

<b>WINNEBAGO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE NEWS MEDIA RELEASE</b>		<b>NEWS RELEASE NUMBER 2013-022</b>
<b>INFORMATION: CHANGE IN RESTRICTIONS FOR RIVERS IN WINNEBAGO COUNTY</b>		
<b>DATE: 06/27/13</b>	<b>TIME: 2:00 PM</b>	<b>PAGE 1 OF 1</b>

**NARRATIVE:**

The Winnebago County Sheriff's Office continues to work with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) in monitoring safe conditions on the Rock River. Due to the safety cable normally in place above the Fordam Dam being down, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources has designated the area of the Rock River from the State Street Bridge south to the Fordam Dam a restricted boating area. **This means that these waters are closed for use and any activity is prohibited.** Public boat launches immediately north of the State Street Bridge have been posted notifying boaters of this restriction as well.

The missing cable creates conditions significantly hazardous for navigation from State Street to the Fordam Dam on the Rock River. The conditions also make it treacherous for emergency response personnel who are called upon to respond and rescue persons involved in boating mishaps. Once the safety cable is reinstalled, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources will lift this restriction.

The Sheriff's Department has been monitoring water levels and water is still out of the banks in some areas of Northern Winnebago County. Sheriff Richard A. Meyers is announcing the continuation of the "**NO WAKE ZONE**" for the Rock River within Winnebago County north of the State Street Bridge, due to the high water and hazardous river conditions. The Rock River is still out of its banks in many areas, and boaters are encouraged to avoid using the river for recreational purposes during this time as the presence of debris in the river creates hazardous conditions, which are difficult to detect. Additionally, the increased water flow creates a much faster current than what has been experienced over the past few months with the lower water levels. These conditions increase the likelihood of problems for boaters, which results in exposing first responders to dangerous conditions should a rescue situation develop.

The Sheriff only has the authority to implement and eliminate a "No Wake" order, the authority for opening or closing the river rests with the Department of Natural Resources. Any questions or comments concerning the opening or closing of the river should be directed to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Region 1 Office in Sterling at (815) 625-0086.

As a reminder, recreational users of the rivers should exercise caution when using the rivers.

**For current river conditions, and any further updates, contact the Sheriff's Office at (815) 319-6300, or the Rock River information telephone line at (815) 316-8888. You may also visit the Sheriff's Department's website at [www.winnebago sheriff.com](http://www.winnebago sheriff.com)**

**SHERIFF RICHARD A. MEYERS**

SUPERVISOR AUTHORIZING RELEASE

DATE: 06/27/13 TIME: 1400 HOURS