

HB 160 -- Watercraft Regulations

Co-Sponsors: Luetkemeyer, Hampton

This bill makes a number of changes relating to watercraft regulations. The bill:

- (1) Creates a definition for "racing shell" and "water skiing";
- (2) States that a penalty fee or cancellation may only be imposed upon a person who documented a vessel with the U. S. Coast Guard prior to August 28, 1994, if that person received at least 30 days' notice that his or her vessel is required to be registered;
- (3) Requires all watercraft to have one wearable personal flotation device for each person on board. Watercraft 16 feet or more in length must have at least one throwable personal flotation device on board. Sailboards, racing shells, racing canoes, racing kayaks, and rowing sculls are exempted from the requirement to carry any type of personal flotation device and kayaks are exempted from the requirement to carry a type IV personal flotation device. Mandatory use of personal flotation devices is required in watercraft under 18 feet in length between October 15 and March 15 in certain locations;
- (4) Authorizes the use of a urine sample to test for alcohol or drugs. The current boating law only authorizes the use of blood, breath, or saliva;
- (5) Clarifies that the displaying of a ski flag is optional when the watercraft is in the process of towing a person engaged in water skiing, tubing, or similar activity;
- (6) Establishes a night-time speed limit of 30 miles per hour on all waters of the state;
- (7) Prohibits vessels from operating within 100 feet of any other vessel, person in the water, dock, or pier at a speed in excess of the slow-no wake speed;
- (8) Authorizes the State Water Patrol to arrest persons on probable cause, anywhere in the state, for a criminal violation under investigation which occurred within the Water Patrol's jurisdiction;
- (9) Deletes the reference to 600 hours of instruction a Water Patrol officer must receive and replaces it with language referring to training pursuant to Chapter 590, RSMo; and

(10) Increases from \$200 to \$500 the amount of property damage sustained before a person is required to report a watercraft accident.