

Camping

Camping at designated camping sites only, is the rule for most public lands. Contact the managing agency for regulations. If you choose to camp elsewhere along the river, you should have permission of the private land owner in advance.

Watch for biting insects, poisonous plants and snakes. They can ruin a trip. Have a first-aid kit on board.

Weather

Monitor the local weather forecast before you begin your journey and throughout your trip. In the Midwest, storms may emerge abruptly. These storms are often accompanied by strong winds that can easily capsize a small craft. Lightning, heavy rain or hail can turn a pleasant trip into disaster. Watch the sky and be aware of your surroundings for signs of inclement weather. Carry foul weather gear for unexpected storms.

High winds create very hazardous conditions and it is best to exit the river as soon as possible. Facing downstream in a crosswind can be dangerous. Always keep your boat straight into or away from the wind (parallel with the wind) as you head toward the shore.

Carry a portable radio or weather radio and tune it to the National Weather Service for up-to-date forecasts.

Beware of travel on a rising river which often results in large quantities of floating debris that can cause serious boat damage.

Emergencies

Emergency numbers for each county are listed on the following sheet, SHEET L, and county boundaries are designated on the charts. The county sheriff's office will contact the proper authorities to deal with the emergency.

File a float plan - let a reliable person know where you are going, when and where you plan on departing and arriving, your route and other pertinent information that will enable someone to find you. We never plan on accidents but they do happen. Filing and adhering to a float plan will help if emergency personnel need to locate you.

Administer first aid to accident victims immediately and then call or send for help.

Boaters are advised to carry a marine radio and cell phone or satellite phone for emergency communication with the local Sheriff's office or other emergency response agencies and be familiar with these phone numbers. Cell coverage may not be 100% in rural areas.

Help Stop Zebra Mussels

The zebra mussel poses a multibillion-dollar threat to North America's industrial, agricultural, and municipal water supplies. First discovered in 1988 in the Great Lakes, this invader has spread throughout the Mississippi and Ohio River basins in just 10 years. Public assistance in reporting zebra mussel sightings at new locations is essential in preventing its spread.

Zebra mussels look like small clams with a yellowish or brownish "D" shaped shell. They usually have alternating dark and light stripes. Zebra mussels are relatively small, with adults ranging from 1/4 to 1 1/2 inches long. Zebra mussels usually grow in clusters. They are the only freshwater mollusk that can firmly attach to objects. They are commonly found on rocks, dock pilings, boat hulls, and water intake pipes.

Zebra mussel juveniles, called veligers, are microscopic and invisible to the naked eye. You can prevent the spread of zebra mussels by routinely decontaminating your boat and equipment by power washing with water heated to 140- degrees Fahrenheit or by allowing everything to completely dry before using in another body of water. Drain water from your motor, live well, bilge and transom wells before leaving the recreation area. Empty bait buckets in land based receptacles and do not take bait from one body of water to another.

If you find a zebra mussel, note the date and precise location where the mussel was found. Take the mussel with you and store in rubbing alcohol. Immediately contact the nearest state wildlife department.

For more information please visit these websites:
www.100thmeridian.org
www.protectyourwaters.net
www.anstaskforce.gov

