



GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
LANSING



DANIEL EICHINGER  
DIRECTOR

### Procedures for Permanent Local Watercraft Control

Local units of government that believe that a special local watercraft control (LWC) is needed on waters subject to their jurisdiction shall follow the procedures established in [MCL 324.80110](#) through [324.80112](#). Those procedures are detailed below. Local Watercraft Control is state terminology. When a local unit of government adopts a LWC they may use the term ordinance. The local unit of government initiates the process by submitting a resolution to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The DNR shall investigate the need for special regulations for the use of vessel and other contrivances on the waters of the state to assure compatibility of uses and to protect public safety. Submitting a resolution does not guarantee approval of a LWC.

- 1) When a local unit of government believes a regulation is needed for the use of vessels on waters within their jurisdiction, they may submit a resolution for a LWC to the DNR Law Enforcement Division (LED).
  - a) The resolution shall be approved by a majority of the governing body of the local unit of government following a public hearing on the resolution.
    - i) The hearing must be specific on the resolution and not part of their regular meetings.
  - b) The resolution and hearing minutes shall be submitted to the DNR LED.
- 2) Once the request and resolution are received, the DNR will initiate an investigation and inquiry as directed in [MCL 324.80110](#).
- 3) Upon completion of the investigation and inquiry, the DNR will prepare a preliminary report that includes the findings of the investigation and a preliminary recommendation as to whether special rules are needed for the body of water, and submit a copy of the preliminary report to the local unit of government.
- 4) The DNR will work with the local unit of government to schedule a public hearing in the vicinity of the body of water to gather public input.
  - a) The public hearing will be scheduled and advertised at least 10 days (typically 30 days) prior to the hearing.
  - b) The DNR shall provide notice of the public hearing made in a newspaper of general circulation in the area where the water body is located.
  - c) It is recommended the local unit of government provide notice of the public hearing through any and all media and advertising platforms they have available.
- 5) The DNR will facilitate the public hearing.
  - a) At the public hearing, interested persons shall be afforded an opportunity to present their views on the preliminary report and the need for special rules, either orally or in writing.
  - b) The DNR will accept written comments for 30 days after the date of the public hearing.

- 6) Within 90 days after the public hearing, if the DNR determines there is a need for a LWC, the DNR will propose a LWC to the local unit of government.
  - a) The proposed LWC becomes valid only after the following conditions are met.
    - i) The local unit of government adopts the LWC in its entirety at a public meeting.
      - A. The wording used in the local unit of government's ordinance shall be identical to the proposed LWC recommended by the DNR.
    - ii) The local unit of government notifies the DNR of the adoption.
      - A. Notification to the DNR shall include all the following:
        - 1) A copy of minutes from the public meeting showing the adoption.
        - 2) Proof of publication in a locally circulated newspaper. The proof of publication must show the date and the name of the newspaper.
          - A. The page directly from the newspaper, or
          - B. A photocopy of the page from the newspaper
    - b) The conditions in 6) a) must be completed within 60 days from the date the DNR submits the proposed LWC to the local unit of government.
      - i) If the local unit of government fails to notify the DNR within 60 days, the proposed LWC is considered disapproved.
  - 7) If the DNR determines there is not a need for a LWC, the DNR shall notify the local unit of government and provide the specific reasons for the denial.
    - a) The local unit of government may appeal to the Director of the DNR.
      - A. The Director shall make the final decision.
  - 8) Other responsibilities of the local unit of government.
    - a) The boundaries of the area described in the LWC shall be marked with signs and/or with buoys and maintained by the local unit of government.
      - i) The local unit of government is responsible for the purchase, placement, maintenance and removal of all signs and buoys.
      - ii) All buoys must be placed as provided in a permit [Application for Permit to Place Buoys/Beacons in Michigan Water {PR9203}](#) issued by the DNR and be in conformance with the [State Uniform Waterway Marking System](#).
      - iii) Buoys shall not be placed in a commercial shipping channel.
    - b) Any state, county or local law enforcement officer having jurisdiction over the controlled area can enforce the LWC or ordinance.
      - i) A LWC or ordinance is only enforceable when clearly and properly marked.
    - c) It is recommended the local unit of government post signs at any public launches, marinas and beaches educating boaters of the LWC or ordinance.
    - d) It is recommended the local unit of government post information on their website and social media platforms educating boaters of the LWC or ordinance.
  - 9) A LWC or ordinance can only be requested for waters within the jurisdictional boundaries of a local unit of government.

10) If a body of water is within multiple jurisdictions, each local unit of government shall follow this process to request a restriction within their jurisdiction.

11) Local units of government can email their requests to [DNR-LED-RecSafety@michigan.gov](mailto:DNR-LED-RecSafety@michigan.gov) or mail them to:

DNR-LED  
P.O. Box 30031  
Lansing, MI 48909  
Attn: Boating Law Administrator

Submitting an application and resolution does not guarantee the approval of a LWC.