



**Spartanburg Water System  
Policies and Procedures for Use of  
Water Supply Reservoirs**

**Revised March 2006**

[www.sws-sssd.org](http://www.sws-sssd.org)

The Spartanburg Water System (SWS) is responsible for providing an adequate water supply for the citizens, businesses, and industries of Spartanburg County. Our community depends on SWS to provide a water supply of excellent quality and sufficient quantity that is reasonably priced.

Lake Bowen, Lake Blalock, and Reservoir #1 were constructed by the SWS as water storage reservoirs whose primary function is to ensure an adequate water supply. In addition, the residents of Spartanburg and surrounding communities benefit from the recreational resources provided by these lakes.

To protect the reservoirs as a source of drinking water, the Commission has adopted certain rules and regulations. These rules and regulations are intended to protect and enhance the water quality in the reservoir, maintain and minimize disturbance of the buffer zone owned by SWS around the lakes, and provide safe recreation for all users of the lake.

Your compliance and cooperation are vital to the protection of this essential water resource. Thank you for your assistance and support.

Graham W. Rich, General Manager  
Spartanburg Water System

## **Offices**

Spartanburg Water System (SWS)  
P.O. Box 251  
Spartanburg, SC 29304  
(864) 583-7361

Lake Bowen Warden's Office  
8515 Highway 9  
Inman, SC 29349  
(864) 592-2240

Lake Blalock Warden's Office  
1925 Sandy Ford Road  
Chesnee, SC 29323  
(864) 578-5442

24-Hour Emergency Number:  
(864) 578-2764

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## **General**

- 1.** All persons using the lakes and properties of Spartanburg Water System (SWS) are subject to all policies and procedures adopted by the Commissioners of Public Works of the City of Spartanburg, SC. These policies and procedures are enacted pursuant to statutory authority giving the Commissioners full management and control over all SWS properties.
- 2.** Any uses of the strip of land owned by SWS between the property line and the water's edge shall be subject to the issuance of a permit or written agreement prior to such use.
- 3.** Any permit or agreement issued for structures, access to reservoirs, or other purposes may be revoked by the Warden or the Commissioners whenever the holder thereof violates any of the policies, procedures, or restrictions governing the use of SWS lakes, any governing laws or regulations, or any contractual obligations.
- 4.** No person shall pollute the waters of the lakes or property of the SWS with any sewage, garbage, rubbish, tree limbs, stumps, debris, or waste of any kind. No person shall use gasoline, oil, lubricants, pesticides, herbicides, or any other toxic or hazardous substance that may cause pollution of the water supply provided the use of gasoline and lubricants is permitted only for the proper operation of motorized boats.
- 5.** Commercial use or operations are not allowed on SWS lakes and properties.
- 6.** No access permit for boating or any other use will be issued to any person having possession of firearms or fireworks of any kind. Use of firearms or fireworks is not allowed on SWS lakes and properties.
- 7.** No wading, bathing, or swimming is permitted within 200 feet of public landings, bridges, or restricted areas.
- 8.** No camping, picnicking, cleaning, or cooking of fish or other foodstuffs is permitted on SWS property except in designated areas or by contiguous property owners on Lakes Bowen and Blalock.
- 9.** No person may grade or alter the property of SWS without a written permit from the Warden.
- 10.** All Rules and Regulations of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) apply to SWS lakes. SCDNR may place their boats on SWS lakes for inspection and enforcement of state laws and regulations. A copy of SCDNR's Rules and Regulations is available at the Warden's office.
- 11.** No alcoholic beverages (beer, wine, distilled spirits) or any controlled substance without a prescription will be permitted on any property of SWS. Persons showing evidence of intoxication will not be permitted to occupy or operate a vessel on SWS Lakes. Furthermore, persons showing evidence of intoxication will not be allowed on SWS property.

12. All persons using the lakes and properties of SWS are subject to all applicable state and federal laws.
13. **SPARTANBURG WATER SYSTEM IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOSSES, DAMAGES, OR INJURIES OF ANY KIND THAT HAVE BEEN SUSTAINED WHILE USING THE RESERVOIRS, FACILITIES, AND ADJOINING PROPERTIES OF SPARTANBURG WATER SYSTEM.**

### **Warden**

1. The Wardens are the official custodians and are responsible for the enforcement of these policies and procedures. The Wardens are commissioned law enforcement officers and have the authority to file charges and make arrests.
2. The Wardens may deny admission to SWS property to any person known to have willfully violated any of these policies and procedures. Persons who are discourteous on SWS lakes or property in a manner that interferes with the peaceful use of the lakes and adjoining property by others will be required to leave SWS property and may be denied future admission to SWS lakes and property.
3. The Wardens are hereby vested with the authority to take necessary measures within these policies and procedures and the laws of the state to ensure safe, wholesome activities on SWS property and to remove from SWS property persons creating a nuisance, a disturbance, or an unsafe situation.
4. Any permit may be revoked and immediately seized by the Wardens whenever the holder or operator violates any of the policies and procedures governing the use of the SWS lakes or property. This also applies to any of the restrictions attached to a permit issued by SWS.

