

Guidelines to Being a Good Boater

(Boater Etiquette)

- 1) **Do not crowd anglers that are fishing from shore.** We have to share our water with the public (those not in the tournament) and we need to keep a good relationship with them in order to keep having tournaments in North Dakota. Whenever possible please keep a distance of 100 feet away from them.
- 2) **Sharing the water with other club members during tournaments.** We fish lakes of all different sizes, but we still need to share the water with other club members when fishing a tournament. Nobody owns a shoreline but we certainly do not want members cutting each other off just to beat them to a rock or stump etc... When you want to move to a shoreline that is occupied by another boat you need to start off by creating some distance from each other. How does one figure this out? Simple, treat others the way you would want to be treated. (If you treat them like crap, don't get mad when they return the favor)
- 3) **Communication is key.** Talk to each other out there, especially when sharing a shoreline or spot. If you and another angler are working a shoreline towards each other notify one another as to whom will go on the outside when you pass each other. (If one of the two boater's was there first I recommend letting them stay to the inside during the pass – this isn't a rule just a recommendation)
- 4) **Make sure you have enough life jackets in the boat.** Even if you plan on fishing by yourself, there is a chance you will get paired with a non-boater. Play it safe and have an extra life jacket in the boat. You wouldn't want to get a fine from the Game and Fish department.
- 5) **Driving a boat safely.** We all want to get to that hot spot before someone else, if we didn't we wouldn't have 250 HP motors on the back of our boats. However, DON'T BE STUPID. Drive safely and not recklessly; be considerate of your non-boaters safety as well as the safety of the other boaters. I'm not saying you can't go fast just don't be pulling stupid moves to beat someone to a spot....it's not worth it.
- 6) **Be conscious of the weather.** Up here in North Dakota there is a saying "If you don't like the weather, wait 5 minutes because it will change". This is so true. Look at weather reports before driving to the lake and dress appropriately. If there is inclement weather on the way perhaps it would be a good idea to stay close to the ramp and not travel long distances in rough water conditions. If lightning is present, I recommend that you seek shelter and get off the water.
- 7) **Boating expenses.** All non-boaters are required to pay a minimum of \$25 to the boater to help pay for gas expense. This is a new club rule for 2014. The boater has the right to decline it if they wish. As a side note, if you are fishing a small lake or perhaps you don't use a lot of gas you shouldn't be asking for more than the minimum. Be a responsible adult and talk to your non-boater prior to take off and notify them if you plan on using a lot of gas. If an agreement can't be made between the boater and non-boater, the tournament directors will make a fair decision for you.
- 8) **Make it enjoyable.** Certainly the most important aspect of it all, make the day enjoyable. Whether you are fishing with a friend or with someone that you never fished with before make the day enjoyable. We all can learn from each other no matter how good you THINK you are. I suggest that you fish it like a team tournament and try to figure out what the fish are doing by working together. This will make for a great day on the water.