

Canadian Coast Guard

Your safety in Historic Canals and Locks

When visiting one of Canada's historic canals, your vessel must be equipped with good mooring lines and have securely fastened floating fenders in sufficient numbers and size.

Boaters should be aware that there are a number of activities prohibited while in a canal. These are not limited to, but include:



- excessive noise between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.;
- fishing within 10 m of a lock or approach wharf or fishing from a bridge that passes over a navigation channel;
- diving, jumping, scuba-diving, swimming in a navigation channel or within 40 m of a lock gate or a dam;
- water-skiing or other towing activities while in a navigation channel or within 100 m of a lock structure;
- mooring a vessel to any navigation aid.

TIP: Boaters should know that procedures for using the St. Lawrence Seaway locks differ from those outlined here - consult the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority's Pleasure Craft Guide. To obtain your copy, write:

The Information Office
St. Lawrence Seaway Authority,
202 Pitt Street,
Cornwall, ON
K6J 3P7

Internet: [The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway System](#)

Safe passage through a lock

Regulations are in place to ensure the safety of you and other vessels while entering and exiting locks. These rules require you to:

- obey posted speed limits and watch your wake, especially when approaching a lock (wake limits have precedence over speed limits);
- keep the channel near lock gates clear so that vessels departing or entering the lock can do so safely;
- only tie up at the blue line if you wish passage through the lock (the painted blue line above and below most locks is a designated temporary tie-up area for boats);
- obey Lock Staff directing you into the lock (at a number of lock stations, a green traffic light is your signal to proceed);
- enter the lock slowly and have crew members posted at the bow and stern of the boat with mooring lines ready to use;
- if the lock is equipped with drop cables, loop vessel lines around them once safely positioned inside the lock. **DO NOT TIE VESSEL LINES TO THE DROP CABLES**; if the lock is equipped with floating docks you may be directed to tie-up to one inside the lock chamber;
- turn off the engine and all open-flame appliances (including pilot lights);
- do not smoke;
- leave the bilge blower on;
- tend vessel lines carefully during the lockage;
- never leave bow or stern lines unattended (here's a tip: looping a line around a deck cleat may provide extra leverage).

When the lock operation is completed and lock gates are opened, wait for staff to direct you to restart your engine. Make sure all vessel lines are returned to the boat and exit slowly. Exit in order if necessary. **REMEMBER** to watch out for winds, currents and other boats!

See For [Further Information](#) on how to contact the individual Historic Canal offices.



Safety around Dams

Boaters must be very cautious near canal dams and waste weirs where currents and undertows can be extremely dangerous. It is unsafe and illegal to dive, jump, scuba-dive, swim or bathe within 40m (130') of a dam.