### **Boating**

1. The operation of vessels of any type authorized on SWS lakes shall be at the risk of the user and shall be subject to all federal and state laws and the policies and procedures herein set forth by the Commissioners.
2. The Warden may deny an access permit to any owner of any vessel that the Warden deems to be in unsafe condition.
3. No vessel or floating devices can be placed on the lakes without an access permit from the Warden's office.
4. No vessel shall be operated within a distance of 500 feet of a pump station, water intake of the dam, or spillway.

5. Hydroplanes, powered racing hulls, airboats, airplanes (including seaplanes), Hovercraft, and houseboats are not allowed on SWS lakes.
6. It shall be the responsibility of the operator of a vessel to make certain that there is a U.S. Coast Guard-approved lifesaving device for each person aboard or skiing from such vessel.
7. No person shall operate a vessel at a speed that will produce a wake, or in excess of 10 miles per hour, in a congested area. No person shall operate any vessel in such a manner as to endanger the passengers or the safety of other persons or property.
8. The operator is legally responsible for the wake of his or her vessel. There is a no-wake zone at all bridges and public docks.
9. At no time shall any vessel carry more than the recommended weight specified by the manufacturer or carry so many persons that an unsafe or hazardous condition is created.
10. No vessel shall operate or anchor within 150 feet of the public fishing piers on Lake Blalock or Lake Bowen.
11. At times when the Warden deems the lakes to be too congested with vessel traffic to permit safe navigation, the Warden, in the interest of safety, may close boat landings and otherwise restrict access to use of the lakes.

## **Fishing**

1. A valid South Carolina Fishing License is required.
2. Fishing within or on the pump station, water intake of the dams, spillways, any portion of the dam, any restricted or posted areas, or on the lake frontage of a contiguous property owner is not allowed.
3. Designated fishing areas on Lake Bowen and Lake Blalock are posted in the Warden's office.

## **Permits as to Vessels**

1. Access and launching permits for all vessels must be secured from the Warden's office before vessels are placed in SWS lakes. The permit sticker must be attached to vessel in a highly visible location on the port (left) side of the vessel.
2. Permit fees are listed in a separate schedule.
3. SWS season permits are valid from April 1 through the following March 31.
4. The Warden may deny a permit to an owner of any vessel which:

- a. Is in an unsafe condition.
  - b. Is propelled by a motor or motors having a combined horsepower rating in excess of lake specifications as discussed in Code of Laws of SC – 1976 (see Appendix A).
  - c. Has a motor from which the serial number or model number has been removed. The Warden shall revoke any permit previously issued if he discovers a vessel propelled by a motor on which the serial number or model number has been removed, changed, or altered, or if the cover of a small engine has been used to camouflage a larger engine size.
5. If alterations to the exhaust system on any motor result in excessive noise, no permit will be issued. If a permit has been issued, such permit shall be immediately revoked and seized by the Warden.
6. Anyone operating a vessel of any type under the influence of alcohol or drugs will have all privileges revoked for a minimum of one year.

## **Dredging and Digging**

The dredging, digging, widening, or altering in any way of any artificial or natural channel, canal, stream, creek, tributary, or any other water course on all property lying below the contour elevation 720 feet above sea level for the entire Lake H. Taylor Blalock property or below the elevation of 827 feet above sea level for the entire Lake William C. Bowen property must be approved by the Commission. Such activities:

- a. Will not be allowed in Municipal Reservoir #1
- b. Require a permit from the SCDHEC Division of Water Quality
- c. Must have a signed written agreement by SWS once a permit from SCDHEC Division of Water Quality is obtained.

## **Erosion Control**

1. There shall be no change of ground elevation or grading and no disturbance of the natural soil level of SWS property and the shoreline of the water, as it may vary from time to time, without prior issuance of a permit by the Warden. Prior to any such activity, bales of straw and/or silt screening shall be placed along the water's edge or at a location approved by the Warden.

2. No grading will be permitted that will change the location of the present contour elevation of each lake (827 feet at Lake Bowen, 720 feet at Lake Blalock, and 780 feet at Reservoir #1).
3. The landowner, at his sole expense, shall establish the location of contour elevation by a registered land surveyor, subject to review by SWS.

