

## **AN UPDATE ON MAINE BOATING LAWS**

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Because Maine Lakes are constantly under threat by the introduction of invasive plants, fish, and diseases that threaten the wellbeing of native flora and fauna, a new law took effect this year that all boaters need to be aware of. Effective June 16, 2023, before entering and when preparing to leave a body of water, all boaters are required to remove the hull drain plug, as well as drain any bailers, live wells, or ballast tanks to encourage drainage of areas containing harmful materials (excluding live bait containers). This practice must be done in an area where none of the drained water will enter any inland body of water.

Also, to promote boater safety and education, beginning January 1, 2024, anyone born on or after January 1, 1999 cannot operate a motorboat with 25 (or greater) horsepower on inland or territorial waters unless that person is 12 years of age or older AND has completed a boater safety or education course. This course teaches boaters how to operate a boat, boater safety, how to prepare for emergencies, and preventing the spread of invasive species, and may be taken in person or online.

For more information on these laws, visit the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries website at [www.maine.gov/ifw](http://www.maine.gov/ifw)