

## §13056. Certificate of number, identification numbers and validation stickers

### 1. Prohibition.

[PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §361 (RP); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

**1-A. Operating without certificate of number.** Except as provided in paragraph A, a person may not operate or give permission to operate a motorboat requiring a certificate of number without a current certificate of number or a current temporary certificate of number. Only the certificate of number or temporary certificate of number as issued by the commissioner is valid. Except as provided in subsection 12, paragraph A, a facsimile or copy of the certificate is not valid.

A. The certificate of number for a watercraft less than 26 feet in length and leased or rented to another for the latter's noncommercial use may be retained on shore by the owner of the watercraft or the owner's representative at the place where the watercraft departs or returns to the possession of the owner or the owner's representative, as long as the person leasing or renting the watercraft has a copy of the lease or rental agreement that shows the watercraft number thereon and the period of time for which the watercraft is leased or rented and that is signed by the owner or the owner's representative. [PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §361 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

B. The following penalties apply to violations of this subsection.

(1) A person who violates this subsection commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$200 nor more than \$500 may be adjudged.

(2) A person who violates this subsection after having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period commits a Class E crime. [PL 2009, c. 213, Pt. OO, §13 (AMD).]

[PL 2021, c. 130, §1 (AMD).]

**1-B. Operating without identification number and validation stickers.** A person may not operate or give permission to operate a motorboat without the identification number and validation stickers, assigned by the commissioner and authorized by this chapter, displayed on each side of the bow in accordance with subsection 12, paragraphs A and B or section 13059, subsection 4.

A. A person who violates this subsection commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$500 may be adjudged. [PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §361 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

B. A person who violates this subsection after having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period commits a Class E crime. [PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §361 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

[PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §361 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

**2. Motorboats requiring.** Except as provided in this subsection, the owner of a motorboat, including an airmobile, used on the waters of the State as the state of principal use shall obtain a certificate of number for the motorboat from the commissioner. No certificate of number may be issued unless the owner submits proof that the watercraft excise tax, assessed under Title 36, chapter 112, has been paid or that the boat is exempt from the watercraft excise tax. The following motorboats are exempt from this subsection:

A. A watercraft that has or is required to have a valid marine document as a watercraft of the United States; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

B. A motorboat already covered by a current certificate of number issued under a federally approved numbering system of another state or a federal law, as long as the number so issued is displayed on the motorboat and as long as the motorboat has not been within this State for a period

in excess of 60 consecutive days after the state of principal use has been changed; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

C. Military or public watercraft, except recreational type watercraft of the United States; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

D. A motorboat whose owner is the United States, a state or subdivision thereof that is used for governmental purposes and is clearly identifiable as such; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

E. A ship's lifeboat; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

F. A motorboat from a country other than the United States, as long as the motorboat has not been within this State for a period in excess of 60 consecutive days; [PL 2013, c. 408, §23 (AMD).]

G. A motorboat used exclusively for racing purposes that displays on its hull in a prominent manner a valid boat number issued by a recognized racing association; and [PL 2013, c. 408, §24 (AMD).]

H. A motorboat participating in an event as permitted by section 13061. [PL 2013, c. 408, §25 (NEW).]

[PL 2013, c. 408, §§23-25 (AMD).]

**3. Other watercraft may be numbered.** Nothing in this section prohibits the numbering of any watercraft upon the request of the owner. The owner shall comply with all applicable requirements of this chapter if the owner chooses to number a watercraft.

[PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

**4. Application.** The owner of a motorboat requiring or of a watercraft for which the owner wishes to request a certificate of number shall make application to the commissioner on forms approved by the commissioner. The application must show the legal residence of the applicant and the place where the watercraft is situated.

[PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

**5. Issuance.** Upon receipt of the approved application with the proper fee, the commissioner shall enter the application upon the office records and issue the applicant a pocket-sized certificate of number stating:

A. The number assigned to the motorboat; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

B. Its description; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

C. The name and address of the owner; and [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

D. Such other information as the commissioner deems appropriate. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

The holder of any certificate of number issued under this chapter may obtain a duplicate validation sticker from the commissioner upon application and payment of the fee set forth in subsection 8.

[PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

**6. Certificate of number; term.** A certificate of number is issued to the owner of a watercraft or a dealer for a specific calendar year and is valid through December 31st of the year for which it was issued.

[PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

**7. Numbers permanent.** A number once awarded under this chapter to a motorboat remains with that boat until the boat is destroyed, abandoned, permanently removed or no longer principally used in

this State, except that numbers that have been inactive for at least 7 years may be reissued by the division.

[PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

**8. Fees.** The fees for each original or renewal certificate of number with 2 validation stickers are set out in this subsection.

A. For a watercraft requiring or whose owner requests a certificate of number and that is equipped with a motor having a manufacturer's horsepower rating of:

(1) Ten horsepower or less, prior to January 1, 2020 the fee is \$25 for operating on inland waters of the State and \$15 for operating only on tidal waters of the State. Beginning January 1, 2020, the fee under this subparagraph is \$30 for operating on inland waters of the State and \$15 for operating only on tidal waters of the State;

(2) Greater than 10 horsepower but not more than 50 horsepower, prior to January 1, 2020 the fee is \$30 for operating on inland waters of the State and \$20 for operating only on tidal waters of the State. Beginning January 1, 2020, the fee under this subparagraph is \$35 for operating on inland waters of the State and \$20 for operating only on tidal waters of the State; and

(3) Greater than 50 horsepower but not more than 115 horsepower, prior to January 1, 2020 the fee is \$36 for operating on inland waters of the State and \$26 for operating only on tidal waters of the State. Beginning January 1, 2020, the fee under this subparagraph is \$41 for operating on inland waters of the State and \$26 for operating only on tidal waters of the State. [PL 2019, c. 264, §3 (AMD).]

B. Prior to January 1, 2020, for a personal watercraft requiring or whose owner requests a certificate of number and watercraft equipped with a motor having a manufacturer's horsepower rating of 115 horsepower or greater, the fee is \$44 for operating on inland waters of the State and \$34 for operating only on tidal waters of the State. Beginning January 1, 2020, the fee under this paragraph is \$49 for operating on inland waters of the State and \$34 for operating only on tidal waters of the State. [PL 2019, c. 264, §4 (AMD).]

C. For a duplicate certificate of number, the fee is \$1. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

D. For a duplicate validation sticker (per set), the fee is \$1. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

E. For a certificate of number issued with transfer of ownership authorized in subsection 10, the fee is \$2. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

F. [PL 2005, c. 12, Pt. III, §38 (RP).]

Validation stickers are nontransferable.

A motorboat that is used for governmental purposes and is owned and operated in the State by the Federal Government, the State or a political subdivision of the State is exempt from registration fees. [PL 2019, c. 264, §§3, 4 (AMD); PL 2019, c. 452, §10 (AMD).]

**9. Renewal.** The owner may renew the owner's certificate of number at expiration by stating the old number in the owner's application and paying the fee prescribed in subsection 8. The fee is the same fee the owner would pay for the original issuance. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

**10. Transfer of ownership.** Whoever transfers ownership of a motorboat for which a certificate of number has already been issued under this chapter and applies for a certificate of number for another motorboat is entitled to a new certificate of number upon payment of a transfer fee of \$4 as set forth in

subsection 8, paragraph E, provided the applicant returns to the commissioner the old certificate of number properly signed and executed, showing that ownership of the motorboat has been transferred. [PL 2005, c. 12, Pt. III, §38 (AMD).]

**11. New ownership.** If there is a change of ownership of a motorboat for which a certificate of number has previously been issued under this chapter, the new owner shall apply for a new certificate of number and set forth the original boat number in the application. The new owner shall pay the regular fee for the particular motorboat involved and is not entitled to the special transfer fee set forth in subsection 10.

A. [PL 2005, c. 12, Pt. III, §39 (RP).]  
[PL 2005, c. 12, Pt. III, §39 (AMD).]

**12. Requirements.** The following provisions establish requirements for certificates of number, identification numbers and validation stickers.

A. The operator shall have the certificate of number available for inspection on the motorboat for which it was issued whenever the motorboat is in operation. The operator may have the certificate of number available for inspection in electronic form on the motorboat for which it was issued. [PL 2021, c. 130, §2 (AMD).]