### **Structures for Lake Bowen and Lake Blalock**

1. Only non-cove property owners with lots approved for residential construction as approved by Spartanburg County and SCDHEC, and with a minimum of 40 feet fronting and abutting on the ponded water at normal pool elevation may be granted authority to construct, install, establish, or create a boat ramp, dock, retaining wall, driveway, road, boat launching device, or any other structure. No ramps, roads or driveways shall be constructed on SWS Lake Blalock property. Docks must be placed so that all portions of the dock are at least 14 feet from the imaginary projection of adjoining side lot lines as those lines project out into the lake. Projection of these side lot lines is accomplished by extending an imaginary line perpendicular to the structure boundary at each property corner. These lines are determined by bisecting the angle formed by the two structure front property lines that intersect at each property corner. Exact placement of structures will be determined by SWS. See Appendix B for dock placement example.
2. Property owners living in a cove who request a boat ramp, dock, retaining wall, driveway, road, boat launching device, or any other structure will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
3. Certain docks and structures constructed prior to the enactment of the Spartanburg Water System Policies and Procedures for Use of Water Supply Reservoirs did not meet the standards set forth herein. Those docks and structures, provided they are maintained in good condition and repair, will be permitted to remain as “grandfathered” subject to the following conditions:
  - a. As long as the grandfathered docks do not interfere with or impede the operation of the water reservoir or other authorized use of the lake, they will be permitted to remain as they are.
  - b. If any grandfathered docks are abandoned or are not maintained, the SWS reserves the right to (1) require the owner of the dock to remove the dock or (2) remove the dock.
  - c. No grandfathered dock shall be rebuilt or replaced without prior written permission from the Lake Wardens. Such permission may contain restrictions as to the location and use consistent with these policies and procedures.
4. Application for a structure agreement shall be made to SWS (contact the Warden’s Office for an application and specification requirements).

5. A signed agreement approved by the Commissioners and a building permit approved by the Lake Warden must be secured before initiating construction of a structure.
6. Location of encroachments on SWS property may be determined by extending the property owner's lot lines to the 710' Mean Sea Level (MSL) elevation for Lake Blalock and the 815' MSL elevation for Lake Bowen at the discretion of SWS.
7. SWS may deny a permit or agreement for the construction of any structure such as, but not limited to, a dock, walkway, ramp, or retaining wall that is not suited to a particular lot because of the shape of the shoreline or for any and all other circumstances that would or could potentially endanger the health, safety, and welfare of persons entitled to the use of the lakes or would degrade the water quality in the lake. The SWS may also deny a permit or agreement for the construction of any structure that would or could potentially endanger or negatively impact the environment or other natural resource(s).
8. If SWS denies a permit or agreement, SWS will, upon request, furnish the applicant written response for the denial. Such written response shall be sent to the address provided on the application.
9. Structures will be permitted only when such structures do not interfere with or impede the operation of the water reservoir and power generation facilities or other authorized use of the lake. Upon five days after written notice by registered or certified mail, SWS may require the removal of any such structure. Owners of said structure have five days from the date of SWS's requested certified return receipt to appeal the required removal by mailing an appeal request to SWS Commissioners, c/o General Manager, P.O. Box 251, Spartanburg, SC 29304.

## **Changes in Policies and Procedures**

The policies and procedures contained herein are subject to change by action of the Commissioners of Public Works of the City of Spartanburg, South Carolina.

### **Lake William C. Bowen**

#### **1. General**

- a. SWS owns all of the property between contour elevation 827 feet above mean sea level and the water's edge, including the property beneath the lake. Normal water level is elevation 815, but can vary.
- b. SWS provides a public picnic area, public lake access, public dock facilities, and a Warden's office, located at 8515 Highway 9, Inman, SC 29349.

- c. The Lake Bowen Warden's office telephone number is (864) 592-2240. The 24-hour emergency number is (864) 578-2764.
- d. No power vessel will be permitted with outboard or inboard motors in excess of the horsepower requirements in Code of Laws of SC - 1976, Section 50-25-1320. This restriction does not apply to tow boats or any Coast Guard-approved vessel commonly referred to as an inboard boat designed by the manufacturer for towing water skiers with the motor or engine near the midpoint of the vessel between the bow and the stern, propeller-driven by a single rod drive shaft extending through the hull, with the propeller located under the vessel in the front of a rudder.
- e. SWS prohibits operation of vessels between midnight and one hour before sunrise.

## **2. Sailing Craft**

No sailing craft with a mast height in excess of 30 feet is permitted to operate.

## **3. Skiing and Towing Devices**

- a. No person shall ski or be towed within 300 feet of any bridge or within 100 feet of the SWS public dock facilities. No skiing or towing devices are permitted upstream and west of the Interstate 26 Bridge over Lake Bowen.
- b. Every person being pulled by vessel, either on skis or a towing device, shall at all times wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved lifesaving device.
- c. No more than two skiers shall be pulled at one time from any boat. No person shall carry another person.
- d. It shall be the responsibility of the vessel operator to make certain that any skiing or towing shall be conducted in a safe manner and comply with these policies.

