

### **Lake Michigan Water Trail Access Information and Safety Awareness**

Access to the Lake Michigan Water Trail for sports such as kayaking, canoeing, windsurfing, stand-up paddling and other non-motorized, self- or wind-propelled board or paddle sports is allowed year-round at 11 locations. These locations are Leone Beach, the Wilson Ave. ramp at Montrose Beach, the south end of Montrose Beach, Montrose Harbor, Diversey Harbor north, Diversey Harbor south, 12<sup>th</sup> Street Beach, 63<sup>rd</sup> Street Beach, Jackson Park Inner Harbor, Rainbow Beach and Calumet Beach. These locations are clearly marked with signs that say “Lake Michigan Water Trail Launch Site”.

During the Chicago swim season (Memorial Day to Labor Day) beach locations should have additional buoys in the water to designate the approved “access path” out to the Lake Michigan Water Trail.

***The purpose of designating these locations is to allow access to the Lake Michigan Water Trail for experienced and well-equipped users or for less-experienced users accompanied by an experienced group or guide. Throughout the City of Chicago, the Lake Michigan Water Trail is at all times outside any designated swim area.***

PLEASE NOTE: THESE LOCATIONS ARE FOR **NON-MOTORIZED** WATER SPORT ACTIVITIES ONLY. YOU MAY NOT LAUNCH **ANY** MOTORIZED BOAT OR APPARATUS FROM ANY BEACH SITE UNLESS OTHERWISE DESIGNATED. LAKE MICHIGAN WATER TRAIL ACCESS SITES LOCATED IN THE CHICAGO HARBOR SYSTEM ARE MANAGED SEPARATELY.

Here are some tips for keeping dry and steering clear of danger:

- Always wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket.
- Obtain the knowledge, skills and ability necessary for your paddle sport.
- Always paddle with a group. Three participants is a recommended minimum.
- Know how to self-rescue.
- File a float plan with friends and family.
- Bring appropriate safety, rescue, and navigational aids, and more than adequate food, water, and extra protective clothing. Do not wear cotton!
- Pick an activity level that matches your ability.
- Monitor your physical and emotional condition. Watch for fatigue and illness.
- Know and follow all local, state and federal laws.
- Be visible - wear bright colors so others can see you between waves or in the fog.
- Carry a bright light, flares, and whistle to signal your position.
- Take a boating safety class offered by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

SEE MORE LAKE MICHIGAN WATER TRAIL AND PADDLE SPORT SAFETY INFORMATION  
AT:

<http://www.openlands.org>

<http://www.illinoispaddling.org/>

<http://www.caska.org/safety.htm>