

Walleye News and Fact File

A More Secure Lake Erie

Our nation's war on terrorism will become more apparent to Lake Erie boaters this season. In its continuing efforts to protect the North Coast, the Coast Guard will be enlisting the support of the boating community to report any suspicious act - while at the same time restricting access to parts of the lake offshore from critical shoreline infrastructure.

Three security zones have been established on Lake Erie to protect the three nuclear power plants; Fermi (Monroe, MI), Davis Besse (Port Clinton, OH) and Perry (Perry, OH) on the lake's southern shore. Although the exact configuration of each zone varies, boaters are prohibited from entering an area approximately 1000 yards offshore from the plant property. Security zones have been designed to provide the necessary protection to plants - yet with as small a footprint as possible so as not to minimize the area eliminated for recreation/fishing or create an unnecessary navigational hazard to boaters. Although future plans call for the placement of buoy system, to clearly mark these zones, boaters are fully responsible for being aware of the location of these zones, entering them into their navigation charts, and staying clear. Permission to enter a security zone for any extraordinary purpose must be requested in advance from the appropriate Coast Guard Captain of the Port (Toledo for Fermi and Davis Besse, and Cleveland for Perry).

Although the Coast Guard pledges to practice patience in enforcing these zones while boaters become accustomed to their existence, the potential penalties for violating a security zone are stiff. Under current law, violators can be fined \$ 1 0,000, imprisoned for 10 years, and have their vessels seized.

The intent in establishing these zones is to provide a buffer that will give early warning of any intruders attempting to approach the plant by water, reaching the beach and gaining access to a nuclear power plant. The zones also provide a measure of security for a plant's offshore water intakes. Anyone following the news over the past nine months is fully aware that our nation's nuclear energy industry has been implicated as a primary target of Al-Quaida and other international terrorist organizations.

Boaters are also being asked to assist our national security effort by keeping their eyes open while on the lake, and report anything suspicious or any unusual activity that they may observe. Project Coast Watch, with roots going back to the World War 11 Civil Defense effort, has been launched by the Coast Guard throughout the Great Lakes to expand the gathering of essential terrorism intelligence. In several instances since 9/11, citizens have observed and reported invaluable leads to authorities concerning potential terrorist activities around the lakes.

For information concerning both security zones and Coast Watch, contact the Coast Guard Captain of the Port in Toledo (419/418-6040) or Cleveland (216/937-0128).

Security Zone Coordinates

Fermi	Davis Besse	Perry
41-58.5'N 83-14.8'W	41-58.2'N 83-13.7'W	41.56.7'N 83-14.8'W
41-56.7'N 83-15.3'W	41-36.3'N 83-09.0'W	41-37.0'N 83-03.9'W
41-35.9'N 83-02.5'W	41-35.4'N 83-03.7'W	41-48.2'N 81-8.8'W
41-48.7'N 81-8.2'W	41-48.7'N 81-8.5'W	41-48.2'N 81-8.5'W

Lake Erie's "Walk-On" Fishing Charters Offer Cost-Effective Fun

Many people know that Ohio's Lake Erie playground is famous for its island-hopping fun and world-class roller coasters. But the area also offers a cost-effective family activity that receives far less attention – walk-on charter boat fishing.

Geared to those wanting to spend a fun day on the lake without spending a lot of money, walk-on charter boats are a great way to experience Lake Erie sportfishing for the first time. Averaging \$25 to \$30 a person, the charter provides several hours of fishing in well-scouted fishing areas; all necessary bait; a bucket of ice for preserving your catch; and lots of tips on how to reel in the big ones.

Getting on board:

Hooking up with one of these fun boats, which holds from 20-30 people, is easy. Visit one of the many Internet sites, such as www.fishlakeerie.com and www.lake-erie.com or contact any of the region's visitors bureaus. Most walk-on charters run twice a day, early in the morning and again around 2:30 in the afternoon. Reservations are not necessary for most walk-ons, but they are welcomed.

What to bring:

All you have to do is supply your own fishing pole, tackle and an Ohio fishing license. A one-day license costs \$7, and an annual license is \$15. It's a good idea to pack along a small cooler of sodas and snacks. Remember that the sun is more intense out on the water so include a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen in your daypack. If you are prone to motion sickness, don't forget to take whatever remedy works best for you.

Cleaning your fish:

For many people, one of the less enjoyable sides of fishing is the cleaning. Well, don't worry because once back on shore anglers can choose from several local fish "houses" where, for a modest fee, catches can be quickly cleaned and filleted.

Including your snacks, a fishing adventure this fall can cost less than \$40 – a bargain by today's entertainment standards. Best of all, you'll have some nice fresh, delicious fish fillets to show for your "work."

Numerous fishing services from Ashtabula to Toledo offer daily walk-on charters to pursue smallmouth bass, walleye or yellow perch, depending on the season. An alternative – and more personalized fishing trip – to consider is scheduling with a private

charter boat captain. Most of these boats accommodate four-to-six people.

Charter captains will be plying Lake Erie's waters through October – and beyond if the weather allows – providing their customers with some great late season fishing. Fisheries experts with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources say September and October should be great months for yellow perch and smallmouth. The walleye fishing is also expected to pick up as the fish move in closer to shore, feeding on numerous shad and baitfish.

Summer may be waning, but the fishing on Ohio's northcoast is still hot. Now is a great time to find out first hand why national fishing magazines rank Lake Erie as one of the country's finest fishing holes.

Reprinted courtesy of ODNR from the September/October ODNR Outdoor Notebook. Laura Jones, author.

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