B. A person may not operate or give permission to operate a motorboat unless the identification number and validation stickers assigned by the commissioner and authorized by this chapter are displayed on each side of the bow of the boat in the following manner:

(1) The identification numbers must be painted or permanently attached to the bow and be of a color that is in contrast to the color of the background so as to provide the highest degree of visibility, i.e., dark numbers on a light background or vice versa, and be plainly visible;

(2) The identification number must be displayed in 3 parts. The prefix, which is the initial letters ME, designating the State of Maine, must be separated by a hyphen or space equal to the width of a letter, other than the letter "I," from the numerals that follow it. The suffix, which consists of the ending letter or letters which appear after the numerals, must be likewise separated from the numerals;

(3) The identification number must be displayed to read from left to right, of good proportion, with vertical block character capital letters and Arabic numerals, all of which must be not less than 3 inches in height and maintained in a legible condition at all times;

(4) No number other than the assigned boat number may be displayed on the bow of such a motorboat; and

(5) The validation sticker, as issued by the division, must be displayed approximately 3 inches behind the last letter of the identification number and on a level with the number on both sides of the bow viz.: ME-123-A. [PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §361 (AMD); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

C. The owner of a certificate of number terminated or invalidated under subsection 13 shall return it within 10 days of the termination or invalidation. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

D. The owner of a watercraft that has been issued a certificate of number shall notify the commissioner in writing within 10 days of:

(1) The transfer of all or any part of the owner's interest, other than the creation of a security interest, in the watercraft covered by the certificate;

(2) The permanent removal of the watercraft from the State;

(3) The destruction or abandonment of the watercraft;

- (4) The theft or recovery of the watercraft; or
  - (5) Any change in the owner's address. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]
- E. Upon sale or transfer of ownership of a registered watercraft, the owner or dealer shall remove and destroy any validation stickers on the craft. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]
- F. The person whose name appears on the certificate of number as the owner of a watercraft shall remove the number and validation stickers from the craft when:
- (1) The watercraft is documented;
  - (2) The watercraft is no longer used principally in the State;
  - (3) The application for a certificate of number contains false or fraudulent statements or information; or
  - (4) The fees for issuance of a certificate of number are not paid. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]
- [PL 2021, c. 130, §2 (AMD).]

**12-A. Violation of requirements; penalty.** The following penalties apply to violations of subsection 12.

- A. A person who violates subsection 12 commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$500 may be adjudged. [PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §361 (AMD); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]
  - B. A person who violates subsection 12 after having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period commits a Class E crime. [PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §361 (AMD); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]
- [PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §361 (AMD); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

**13. Termination of certificate of number.** Under any of the following conditions, the certificate of number issued by the commissioner is terminated or invalidated:

- A. Transfer of the watercraft; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]
- B. Documentation of the watercraft; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]
- C. Change in state of principal use of the watercraft; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]
- D. Permanent removal of the watercraft from the State; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]
- E. Abandonment or destruction of the watercraft; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]
- F. False or fraudulent information on the application for the certificate of number; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]
- G. Failure to pay the required fee for the certificate of number; or [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]
- H. Involuntary loss of interest in the watercraft due to legal process. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

The transfer of a partial interest that does not affect the original owner's right to operate the watercraft does not terminate or invalidate the certificate of number.

[PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

RR 2003, c. 1, §9 (COR). RR 2003, c. 1, §10 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 414, §A2 (NEW). PL 2003, c. 414, §D7 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 655, §B361 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 655, §B422 (AFF). PL 2005, c. 12, §§III38,39 (AMD). PL 2005, c. 397, §§A55,56 (AFF). PL 2007, c. 44, §§2, 3 (AMD). PL 2009, c. 213, Pt. OO, §§13-15 (AMD). PL 2013, c. 408, §§23-25 (AMD). PL 2019, c. 264, §§3, 4 (AMD). PL 2019, c. 452, §10 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 130, §§1, 2 (AMD).

The State of Maine claims a copyright in its codified statutes. If you intend to republish this material, we require that you include the following disclaimer in your publication:

*All copyrights and other rights to statutory text are reserved by the State of Maine. The text included in this publication reflects changes made through the First Regular and First Special Session of the 131st Maine Legislature and is current through November 1, 2023. The text is subject to change without notice. It is a version that has not been officially certified by the Secretary of State. Refer to the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated and supplements for certified text.*

The Office of the Revisor of Statutes also requests that you send us one copy of any statutory publication you may produce. Our goal is not to restrict publishing activity, but to keep track of who is publishing what, to identify any needless duplication and to preserve the State's copyright rights.

PLEASE NOTE: The Revisor's Office cannot perform research for or provide legal advice or interpretation of Maine law to the public. If you need legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.