

Personal Watercraft and Water Jet Devices

The official definition of personal watercraft (PWC) varies from state to state, but they are generally recognized as a vessel which uses an inboard motor powering a water jet pump as its primary source of motive power. The vessels are designed to be operated by a person sitting, standing or kneeling. PWC are manufactured by BRP (Sea-Doo®), Kawasaki (JET SKI®), and Yamaha (WaveRunner®).

Water jet devices (WJD) include Jetpaks™, Jetlevs™, Flyboards™, Jetovators™, Hydrolift™, and Jetsurf™, and other similar devices where individuals ride a hydro-powered apparatus above the surface of the water while connected to a PWC or other power source that supplies thrust to the WJD through a hose connecting the two devices. When the PWC and WJD devices are connected they are considered to be one vessel.

Who rides PWC?

Many people are surprised to learn that 99 percent of all PWC sold today are multi-passenger vessels, with three-seat models making up the vast majority of sales. These are purchased by families who want to spend a day together on the water and have found PWC to be affordable, approachable, easy to store, transport and maintain. The National Survey on Recreation and the Environment 2000, coordinated by the USDA Forest Service, reports that 20 million Americans enjoy PWC each year.

How many PWC are there?

The National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) reports that 39,400 PWC were sold in the U.S. in 2013. The majority of all PWC sold today include 4-stroke engines. NMMA estimates that there were approximately 1.1 million PWC in use in the U.S.

How is the safety record of PWC?

According to U.S. Coast Guard figures, over 99 percent of PWC are enjoyed accident-free every year.

More Information

[Boating Safety Tips](#)

[Carbon Monoxide](#)

[Personal Watercraft Industry Association](#)

Updated: February 2017