

CHAPTER 38  
BOAT REGISTRATION AND NUMBERING  
[Prior to 12/31/86, Conservation Commission[290] Ch 28]

**571—38.1(462A) Emblem placed.** The current registration emblem shall be placed four inches toward the stern of the registration number on each side of the bow of the vessel. On the port side the emblem will be four inches behind the registration number, and on the starboard side four inches in front of the registration number.

On sailboats, when the registration number is placed on the mast as permitted by 571—paragraph 38.19(1)“a,” the registration emblem shall be placed four inches below the registration number on each side of the mast.

All newly registered boats or boats with renewed registrations will receive emblems with the registration certificate.

This rule shall apply to all registered vessels, including those being used by dealers in accordance with Iowa Code chapter 462A.

The requirements of this chapter pertaining to the display of registration decals, registration numbers and passenger capacity numbers do not apply to vessels that are exempt pursuant to Iowa Code section 462A.6A.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 462A.5 and 462A.6A.

**571—38.2 to 38.5** Reserved.

**571—38.6(462A) Procedure for application for boat registration number—content.**

**38.6(1) Application.** The following information shall be submitted on DNR Forms 542-8067 and 542-2000:

- a. Name and address of owner.
- b. Present number (if any).
- c. Hull material (wood, steel, aluminum, plastic, other).
- d. Type of propulsion (outboard, inboard, other).
- e. Length and width of boat.
- f. Make and model year. For home-built vessels, the year that construction is started shall serve as the model year.
- g. Statement as to use.
- h. Signature.
- i. From whom purchased (name and address).

**38.6(2) Vessels not previously registered.** If a person is making application for a boat registration number for a used vessel that has never before been registered or titled and the person does not have any satisfactory proof of ownership, the county recorder may issue a certificate of number for the used vessel if the applicant has provided the recorder with a signed and notarized affidavit, on DNR Form 542-8074, stating that the person making the application is the lawful owner of the vessel.

**571—38.7 to 38.9** Reserved.

**571—38.10(462A) Information on certificate.** The certificate of number (DNR Form 542-0540) shall show the following:

1. Name and address of boat owner.
2. Number issued.
3. Expiration date.
4. Make, or model, or type of boat.
5. Hull material (wood, steel, aluminum, plastic, other).
6. Length and width of vessel.
7. Propulsion (inboard, outboard, other).
8. Maximum capacity rating (number of persons).

9. Decal audit number.
10. If vessel is required to be bonded, date of bonding.

**571—38.11(462A) Registration applied for card.**

**38.11(1) Procedure for registration applied for card—content.** The following information shall be furnished, required and stated on the registration applied for card (DNR Form 542-0538):

- a. Name and address of dealer.
- b. Make and model of vessel.
- c. Hull identification (or serial) number of vessel.
- d. Present registration number (if any).
- e. Date of purchase.
- f. Name and address of purchaser.

The above information shall be legibly printed on the card by the dealer selling the vessel.

**38.11(2) Use.** The registration applied for card may be used only after an application for registration has been made to the county recorder. Placing a completed application for registration and required fee in the mail to the recorder shall constitute making an application.

**38.11(3) Placement on vessel.** The registration applied for card shall be placed on the forward half of the vessel in a position so as to be clearly visible at all times and shall be maintained in a legible manner.

**38.11(4) Proof of purchase.** The operator of any vessel displaying a registration applied for card shall carry and display upon request of any peace officer a valid bill of sale for said vessel.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 462A.49.

**571—38.12(462A) Vessels in storage.** If the owner of a currently registered vessel places the vessel in storage, the owner shall return the registration certificate to the county recorder with an affidavit on DNR Form 542-8048. The county recorder shall notify the department of each registered vessel placed in storage. When the owner of a stored vessel desires to renew the vessel's registration, the owner shall apply to the county recorder and pay the applicable fees.

