

Citizen Resolution # 130223



Ballast System Inspection Requirement

Ballast systems are used in some boats to artificially enhance wakes. These systems can contain hundreds of gallons of lake water.

NR 19.055(1) requires all ballast systems to be emptied of water immediately upon leaving the waterbody.

The failure to totally empty water from ballast systems risks the spread of invasive species to other waterbodies as for most ballasted boats, it is impossible to fully empty the water after removal of the boats from the waterbody, leaving an average of 8 gallons of water and as much as 20 gallons of water that cannot be purged.

There is currently no reasonable way to inspect ballast systems on many boats upon removal of the boat from the waterbody.

WDNR personnel have stated that it is impossible to enforce the regulation regarding emptying ballast systems upon leaving the body of water because of an inability to inspect water ballast tanks.

The boat owner should follow manufacturers' instructions to make the system visible and permit any WDNR employee, municipal official, and any State authorized Clean Boats / Clean Waters person monitoring boat landings to inspect the ballast system and forbid any person from launching or removing a boat that contains water in a ballast system. Any ballast system that has no practical means for inspecting shall be presumed to contain residual water and shall be forbidden to launch.

Would you support regulations by WDNR to require that all ballast systems used in boats shall have a reasonable practical means of inspecting the system to confirm that no water is retained in the system (tanks, piping, valves, etc.).

Additional Information provided by author:

(Campbell et al, Management of Biological Invasives (2016) Vol 7, Issue 3: 281-286--Authors are researchers at the Univ of Wisconsin, the Minnesota DNR and a WI planning commission.)

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