- ☐ Throwable device on boats 16 ft or longer
- ☐ Check the lake's motor and hp rule
- ☐ Check the posted signs at the ramp
- ☐ Check closures and drawdowns on the PFBC PA Lakes map
- ☐ Check the park page for alerts

Appendix C · How to read Chapter 111

Chapter 111 of 58 Pa. Code lists special boating rules county by county. Each county section has lettered paragraphs, one per water: §111.52(b) is Pike County's paragraph (b), Lake Wallenpaupack. Numbers inside a paragraph, like (5), are individual rules. 'Holidays' means federally recognized holidays; 'weekends' means Saturday and Sunday. Horsepower and motor rules in Chapter 111 are qualified by §107.1 and §107.2.

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