

**RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE USE OF BEAVER CREEK RESERVOIR AND THE ADJACENT AREAS  
FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES**

Adopted: June 1956

Revised: February 1981; January 1994; August 1995; November 2001; November 2009; May 2013; April 2024

**GENERAL PROVISIONS:**

1. **Departmental Jurisdiction.** Beaver Creek Reservoir, a primary water supply source for the City of Martinsville, and certain areas adjacent to the Reservoir are under direct control and supervision of the Water Resources Department.
2. **Designated Recreation Areas.** The water surface of the Reservoir and approximately 20 acres of adjacent land area are available to the general public for recreation purposes, subject to these rules and regulations.
3. **Types of Recreational Privileges.** Recreational activities shall be generally classified as picnicking, fishing, boating and hiking.
4. **Hours of Operation.** All activities shall be restricted to the period each day from sunrise until sunset, unless special permission is granted otherwise. The city reserves the right to modify these hours as may be deemed to be in the best interest of the city.
5. **Access.** Entrances to the water surface and recreation areas shall be controlled and limited to the gated entrance on Boat Ramp Drive. The designated access shall be strictly observed by the public. Vehicles parked on Reservoir premises after designated hours may be towed at owners expense.
6. **Prohibited Acts.** No activity shall be allowed that would endanger the reservoir impoundment, contaminate the water, pollute the watershed, or in any other way be detrimental to the public interest. Specifically, no person shall:
  - a. Swim, wade or bathe in the reservoir.
  - b. Allow a pet or domestic animal to enter the water or run at large in the recreation areas.
  - c. Enter the area with fireworks, nor discharge same while there.
  - d. Engage in any commercial activity within the area, except pursuant to a specific contract with the City.
  - e. Post, distribute or display private notices or advertisements, except those deemed necessary for the convenience and guidance of the public using the reservoir area for recreational purposes.
  - f. Operate a boat in any manner so as to constitute a menace or hazard.
  - g. Place in the reservoir any boat, trailer or bait container that has been in other water bodies within the previous week, or that has been in other water bodies within three weeks but not within the previous week unless first inspected and approved by the Lake Warden, in order to prevent the introduction of zebra mussels.
  - h. Possess or consume alcohol within the area.
  - i. Commit lewd or licentious acts or use profane language.
  - j. Feed fowl.
7. **Suspension of Recreational Privileges.** By order of the City Manager or designated agent, recreational privileges may be suspended or discontinued in part or in full and for any length of time required to preserve the safety of the water supply, to abate hazardous conditions or for other appropriate reasons.
8. **Exemptions.** City Manager or his designated agent may make exemptions to these rules and regulations as may be deemed to be in the best interest of the city.

## ENFORCEMENT OF REGULATIONS

1. **Responsibility.** Enforcement of these regulations shall be the primary responsibility of an officer of the City designated as the Lake Warden.
2. **Posting of Regulations.** These regulations shall be posted in a conspicuous place(s) at the Reservoir and shall otherwise be made available to all persons entering the area.
3. **Fees.** All fees required by these regulations shall be collected and accounted for by the Lake Warden.
4. **Denial of Admission.** The Lake Warden is empowered to revoke the recreation privileges described herein and/or to deny admission to any person who violates these regulations. All law enforcement situations will be fulfilled by either Game Warden or Henry County Sheriff's Department.

## PICNICKING

1. **Location.** Picnicking activities shall be permitted only in designated areas.
2. **Fires.** Fires shall be allowed only in designated picnic areas and shall be laid only in the cooking grills provided or in privately owned grills, or otherwise to strictly avoid uncontrolled conflagration.
3. **Garbage.** All garbage, rubbish and trash resulting from picnicking shall be deposited in receptacles provided.

## FISHING

1. **Licensure.** Persons fishing the Reservoir must be in compliance with all Commonwealth of Virginia game and fish laws and must have in their possession valid state licenses. No other fees or permits shall be required.
2. **Where Allowed.** Fishing shall be allowed from boats, from the shore and from established fishing piers.
3. **Sale of Fish.** Fish taken from the Reservoir may not be sold commercially nor bartered.

