



2025 ASSEMBLY BILL 1033

February 9, 2026 - Introduced by Representative BROOKS, cosponsored by Senator FEYEN. Referred to Committee on State Affairs.

1 **AN ACT** *to renumber and amend* 30.69 (1) (b); *to amend* 30.69 (1) (a) (intro.),
2 30.69 (3) (d) and 30.74 (1) (a); *to create* 30.01 (1ag), 30.01 (1ah), 30.01 (6r) and
3 30.69 (3) (cm) of the statutes; **relating to:** the regulation of wakesurfing and
4 providing a penalty.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill regulates wakesurfing. The bill defines “wakesurfing” as surfing a motorboat’s wake, regardless of whether the person is being pulled by a tow rope attached to the motorboat that is producing the wake, or operating a motorboat in a manner that creates a wake that is, or is intended to be, surfed by another person.

Under current law, various regulations apply to water skiing, aquaplaning, or a similar activity, and under current law, wakesurfing likely falls under “aquaplaning” or a “similar activity.” The bill explicitly provides that aquaplaning includes wakesurfing and thereby applies the same safety regulations that apply to water skiing and aquaplaning to wakesurfing. These regulations include requiring an observer or a wide-angle mirror on the motorboat, restricting wakesurfing to between sunrise and sunset, prohibiting intoxicated wakesurfing, requiring a motorboat used for wakesurfing to stay more than 100 feet away from any occupied anchored boat, personal watercraft, or marked swimming area or public boat

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landing, and prohibiting a person engaged in wakesurfing from being within 100 feet, or allowing a tow rope to be within 100 feet, of a personal watercraft.

The bill generally prohibits a person from engaging in wakesurfing unless all of the following apply:

1. The motorboat is operated farther than 200 feet from a shoreline or dock, pier, boathouse, or other structure located completely or partly on the water.

2. The motorboat is operated farther than 200 feet from any person in the water or any occupied vessel.

3. Any person surfing on or across the wake of the motorboat or being towed on a board is wearing a personal flotation device prescribed by federal regulations.

The wakesurfing restrictions under the bill and the current law restrictions that the bill explicitly applies to wakesurfing do not apply to a wakesurfing tournament, competition, exhibition, or trial that is authorized by the Department of Natural Resources or a municipality and where adequate lighting is provided.

The bill applies the same penalties to wakesurfing that apply to water skiing violations under current law.

Current law requires DNR to establish a program of comprehensive courses on boating safety and operation and to issue certificates to persons 10 years of age or older successfully completing such courses. Current law requires DNR to prescribe the course content and the form of the certificate, but the bill adds an exception that the course must include education on wakesurfing and the proper use of and operation of motorboats used in wakesurfing.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 30.01 (1ag) of the statutes is created to read:

2 30.01 (**1ag**) “Aquaplane” includes the board upon which a person rides while
3 wakesurfing.

4 **SECTION 2.** 30.01 (1ah) of the statutes is created to read:

5 30.01 (**1ah**) “Aquaplaning” includes wakesurfing.

6 **SECTION 3.** 30.01 (6r) of the statutes is created to read:

7 30.01 (**6r**) “Wakesurfing” means the activity of any of the following:

8 (a) Surfing a motorboat’s wake, regardless of whether the person is being
9 pulled by a tow rope attached to the motorboat that is producing the wake.

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1 (b) Operating a motorboat in a manner that creates a wake that is, or is
2 intended to be, surfed by a person.

3 **SECTION 4.** 30.69 (1) (a) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

4 30.69 (1) (a) (intro.) Except as provided in ~~par. (b)~~ sub. (3m), no person may
5 operate a motorboat towing a person on water skis, aquaplane, or similar device
6 unless one of the following applies:

7 **SECTION 5.** 30.69 (1) (b) of the statutes is renumbered 30.69 (3m) and
8 amended to read:

9 30.69 (3m) COMPETITION EXCEPTION. ~~Paragraphs~~ Subsections (1) (a), (ag),
10 and (am) and (3) (cm) do not apply to duly authorized water ski or wakesurfing
11 tournaments, competitions, exhibitions, or trials therefor, where adequate lighting
12 is provided.

13 **SECTION 6.** 30.69 (3) (cm) of the statutes is created to read:

14 30.69 (3) (cm) No person may engage in wakesurfing unless all of the
15 following apply:

16 1. The motorboat used in wakesurfing is operated farther than 200 feet from
17 a shoreline or a dock, pier, boathouse, or other structure located completely or partly
18 on the body of water.

19 2. The motorboat used in wakesurfing is operated farther than 200 feet from
20 any person in the water or any occupied vessel.

21 3. The person surfing on or across the wake of the motorboat or being towed
22 on a board is wearing a personal flotation device prescribed by federal regulations.

23 **SECTION 7.** 30.69 (3) (d) of the statutes is amended to read:

24 30.69 (3) (d) Paragraphs (a) to ~~(e)~~ (cm) do not apply to pickup or drop areas

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1 that are marked with regulatory markers and that are open to operators of personal
2 watercraft and to persons and motorboats engaged in water skiing, wakesurfing, or
3 similar activity.

4 **SECTION 8.** 30.74 (1) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

5 30.74 (1) (a) The department shall establish a program of comprehensive
6 courses on boating safety and operation. These courses shall be offered in
7 cooperation with schools, including tribal schools, as defined in s. 115.001 (15m),
8 private clubs and organizations, and may be offered by the department in areas
9 where requested and where other sponsorship is unavailable. The department
10 shall issue certificates to persons 10 years of age or older successfully completing
11 such courses. The department shall prescribe the course content and the form of
12 the certificate, except that the course shall include education on wakesurfing and
13 the proper use of and operation of motorboats used in wakesurfing.

14

(END)