

## Boat Shelters, Hoists, or Lifts Exemption Checklist



Certain activities in navigable waters are exempt from needing a permit under [Chapter 30](#). Use this checklist to determine if your project qualifies for an exemption.

Your proposed project is eligible if it meets **all** the following conditions:

- **Federal and State Threatened and Endangered Species:** This exemption does not address threatened and endangered species. Applicants are required to comply with Wisconsin's Endangered Species Law (s. 29.604, Wis. Stats.) and the Federal Endangered Species Act. To determine if the project is in compliance, visit the [NHI Public Portal](#), and enter the project area to generate an Endangered Resources (ER) Preliminary Assessment. Read the ER Preliminary Assessment carefully to determine follow-up steps, if needed.
- **Waterway Designations:** Except for designations under [s. 30.275, Wis. Stats.](#), the structure may not be placed in any waterway designated by federal, state, or local government as having outstanding scenic values.

### RIPARIAN/PLACEMENT

- A boat shelter shall comply with all applicable provisions of any municipal ordinances.
- A boat shelter may not interfere with public rights and may not have unreasonable adverse effects on aquatic habitat.
- A boat shelter shall allow the free movement of water underneath and may not cause formation of land on the bed of the waterway.
- A boat shelter may not interfere with the right of other riparian owners.
- A riparian landowner may place no more than two boat shelters or boat slips for the first 100 feet of shoreline, and one for each additional 50 feet of shoreline footage in common ownership.
- The boat shelter, boat hoist, or boat lift must be in the riparian zone of interest and may be placed and maintained only by a riparian landowner and/or in lakes or flowages. (An authorized agent or contractor may do the work on behalf of the riparian owner)
  - [Determination of riparian zones](#)
- The boat shelter, boat hoist or boat lift is placed adjacent to a pier, wharf, or shoreline. A boat shelter shall be connected to adjacent uplands by a pier.
- Permanent and seasonal boat shelters shall be placed as close together as practicable at a single location adjacent to each property. Adjacent lots in common ownership shall be considered a single property.

### DESIGN

- A boat shelter – a structure designed to cover a boat slip or place for a watercraft - must be seasonal. This means that any roof, supports, or sides must be removed from the water between December 1 and April 1 annually.
- Unless a boat shelter needs to be longer or wider to protect a boat that has a wooden hull or is designated as a boat with significant historic or cultural value, as determined by the state, county, or local historical society, a boat shelter placed or permitted after September 1, 1991, may not exceed an outside dimension of 12 feet wide by 24 feet long on waters under 1,000 acres in size and may not exceed an outside dimension of 14 feet wide by 24 feet long on waters 1000 acres and larger in size. The burden of proving that a boat shelter was placed prior to September 1, 1991, shall be on the owner. A seasonal boat shelter originally placed prior to September 1, 1991, and which does not comply with these dimensions may not be expanded in size.
- A boat shelter may include a roof which shall be pitched not less than one foot nor more than 2.5 feet from the roof peak to the bottom of the eaves. Only the size and number of vertical components required to support the watercraft and any roof are permitted. Storage facilities may only be included above the eaves of a boat shelter.

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- A boat shelter may include temporary sides to protect a boat that has a wooden hull or is designated as a boat with significant historic or cultural value, as determined by the state, county, or local historical society. The sides must be comprised of flexible material with a minimum openness factor of 5%. The temporary sides must be placed no less than 36 inches above the water surface.
- A boat shelter may include only a single sign necessary to identify the property and may only include lighting essential for safety and mooring. A boat shelter may not be visually intrusive as viewed against the shoreline.