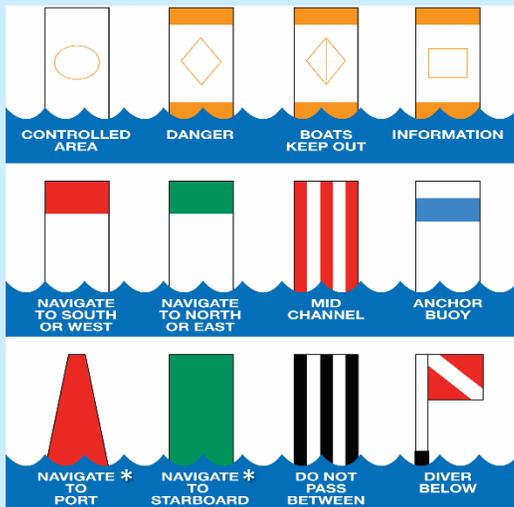


For your safety, recognize and obey all buoys and markers.



*\*When traveling downstream.*

## BUOYS

Just as our highways are marked and signed, our waterways use a buoy system to mark and sign them. The two most common buoys seen on our waterways are the green can buoy and the red nun buoy these are known as navigation aids.

When traveling upstream, the green buoy is on the port (left) side of the channel, and the red buoy is on the starboard (right) side.

When heading downstream, they will be opposite. Also, use caution because not all areas are marked and the buoys may drift off location. The river is “ever-changing.”

There are many other buoys and aids to navigation you will encounter on our nations waterways. You will learn more about them if you take a boating class.

## RIVER HAZARDS

Be *DAM CONSCIOUS* and know your location on the river with regard to each dam and lock.

Keep a lookout for “DANGER DAM” and “NO BOATING” signs. All water immediately above and below each dam are DANGER areas.

DO NOT approach the DAM! Currents may draw your boat into or under the dam.

Approach the lock directly in line with the lock, at a reduced “no wake” speed.

It is recommended that boaters use navigation charts that provide valuable information on the location of the dams and other structures in the river.

## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Engines should be shut down during the lockage.
- If the lock is in use, find a safe place to wait that is well out of the path of the exiting boats. Do not anchor in the channel or tie off to a navigation buoy.
- In a crowded lock, you may have to tie up to another boat.
- Do not cut in front of towboats to be first to the lock. Even though you may appear to have arrived first, a tow has the right-of-way and the lockmaster will decide who has priority.

## LOCKAGE PRIORITY

The Secretary of the Army prioritized passage through the locks, as follows:

1. Vessels owned by the United States government.
2. Commercial passenger vessels.
3. Commercial cargo vessels.
4. Commercial fishing boats.
5. Recreation boats.



US Army Corps  
of Engineers.

FOR SITE SPECIFIC LOCKING  
PROCEDURES PLEASE GO TO:  
<http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Navigation-Locks/>

BUILDING STRONG®

## INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operates and maintains numerous locks and dams along its waterways. The lock operator has full authority over the boats in the lock and those approaching the lock. On days when traffic is heavy at the lock, your patience is very much appreciated. The lock crew will get you locked through, safely and in turn. Please refer to the Lockage Priority section in this brochure. Try to allow plenty of time for your trip.



## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

1. Recognize and obey all buoys and markers as shown in this brochure. Stay between the red and green buoys. They mark the river's navigable channels.
2. Safety is the prime consideration when locking any type of vessel through the lock. Always wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (life jacket).
3. Always travel at a slow NO WAKE speed on entering and leaving the lock.

4. Most lock operators prefer contact be made by marine radio on the appropriate channel. Some locks are equipped with small boat alarms, normally found in the ladder recess, along each guide wall. If available, boaters may call the lock using cell phones.

5. Once you have made contact with lock personnel you will be instructed by traffic lights, air horn signals or marine radio. This will change from lock to lock or District to District.

6. After making contact with the lock operator, wait for their signal to enter the lock.

7. Recreational craft going upstream or downstream should stay past the end of the lock walls until signal to enter is received.

8. If other craft are about to leave the lock, and are headed in your direction, you must let the craft exit the lock and safely pass before you enter the lock.

9. Approach lock along the bank, directly in line with the lock, and at a reduced speed.

10. Always carry at least two mooring lines onboard, each a minimum of 75-feet long. Most locks require handling a line. Do not tie to ladders or mooring post along the wall. Never tie a mooring line; always tend your line and be prepared to cast off your mooring line quickly in case of an emergency.

11. Make sure there is a mooring ring or similar device on your boat to which a mooring line can be wrapped around and tended.

12. Use fenders to prevent damage to your boat and the lock walls.

13. Turbulent water is created during lockage. Boat passengers should always remain seated. Don't leave the boat motor running during locking.

## TRAFFIC SIGNALS, AIR HORNS & STROBE LIGHTING



*Signals at each Corps lock vary, but these are the most common. Check lock web sites for proper procedures.*

14. Wait for the lock operator's signal before releasing your mooring line to leave the lock. Travel at a slow NO WAKE speed until you clear the long wall. Fast speeds endanger your own boat, other crafts and the lock gates.

15. Know your location on the river with regard to proximity of each lock and dam. You can buy navigation charts for each District at the Government Printing Office bookstore:

<https://bookstore.gpo.gov/agency/919>

16. Do not approach the spillway or dam. Currents may draw your boat into or under the dam.

17. Carelessness can result in loss of boats and LIVES. Be safe!

18. Lock specific information and guidance can be found at:

<http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Navigation-Locks/>

