

enjoy yourself – come home safely

Waterways Ireland

As the navigation authority responsible for the management of over 1000km of inland waterways in Ireland, Waterways Ireland is responsible for facilitating and encouraging recreational use on the waterways.

Waterways Ireland would like to encourage responsible use of the waterways. This leaflet has been produced to guide all users on the inland navigations in compliance with the bye-laws.

Your Wake and the Speed Limits

The waterways are enjoyed by a wide variety of users, in craft powered by oar, sail, or engine and inhabited by wildlife nesting, wading or swimming.

Behind every craft powered by an engine is a wake, i.e. a flow of water causing a disturbance in the water behind the craft. This wake can hit other craft and the shore with surprising force. In narrow channels, in particular, this wake can be very destructive and have a dramatic effect on the enjoyment of other users and on the survival of certain birds and water creatures.



Many small craft including rowing and angling boats have a freeboard of 15-20cm i.e. the water level is 15-20cm below the people in the boat. Even a small change in the water level caused by a wake can sink the craft.



People swimming near a jetty can be difficult to see from a boat. A slow approach enables you to see the situation more clearly, gives more time to react and ensures that your craft does not pose a danger to anyone in the water. Also pay particular attention to water-skiers as they may be in the water and therefore very difficult to see.



Some of the water users on the navigations are new to the waterways, either in hire craft or privately owned boats or jet-skis. New to the navigation and to the way the craft operates, other water users approaching at speed or circling and zig-zagging around the craft can greatly effect on the enjoyment of their waterway experience.



Waterways Ireland has installed speed limit signs in some areas to inform of the potential danger to other users from the wake produced by excessive speed. Reduce your wake and give a wide berth to other water users even in open water.

Mooring and Harbour Hogging

Waterways Ireland provides an extensive number of public moorings along the navigations. In order to provide access to moorings in popular locations, limits have been set on the amount of time it is possible to moor at public moorings before moving the craft to new moorings. Each waterway has set different mooring time limits; on the Erne System 48 hours is the limit while on the Shannon Navigation, Shannon-Erne Waterway, Barrow Navigation, Grand Canal and Royal Canal a five day limit is in place.



Exceeding the time limits is referred to as Harbour Hogging and severely inconveniences other water users. If wishing to stay in a location longer than the time limit, owners are advised to seek a private mooring, or leave the mooring for the minimum waiting time before returning, in order to avoid a fine or other penalty.

When mooring leave maximum space for other boats. Only moor at pump-out stations when actively pumping out.

Jetties are primarily reserved for use by watercraft. In the event of limited mooring availability, anglers should defer to craft attempting to moor. Separate facilities are generally provided for anglers.

Registration

All craft with engines of more than 10bhp on the Erne System and 15bhp in the Republic of Ireland must be registered. Contact the Inspectorate of Navigation for information and a registration form. Return it and you will be sent a registration number and details about the navigation. The registration must be displayed on the craft in a prominent position. On the Shannon Navigation it is a label for display in the window while on the Erne System the registration number must be displayed conspicuously in 75mm high letters on either side of the boat.

On the Barrow Navigation, Grand Canal and Royal Canal boats must show a name or number and a valid permit from Waterways Ireland. Permits are required to enter and moor on these canals. They must be purchased in advance of travel and information on purchase points can be obtained from the Waterways Ireland Eastern Regional Office (see rear for contact details)

Wearing Lifejackets



It is a requirement under the bye-laws that no craft should leave a mooring without a suitable lifejacket for every adult and child on board. Waterways Ireland promotes the wearing of lifejackets by all users.

The Inspectorate of Navigation is happy to register craft, answer questions and provide information on the bye-laws.

On the Shannon Navigation contact
Inspector of Navigation
The Docks, Athlone, Co Westmeath
Tel no +353 (0)90 6494232
Fax no +353 (0)90 6494147

On the Erne System contact
Lough Erne Warden
Castle Lane, Portora, Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh
Tel no +44 (0)28 6632 2836

On the Barrow Navigation, Grand Canal and Royal Canal Contact
Waterways Ireland Eastern Regional Office
Floor 2 Block C, Ashtowngate, Navan Rd, Dublin 15
Tel no +353 (0)1 8680148
Fax no +353 (0)1 8383647

Waterways Ireland produces a number of publications on the waterways including, charts and guides to the navigations, activity and events guides as well as corporate publications. These are available by contacting Waterways Ireland at the address below.

Marketing and Communications
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20 Darling St, Enniskillen,
Co Fermanagh, BT74 7FB
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Waterways Ireland accepts no responsibility for any error omission, misinterpretation or changes which may occur following publication of this guide.

If requested this brochure can be made available in accessible formats.

Waterways Ireland is one of the six North/South Implementation Bodies established under the terms of the British Irish Agreement Act 1999. Waterways Ireland has responsibility for the management, maintenance, development and restoration of inland navigable waterways principally for recreational purposes. The waterways under the remit of the Body are the Barrow Navigation, the Erne System, the Grand Canal, the Lower Bann Navigation, the Royal Canal, the Shannon-Erne Waterway and the Shannon Navigation.

The Bye-laws and Their Implementation

Waterways Ireland has responsibility for the enforcement of the navigational rules—the bye-laws - on the navigations under its control. Six of the navigations have bye-laws while one, the Lower Bann, has a voluntary code. Waterways Ireland through its Inspectorate of Navigation and its staff, enforce the bye-laws and as such are authorised to board vessels, ask for and receive accurate information, impose fines and order the mooring or removal of vessels from the navigations.

Copies of the bye-laws on navigations in the Republic of Ireland are available from:
Government Publications Sale Office
Sun Alliance House, Molesworth St, Dublin 2
Tel no +353 (0)1 6476879
Fax no +353 (0)1 6476843 (Mail Order)
Web-site: www.irishstatutebook.ie

Copies of the bye-laws on the Erne System are printed on demand from:
The Stationary Office
Arthur St, Belfast BT1
Tel no +44 (0)28 9023 8451
Fax no +44 (0)28 9023 5401
Web-site: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

Good Boating Guide

Operating craft on Waterways Ireland's Navigations

