

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (EXCERPT)
Act 451 of 1994

324.80152 Towing or assisting person prohibited; exceptions; violation; fine; subsections (1) and (3) inapplicable under certain conditions; standards; rules; certification; information to be provided; specification of bodies of water for use in practice.

Sec. 80152.

(1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, a person shall not operate a vessel on the waters of this state while towing or otherwise assisting a person being towed unless both of the following conditions are met:

(a) A person capable of communicating to the vessel operator the condition and needs of the person being towed or assisted is on board the vessel and positioned to observe the person being towed or assisted.

(b) The person being towed is wearing the proper type I, type II, or type III personal flotation device, as applicable. The wearing of an inflatable personal flotation device does not satisfy this requirement.

(2) A person who violates subsection (1) is responsible for a state civil infraction and may be ordered to pay a civil fine of not more than \$100.00.

(3) A person shall not permit himself or herself to be towed or otherwise assisted by a vessel on the waters of this state unless he or she complies with the conditions listed in subsection (1).

(4) A person who violates subsection (3) who is 16 years of age or older is responsible for a state civil infraction and may be ordered to pay a civil fine of not more than \$100.00.

(5) Subsections (1) and (3) do not apply to any of the following:

(a) A person who operates or who is towed by a vessel used by a ski school in the giving of instructions or a vessel used in sanctioned ski tournaments, competitions, expositions, or trials if the vessel is equipped with a 170-degree wide-angle rearview mirror affixed in a manner that will permit the operator to observe the progress of the person being towed.

(b) A person being towed by a motorboat less than 16 feet in length that is actually operated by the person being towed if the vessel is constructed to be incapable of carrying the operator in or on the motorboat.

(c) A vessel operator or the person being towed if the vessel operator is towing a person preparing for a specific water ski tournament and if all of the following conditions are met:

(i) The vessel operator is certified as provided in subsection (6).

(ii) The person being towed is certified as provided in subsection (7).

(iii) Towing is conducted so that, on average, not more than 1 vessel approaches within 300 feet of the towing vessel during any 5-minute period.

(iv) The vessel is equipped with all of the following:

(A) A center-mounted tow pylon.

(B) A large clear rearview mirror capable of allowing the vessel operator to distinguish hand signals at a distance of 75 feet.

(C) Markings that identify the vessel as a vessel that is being operated in conformance with this subdivision.

(6) The department shall adopt standards for water ski tournament boat operation established by U.S.A. water ski in "Trained Boat Driver Program", April 1997, and by the American water ski association in "Drivers' Policy Manual". However, the department may promulgate rules providing for alternative standards under the administrative procedures act of 1969, 1969 PA 306, MCL 24.201 to 24.328. The department shall certify each individual who satisfies the standards described in this subsection as a tournament water ski vessel operator and issue proof of that certification to the individual.

(7) The department shall adopt standards for tournament water skiers established by the Michigan water ski association in "Guidelines for Training Permit Eligibility", proposed revision 125 of 1996. However, the department may promulgate rules providing for alternative standards under the administrative procedures act of 1969, 1969 PA 306, MCL 24.201 to 24.328. The department shall certify each individual who satisfies the standards described in this subsection as a tournament water skier and issue proof of that certification to the individual.

(8) The Michigan water ski association shall provide annually to the department and the Michigan sheriffs association both of the following:

(a) A list of the individuals whom the organization considers qualified for tournament water skiing.

(b) The names of not more than 3 bodies of water on which each of those individuals may be authorized to practice for tournament water skiing.

(9) The department shall specify the body or bodies of water upon which a water skier may practice upon each certificate issued under subsection (7).

History: Add. 1995, Act 58, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995 ;-- Am. 1999, Act 19, Imd. Eff. Apr. 30, 1999 ;-- Am. 2012, Act 58, Eff. Nov. 1, 2012
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