**571—38.13 and 38.14** Reserved.

**571—38.15(462A) Numbering pattern to be used.**

**38.15(1) Identification number.** The identification numbers awarded under the Iowa system shall consist of three parts. The first part shall consist of the letters "IA" indicating this state. The second part shall consist of not more than four Arabic numerals. The third part shall consist of not more than two letters.

**38.15(2) Example.** The parts shall be separated by a hyphen or an equivalent space. As example:  
IA-2500-C IA-9875-EA IA 7560 ZZ

**38.15(3) Unusable letters.** Since the letters "I," "O," and "Q" may be mistaken for Arabic numerals, they shall not be used in the suffix.

**571—38.16 to 38.18** Reserved.

**571—38.19(462A) Display of number on vessel, as to size, block type and contrasting color.**

**38.19(1) Application of number.** The identification number awarded to any vessel under the Iowa numbering system shall be displayed thereon by being:

- a. Painted on, or attached to, each side of the bow (i.e., the forward half) of the vessel; read from left to right, and in such position as to provide maximum visibility.
- b. In block characters of good proportion not less than three inches in height.
- c. Of a color which will contrast with the color of the background (i.e., dark numbers on a light background, or light numbers on a dark background) and so maintained as to be clearly visible and legible.

*d.* On vessels propelled by sail only, the numbers may be placed in such a position as to provide maximum visibility, on each side of the bow or deck or on each side of the boom or mast. In all cases except placement on the mast, the numbers shall read from left to right and comply with “*b*” and “*c*” of this subrule. In placement on the mast the number shall read from top to bottom and comply with “*b*” and “*c*” of this subrule.

**38.19(2) Restriction.** No other number shall be carried on the bow of the vessel.

**38.19(3) Purchase of number.** Purchase and attachment of these letters and number is the responsibility of the boat owner.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 462A.5.

**571—38.20(462A) Special certificates for boat dealers or manufacturers.** A manufacturer or dealer may operate an unregistered vessel for purposes of transporting, testing, demonstrating, or selling the vessel after first obtaining a special certificate from the department. An application for a special certificate shall be submitted on DNR Form 542-0488. A manufacturer or dealer operating a vessel pursuant to the issuance of a special certificate shall file an annual report on DNR Form 542-8062.

**571—38.21(462A) Boat dealer’s annual report of vessels with expired registrations.** Each boat dealer shall file, before May 5 of each year, an annual report on DNR Form 542-8063 listing all used vessels held by the dealer for sale or trade and for which the registration fee for the current year has not been paid.

**571—38.22 to 38.24** Reserved.

**571—38.25(462A) Number designating passenger capacity.** The passenger capacity of boats as assigned by the commission shall be painted or attached to the starboard side (the right side while in boat and facing the bow) of boat within nine inches of transom in three-inch or larger block numbers in a color contrasting to the boat color so that the numbers ride above the water line when boat is fully loaded.

**571—38.26(462A) Monthly reports by county recorders.** Each county recorder shall submit a monthly report to the department on DNR Form 542-0418 listing all boats registered in that county in the previous month. The applicable fees shall accompany the monthly report.

**571—38.27 to 38.29** Reserved.

**571—38.30(462A) Boats for hire.** Each commercial boat operator will be required to number the boat or boats used to operate for hire with block characters of good proportion not less than three inches in height, in the following manner.

Upon making application for a number for commercially operated vessels the following type number will be assigned:

Example IA-1555-E

To identify this vessel as a commercial vessel it will be required that the commercial operator affix an X as the final letter of the suffix:

Example IA-1555-EX

When a commercial operator transfers a vessel to another individual, unless it be to another commercial operator, it will be the operator’s responsibility to remove the second letter from the suffix. (The letter X).

*Transferred to*

*Commercial*

IA-1555-XX

IA-1555-EX

*Private Individual*

IA-1555-X

IA-1555-E

*Transferred to**Private*

IA-1555-A

IA-1555-D

*Commercial Operator*

IA-1555-AX

IA-1555-DX

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