## BOATING

1. **Permits Required.** Any person desiring to place a boat upon the Reservoir, either for regular or temporary use, shall pay a fee and secure a permit from the Lake Warden.
2. **Permit Types, Terms and Fees.** All permits shall be valid only during the calendar year of issuance and fees shall not be prorated. A permit may be transferred to successive owners of a boat.
  - a. **Annual:** An annual permit may be issued to a boat to be placed on the Reservoir during normal hours of operation upon the payment of \$25.00 per year.
  - b. **Daily:** A one-day permit may be issued to a boat to be placed on the Reservoir during normal hours of operation upon the payment of \$5.00 per day.
  - c. *Disabled, Active Duty and Retired Military: All Permit fees shall be waived for Disabled, Active Duty and Retired Veterans with appropriate documentation.*
3. **General Requirements.** Unless otherwise specifically provided herein, all boats must be equipped and operate in accordance with Virginia Boating Laws and Regulations. Permits will be issued only to boats of a substantial type and structure as determined by the Lake Warden.
  - a. **Capacity.** Limited to two people unless a higher capacity or weight limit is specifically stated on the boat.

- b. Juveniles. No boat shall be operated by a person under sixteen years of age. Persons under sixteen years of age may enter and be passengers in a boat only if accompanied by an adult.
  - c. Operating Near Spillways. No boat shall be taken into restricted areas adjoining the spillways and/or intake tower, or in any other area marked by signs as restricted. No boat shall be tied, anchored or moored to the intake tower or its support cable.
  - d. Passing. When two boats approach each other on the same course, the operator of each shall keep to his right (starboard), passing the other boat to his left (portside). Boats without power shall at all times have the right-of-way over power boats. No boat shall cross the bow of another boat within a distance of 50 yards.
  - e. Influence of Alcohol. No person under the influence of alcohol shall operate or be a passenger in a boat on the Reservoir at any time.
  - f. Ride the Gunwales. No person operating a boat shall allow any person to ride or sit on the gunwales or on the deck of the bow of the boat while underway.
  - g. Speed and Reckless Navigation. An operator of a boat shall at all times navigate in a careful and prudent manner, at a rate of speed and in such a way as not to endanger the property or physical well-being of any other person.
  - h. Accidents. The operator of any boat involved in a collision or other accident resulting in damage to property and/or injury or death of any person shall immediately stop the boat at the scene of the accident and shall give his name, address and permit number to the other parties involved; shall render reasonable assistance to any injured person; and shall immediately report the matter to the Lake Warden prior to leaving the Reservoir area.
  - i. All boaters should be existing the water and hour before sunset.
4. **Equipment.** All boats shall be equipped with the following:
- a. Life Preservers. All boats shall be equipped with one U.S. Coast Guard approved wearable personal flotation device for each person aboard. In addition, all boats shall be equipped with one throwable personal flotation device.
  - b. Pails for Sanitary Purposes. Each boat shall be equipped with a pail or other suitable device to be used only for sanitary purposes.
  - c. Bailing Equipment. Each boat shall be equipped with an efficient pumping device or bailing bucket.
  - d. Oars. Each boat shall be equipped with one or more oars or paddles.
5. **Power Boats.** All boats equipped with a motor shall be specially regulated as follows:
- a. The use of gasoline powered motors and the presence of gasoline in containers on the Reservoir shall be prohibited, except by the Lake Warden or other officials during emergencies or enforcement actions.
  - b. Battery powered trolling motors are permitted.
6. **Sailboats.** Permits may be issued to sailboats of small or medium size that are determined by the Lake Warden to be safe and of substantial construction. No person may operate or be a passenger aboard a sailboat unless wearing a U.S. Coast Guard approved life preserver.
7. **Canoes and Kayaks.** Permits may be issued to canoes or kayaks that are determined by the Lake Warden to be safe and of substantial construction. No person may operate or be a passenger in a canoe or kayak unless wearing a U.S. Coast Guard approved life preserver.
- a. Waiver of Age Limit. For the purposes of training or organized excursions, the Lake Warden may authorize the operation of canoes or kayaks by persons under the age of sixteen, and without an adult aboard, when such persons are representing bona fide youth organizations (such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, YMCA) and when such persons are under the immediate supervision of a recognized adult leader.
8. **Inflatable Boats.** Permits may be issued to inflatable boats complying with the following requirements. Rafts and floats are not included.

- a. Air Compartments. Must have a minimum of four air compartments.
- b. Bottom. Must have a solid bottom.
- c. Capacity. Limited to two people unless a higher capacity is specifically stated on the boat.