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## PA Fish and Boat Commission Regulations Applicable to Canoes and Kayaks

### Registration

At the present time you are not required by law to register a non-powered boat in the State of Pennsylvania. (Canoes using either an electric or gasoline motor are subject to the same registration requirements as any motor boat; contact the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission for details.) However, in order to use Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) boat ramps or surrounding property, you must do one of the following:

- 1) Register your boat with the PFBC. Registration cost is \$10 for 2 years (plus any processing fees charged by the issuing agent). Canoes are required to display both the 3" x 3" registration sticker and the registration number assigned to the boat. Kayaks are required to display only the sticker. In both cases, you must carry the actual registration card somewhere with you in your boat as well. The PFBC registration also covers use of State Park waterways, and in most cases fulfills registration requirements of other states you may paddle in. Registration can be done through the PFBC office (PO Box 68900, Harrisburg, PA 17106-8900, 717 705-7940, [www.fish.state.pa.us](http://www.fish.state.pa.us)), through most county courthouses, or through any PFBC certified registration issuing agent. You will need a copy of your sales receipt showing that you paid sales tax, for either new or used boats purchased through a dealer. A Manufacturer's Certificate of Origin (MCO) is not required for non-powered craft with a retail value less than \$2000 (per 2003 Boat Agent's Manual for Titling and Registration, page 16 under "New Boats".) Contact the PFBC for registration information for used boats purchased from a private individual, or those purchased from out of state.
- 2) Purchase a PFBC Use Permit, available from the same sources listed in #1 above. This permit does not require a registration number to be displayed; simply the use permit decal. Cost is \$10 for one year or \$18 for two years (plus any agent fee charged) and covers the use of State Park (DCNR) waterways as well. No proof of ownership or title is needed. Information required is name, address, and telephone number of owner (and applicant, if different from owner, description of the boat (make, year, & length), and the Hull Identification Number of the boat (if readily available). The PFBC Use Permit is valid January 1 - December 31.
- 3) Purchase a State Park (DCNR) Launch Permit, available from any State Park office, or the DCNR Headquarters in Harrisburg, PA. Cost is \$10 for one year, or \$18 for two years, and covers the use of all State Park land and waters, as well as all PFBC property. Information requested is name, address, and telephone number, and driver's license number of boat owner, Hull Identification Number, and description of the boat (make, year, length, width, and construction). The DCNR Launch Permit is valid April 1 to March 31.

### Titling

Effective March 1, 1998, a notarized Certificate of Title (issued by the PFBC) is required for any boat that is purchased, transferred or sold and is:

- 1) 1997 Model or newer, powered by an inboard engine; including personal watercraft.
- 2) 1997 Model or newer, 14' or longer, powered by an outboard (gas or electric) motor.
- 3) Currently titled in another state when Pennsylvania becomes the state of principal use.

(Over)

**Other PA Fish & Boat Commission Regulations**

**PFD's:** Every person (operator or passenger) in a canoe or kayak must have in the boat, readily accessible, a Coast Guard approved wearable type I, II, III or V PFD (lifevest) in a size appropriate for that person (under 30 lbs., 30 - 50 lbs., 50 - 90 lbs., or adult - sized or universal). Children 12 years or under and non-swimmers are required to wear their PFD's. (A "throwable device" is not required in a canoe or kayak regardless of the length of the boat.) Please note that "boat cushions" are no longer acceptable as PFD's.

**Lights:** Any canoe or kayak on the water after legal dusk must have on board a hand-held white light, which is to be turned on and held overhead if approached by another craft. (Motorized canoes must follow motorboat requirements - call the PFBC for details). When anchored in a non-anchorage area after dusk, an all-round (360°) anchor light must be displayed.

**Capacity Plate:** Canoes and kayaks, motorized or non-powered, are exempt from capacity plate requirements in the State of Pennsylvania.

**Alcohol:** Alcohol is prohibited on land and water at all PA State Parks, and at PFBC property. In addition, it is illegal to operate any watercraft (including canoes & kayaks, motorized or non-powered) while under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance. Fines of up to \$7500, 2 years in jail, and loss of boating privileges for up to 1 year can be imposed if convicted.