



July 3, 2008

Ald. Tony Zielinski
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Boat Safety A Priority During Fireworks Event

Speed Restrictions Enforced As Part Of New Ordinance

Milwaukee's new boating ordinance saw success last Thursday with the Big Bang Summerfest opening fireworks display and will be enacted again tonight during the U.S. Bank fireworks display celebrating Independence Day. The ordinance restricts the speed of boats in the Milwaukee Harbor during special events such as fireworks displays and air shows. Boats are to slow to 5 mph and no wake rules apply two hours before, during and two hours after an event.

Ald. Tony Zielinski (District 14), co-sponsor of the ordinance said, "We were very pleased with how successfully the ordinance was enacted last week. People practiced patience and the water traffic was more coordinated."

Ald. Terry Witkowski (District 13), also a co-sponsor, said, "The ordinance, which seeks to prevent damage and injury when many boats in the harbor are tightly parked near one another to watch festivities, was a success and we look forward to another week of safe summer fireworks on the waterfront."

Wayne Happel, spokesperson for the Lake Michigan Yachting Association, the group that helped lobby for the legislation, said the ordinance reduces hazards to the hundreds of anchored boats affected by the wakes caused by boats racing back to launch ramps trying to be early in line to remove their boats from the water. "The potential for harm can be alleviated with a little patience and this ordinance inspires that patience," Ald. Zielinski said.

The Milwaukee Harbor police patrol will again announce the ordinance on marine radio prior to Thursday's event and notices to boaters will be distributed at launch ramps.

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