

STATEMENT OF REASONS

CHAPTER 22

WATERCRAFT REGULATION

W.S. § 41-13-218 empowers the Commission to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of Chapter 13, Watercraft, § 41-13-101 through § 41-13-220 and W.S. § 31-2-101.

The Commission promulgates changes to Chapter 22, Watercraft Regulation, to establish rules and regulations governing the use of watercraft and safety equipment requirements for watercraft operating in the state.

This regulation will become effective January 1, 2024, following action by the Commission in July, 2023. The current Chapter 22 regulation will remain in effect through the 2023 watercraft season. Following action by the Commission in July, the Department will have three (3) months to print and distribute the 2024-2025 Watercraft Regulations.

Section 2. The effective date of this regulation shall be January 1, 2024.

Section 3. The term “kill switch” is being replaced with “engine cut-off switch”, and “personal watercraft” is being modified for consistency with U. S. Coast Guard rules and national standards. The term “watercraft” has been modified to address any mechanical propulsion system and not be limited to only propeller or jet propulsion systems for watercraft. The term “watercraft of closed construction” is being defined since the term is used within this regulation. This definition was previously included in Section 5(f), but is more appropriately placed in the definitions section.

Section 4 edits have been provided for additional clarity to the reader.

Section 5. Edits have been made to this section (g), pertaining to fire extinguisher classifications to address a new standard classification system. Portable fire extinguishers older than twelve (12) years from the date of manufacture stamped on the container shall be considered expired and removed from service. In new subsection (h), new federal rules are requiring watercraft equipped with an engine cut-off switch to be in use while the watercraft is underway unless the main helm of the watercraft is within an enclosed cabin. The Department will undergo an educational campaign to assure watercraft operators are aware of these new rules.

Section 8. Edits to this section incorporate the change in terms from kill switch to engine cut-off switch.

Minor grammatical and formatting edits have been incorporated into this regulation which do not change the meaning of existing regulations.