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News Release

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New Boat Rafting Policies to Go In Effect on Lake Shelbyville

Beginning on July 18, 2008, new policies will take effect regarding rafting of boats on Lake Shelbyville. This is part of a comprehensive effort to stem a trend of fatalities at Lake Shelbyville that has seen four people die in 13 months. This is not an attempt to limit recreation, but we must do everything in our power to turn this trend around and help insure that safety is the first part of fun.

Effective lake wide on July 18, 2008, and thereafter:

No more than five (5) boats will be permitted to be tied together.

No more than fifty (50) people will be allowed on any Raft of Boats.

No Raft of Boats will be permitted within one-hundred fifty (150) feet of another raft.

For purposes of these regulations, a raft of boats is defined as two (2) or more boats tied together.

Individuals may apply for a Special Use Permit for rafts of vessels up to a limit of twenty (20) vessels. The application must include the name, address, and phone number of the applicant; the proposed location of the raft; the number of vessels and the state registration numbers for each vessel included in the raft; and the name of the owner/operator of each vessel in the raft. Standard additional restrictions for this Special Use Permit will include the following:

No alcoholic beverages in "kegs" or on tap.

No public address/music systems.

US Coast Guard approved Type I, II, III, or V personal flotation devices must be worn at all times unless person is below deck or in an enclosed cabin.

No more than four (4) persons per vessel will be allowed for each additional vessel over five (5). For example seven (7) vessels in a raft would be limited to a total of fifty eight (58) persons in the raft.

Additional conditions may be required if warranted by the scope of the special use.

Special Use Permits will be available from the Lake Shelbyville Project Office, RR 4, Box 128B, Shelbyville, IL, 62565, phone 217-774-3951, fax 217-774-2014. If requested by mail please allow ten (10) business days for processing and mailing. Requests in person or by fax can normally be processed the same day. Failure of any member of the party to comply with the conditions of the permit can result in immediate revocation of the permit, and/or issuance of a citation to the violator and/or permit holder. Violation of the terms of the permit may be grounds for denying future permits to any owner/operator of vessels listed on the permit.

While the Corps of Engineers staff at Lake Shelbyville hopes these changes will be readily accepted, public safety is our top priority. Nobody has fun if we don't all come home safely.

The Corps would also like people to know that they have a free life jacket loaner program in place. Anyone may borrow a life jacket free of charge from numerous areas around the lake. Ask any Park Ranger for the locations of the "Trees of Life". We solicit suggestions that will help move this goal forward. For more information on the new regulations at Lake Shelbyville, contact Park Ranger Gary Shea at: (217) 774-3951 or email us at lakeshelbyville@mvs02.usace.army.mil.

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