



Definition: a vessel used for pleasure, recreation or daily living

Last summer LOBA received several reports from members who had been asked by the OPP Marine Patrol to provide proof of ownership/vessel license during a routine vessel check. In a number of cases, the boater was surprised and said that they had never been asked for this documentation before, and in some cases, they did not have the required document. LOBA decided to make inquiries to help clarify the regulations.

A Pleasure Craft Licence is a document with a unique licence number for a pleasure craft. The number serves as identification for the vessel and allows search and rescue personnel to access important information in an emergency. At this time, no fee is required to get this licence, although that may change.

Sergeant Darcy Jibb of the Bracebridge OPP Detachment advised us that the requirement that all vessels with an engine that produces greater than 9.9 hp be licensed, have the license number affixed to the hull of the vessel at the bow and that the operator carry proof of the vessel license with up-to-date owner name and address; is a long-standing regulation. However, previously, it was seldom enforced because the boat registration system was a paper file located in Barrie and officers could not easily verify the information. Digitization of the boat registration data has enabled the Marine Patrol to include proof of ownership in their on-water spot checks. "Think about it in the same way that you would your car, and make sure you have your proof of ownership on board", says Sgt. Jibb. He notes that a photocopy of the documentation is permitted, and even

recommended. The fine for not having a copy of the license on board, operating an unlicensed vessel, or failing to transfer the license into the new owner's name is \$305.

It is the responsibility of the new owner of a vessel to apply for the Pleasure Craft Licence. For the many boaters on the Muskoka Lakes who have older boats with no record of their purchase or transfer in ownership, Transport Canada has instructions on how to register your boat. To that end, the following is a summary of Transport Canada requirements and how to register your boat so that you will be prepared for a spot check next summer. Currently, there is no fee to get this licence.

"Think about it in the same way that you would your car, and make sure you have your proof of ownership on board"

You can apply for a Pleasure Craft Licence online or by mail by going to tc.canada.ca/en/marine-transportation/marine-safety/licensing-pleasure-craft to access the forms. You will need the following documents:

- The completed application form
- A signed photocopy of a valid piece of government-issued identification for each owner whose name appears on the pleasure craft license (both sides)
- A copy of the bill of sale or other proof of ownership (see below)
- A current full side-view colour photograph of the pleasure craft.

If you do not have a bill of sale/purchase agreement for the boat, you can provide other proof of ownership: such as a statutory declaration; will or bequest; separation or divorce agreement; or court judgement.

After you receive your Pleasure Craft Licence, carry the license (or a photocopy) on board the vessel at all times and display the number of both sides of your boat's bow in block characters, at least 7.5cm high and in a contrasting colour to the bow.

Currently, a Pleasure Craft Licence that was issued or updated after 2010 is valid for 10 years. At the end of that period, you must renew your licence. If you change your name, address, or particulars of the pleasure craft after you obtain a Pleasure Craft Licence, you must update your licence.

For any questions about the Pleasure Craft Licensing program, please call the Boating Safety Infoline at **1-800-267-6687** or by e-mail at obs-bsn@tc.gc.ca.

Transport Canada's proposed changes

Transport Canada is proposing changes to the Pleasure Craft Licensing process as follows:

- Bringing grandfathered Pleasure Craft Licenses (with no expiry) into a five-year validity period.
- Reducing the ten-year validity period for licenses to five years. Upon applying for a new, renewal or updated license, the validity will be reduced from ten to five years.
- Expanding the applications of the Small Vessel Regulations to include: all pleasure craft equipped with motors of 10 hp or more, including personal watercraft, which are principally maintained or operated in Canada, and; all pleasure craft (including all power-driven and sail-alone vessels) above 6 metres in length, with the exception of human-powered (e.g., kayak, canoe, dragon boats).
- Reducing the timeframe for owners to notify of a name or address change from 90 to 30 days and specify 30 days for the buyer to notify of a sale or transfer of a vessel.
- Allowing for easier cancellation of a Pleasure Craft Licence. This gives Transport Canada the ability of cancel a license if: the holder of a lifetime PCL fails to apply; a PCL holder fails to renew a PCL, or; a PCL holder wishes to remove their pleasure craft from service.
- A \$15 fee to process an application to obtain a new, renew, transfer, or duplicate a Personal Craft Licence.

LOBA will let our members know when/if these proposed changes are approved.

Have a safe 2021 boating season. ©