

*Planning a cruise to Canada this summer on Lake Ontario?*

*By Bill Towner*

*Here are some helpful hints for 2026 !*

*Crossing the Border to Canada;*

• Immediately Upon Docking in Canada, you must in person, report to an official Telephone Reporting Centre.

Only the boat Master/Captain may leave the boat to do this, and until they have been assigned a clearance number by the CBSA Border Agent, everyone else must remain on board your vessel.

At the telephone reporting site, follow the instructions posted on location to contact the CBSA's Telephone Reporting Centre and request clearance to enter Canada.

Toll free: 1-888-226-7277

You must present the following to the border services officer upon entry:

\*full name, date of birth and citizenship

\*length and purpose of the stay in Canada  
destination

\*acceptable identification (Passport Information and Number for each person on board).

\*visa information, if applicable

All passengers must declare:

any goods being brought into Canada, including restricted and prohibited goods  
currency or monetary instruments totaling CAN\$10,000 or more.

Restricted and prohibited goods include, but are not limited to:

firearms and weapons, food, plants, animals and related products

explosives, fireworks, ammunition, cannabis (marijuana) in any form – without a permit,  
including any oils containing THC or cannabidiol

Undeclared restricted and prohibited goods found on board will be seized and you could  
face criminal charges.

Listing of Canadian Check in Locations and CBSA Offices;

<https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/travel-voyage/gbi-rgf-eng.html>

- **Entering back into the US** you want to register your identification information ahead of time on the CBP DTOPS system, then call in immediately when you first dock at any US location on the Lake.

<https://dtops.cbp.dhs.gov/main/#%20>

- \* All boats 30 Feet and larger must have a current 2026 US Border Patrol Cruising Sticker displayed near your cabin entry (order yours now for 2026) !!

The US CPB Officer WILL ask you the number assigned to the sticker when you check back into the US by your cell phone upon entering.

### ***Boating Safety;***

- AIS - Automatic Identification Systems Receivers and Transceivers how they work and why you might want one.

<https://www.boatus.com/.../2017/june/do-you-really-need-ais>

[https://www.westmarine.com/search?search-button=&q=ais+&lang=en\\_US](https://www.westmarine.com/search?search-button=&q=ais+&lang=en_US)

- PLB – Personal Locator Beacon (the personal carry version of an EPIRB), something you may want to consider for your boat and crew.

<https://www.westmarine.com/personal-locator-beacons-plbs/>

- Fire Extinguishers – New Regulations require up to date inspections tags for EVERY fire extinguisher on your boat.

- o Any Extinguisher older than 12 years is automatically considered expired.

<https://uscgboating.org/recreat.../fire-extinguisher-faq.php>

- **Alcohol in Canada** - Reminder; NO Open Alcohol Allowed While Boat is Under Way.

Only When Safely Docked or at Anchor is Alcohol Allowed to be Open and May Not to Be Carried or Consumed on Docks or Other Public Spaces in Ontario, Canada.

<https://myboatcard.com/drink-on-a-boat-ontario/>

### ***Destinations;***

- The importance of having an up to date Lake Ontario Ports Cruising Guide on board as you travel cannot be understated as it will include information such as Radio Call Channels for Marinas/Yacht Clubs. Phone Numbers, Directions and Pictures to Enter Areas and What to look out for.

- o <https://www.portsbooks.com/lake-ontario-edition/>