



LAND & WATER
RESOURCES
DEPARTMENT

Chapter 71: Regulation of Icebound Inland Waters

May 20th, 2026

Kyle Minks – Watershed Manager, Watershed & Ecosystem Services Division



Background

- Adopted May 1991
- Updated July 2020
- Only County in WI with local ice ordinance

Purpose

- To promote public safety



Ordinance Challenges

- Changes in recreational vehicles
- Restrictions not uniform across all lakes
- No commercially available ATV flotation



Ch 71 Review

- Feb 5, 2025 - LWC Presentation
 - Sheriff's Office
 - LWRD
- Recommended public engagement to collect potential changes



Public Engagement

- Website development
- June 17, 2025 - Public information meeting
- Contacted local EMS/Fire Departments for comment
- September 3, 2025 - LWC meeting
 - Recommendation to work with Corporation Council to draft amendments
- Feb, 2026 - Amendments available for review
- March 4, 2026 - LWC meeting
 - Public comment on proposed amendments
 - Recommendation for amendments to be introduced to County Board



Proposed Changes

- Removal of the weight restrictions for motor vehicles
- Limit the type of vehicle that can be operated on icebound lakes to *Recreational Vehicles*
- Define *Recreational Vehicles* as all-terrain vehicle (ATV), utility-terrain vehicle (UTV), off-highway motorcycle, or snowmobile, registered by the State of WI or other state.
- Require all operators and passengers to wear personal floatation devices (PFD) while onboard a recreational vehicle.
- Define Personal Floatation Device (PFD) according to WI Administrative Code (NR5.001(11c) or “Wearable PFD”, NR 5001(17a)).
- Create uniformity across all icebound lakes in Dane County

Next Steps

- Ordinance Amendment introduced at June County Board meeting
- Committee reviews in June-July
- Tentative adoption by August 2026





THANK YOU

Courtesy Shan Bartus



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