AN ACT to renumber and amend 30.69 (1) (a); to amend 30.69 (1) (b) and 30.69 (1) (c); and to create 30.69 (1) (a) 2. of the statutes; relating to: restrictions applicable to persons operating a motorboat towing a person on water skis.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Under current law, no person may operate a motorboat towing a person on water skis, aquaplane, or similar device unless a competent person, other than the operator, is in the motorboat to observe the progress of the person being towed. This bill provides that this requirement doesn’t apply if the motorboat is equipped with a mirror that provides the operator with a wide field of vision to the rear.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. 30.69 (1) (a) of the statutes is renumbered 30.69 (1) (a) (intro.) and amended to read:

30.69 (1) (a) (intro.) Except as provided in par. (b), no person may operate a motorboat towing a person on water skis, aquaplane, or similar device unless there one of the following applies:
1. There is in the boat motorboat a competent person in addition to the operator in a position to observe the progress of the person being towed.

   (ag) An observer under par. (a) 1. shall be considered competent if that person can in fact observe the person being towed and relay any signals to the operator. This observer requirement does not apply to motorboats classified as Class A motorboats by the department actually operated by the persons being towed and so constructed as to be incapable of carrying the operator in or on the motorboat.

   (am) No person may engage in water skiing, aquaplaning or similar activity, at any time from sunset to sunrise. This restriction of the hours of water skiing does not prevent restrictions of the hours of water skiing between sunrise and sunset by local ordinances enacted pursuant to s. 30.77 (3).

SECTION 2. 30.69 (1) (a) 2. of the statutes is created to read:

30.69 (1) (a) 2. The motorboat is equipped with a mirror that provides the operator with a wide field of vision to the rear.

SECTION 3. 30.69 (1) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

30.69 (1) (b) Paragraphs (a), (ag), and (am) do not apply to duly authorized water ski tournaments, competitions, exhibitions, or trials therefor, where adequate lighting is provided.

SECTION 4. 30.69 (1) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

30.69 (1) (c) In addition to complying with par. pars. (a), (ag), and (am), no person may operate a personal watercraft that is towing a person who is on water skis, an aquaplane, or similar device unless the personal watercraft is designed to seat at least 3 persons.