## **Municipal Reservoir #1**

Surface recreation such as, but not limited to, boating, canoeing, sailing, and swimming is prohibited. No on-surface use of the lake is permitted.

## Lake H. Taylor Blalock

### 1. General

- a. SWS owns all the property between contour elevation 720 feet and the water's edge, as well as the property beneath the lake. Normal water level is 710 feet, but can vary.
- b. SWS provides a public picnic area, public lake access, public dock facilities, and a Warden's office. The entrance to these facilities is located at 1925 Sandy Ford Road, which can be reached by way of U.S. Highway 221 and S.C. Highway 190. Signs at road intersections identify this route.
- c. The Lake Blalock Warden's office telephone number is (864) 578-5442. The 24-hour emergency number is (864) 578-2764.
- d. No power vessel will be permitted with outboard or inboard motors in excess of the horsepower requirements in Code of Laws of SC – 1976, Section 50-25-1330.
- e. There shall be no water skiing or towing of rafts, discs, or any other floating devices.
- f. Refer to the Lake Blalock Buffer Management Plan, March 2006, for information regarding activities permitted within the SWS buffer area.

### 2. Rare and Endangered Plant Species

- a. There exists a rare and endangered species of plant identified as *Hexastylis naniflora*, commonly called "dwarf-flowering heartleaf" or "dwarf-flowered wild ginger," at several locations on the reservoir property between elevation 720 feet and the water's edge. As a requirement of SCDNR, signs have been placed to identify these locations for preservation. Some of the species are also located on private property at higher elevations in the vicinity of the lake.
- b. All rules and regulations of SCDNR that pertain to the protection and preservation of endangered plants are hereby adopted and made a part of these regulations.
- c. There shall be no clearing or planting of land at protected locations designated above.
- d. Docks, walkways, and paths in protected locations will be permitted at the discretion of the Warden, and only if there is enough suitable area to place these facilities without disturbing or destroying any of the protected plants.
- e. No one shall remove any of the species *Hexastylis naniflora* from the protected locations listed above or from any other SWS property.
- f. Any person or persons violating these regulations adopted by the Commissioners for the protection and preservation of *Hexastylis naniflora* shall be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

## Appendix A

**As of the date of this publication, the following are the State Laws and Regulations applicable to Lake William C. Bowen and Lake H. Taylor Blalock. For the most recent Laws see the SC General Assembly website at <http://www.scstatehouse.net/code/statmast.htm>.**

### **ARTICLE 13. RESTRICTIONS APPLICABLE TO LAKES WILLIAM C. BOWEN AND H. TAYLOR BLALOCK IN SPARTANBURG COUNTY**

**SECTION 50-25-1310.** No wake zones; restricted areas for boating and bathing; authority of wardens to limit number of boats. [SC ST SEC 50-25-1310]

On Lakes William C. Bowen and H. Taylor Blalock in Spartanburg County:

- (1) There is established a no wake zone within three hundred feet of all bridges and public docks. No wake zones must be clearly marked with signs. The signs must be designed and installed by the department.
- (2) No watercraft of any type may be operated within five hundred feet of any pump station, water intake of a dam, or spillways. These restricted areas must be clearly marked with signs. Signs must be designed and installed by the department.
- (3) No watercraft may operate or anchor within one hundred fifty feet of public fishing piers.
- (4) No sailing craft with a mast height in excess of thirty feet is permitted to operate.
- (5) No wading, bathing, or swimming is permitted within two hundred feet of any public landing, bridge, or restricted area. These restricted areas must be clearly marked with signs. The signs must be designed and installed by the department.
- (6) The lake wardens, at their discretion, may limit entrance of watercraft onto the lakes via the public landings when conditions such as overcrowding or adverse weather create an unsafe boating environment.

**SECTION 50-25-1320.** Motor restrictions on Lake William C. Bowen. [SC ST SEC 50-25-1320]

On Lake William C. Bowen:

- (1) No watercraft with an outboard motor having a horsepower rating in excess of one hundred fifteen horsepower is permitted.
- (2) No watercraft with an outboard motor in excess of the United States Coast Guard rating, with Coast Guard rating plate missing or changed, is permitted.

(3) No watercraft powered by an outdrive or inboard motor having an engine automotive horsepower rating in excess of one hundred ninety horsepower is permitted. This restriction does not apply to towboats which have been approved by the American Waterski Association or any Coast Guard approved boat commonly referred to as an inboard boat designed by the manufacturer for towing waterskiers with the motor or engine located near the midpoint of the boat between the bow and stern, propeller driven by a single rod drive shaft extending through the hull with the propeller located under the boat in front of a rudder.

(4) There is no minimum or maximum restriction on length of watercraft.

**SECTION 50-25-1330.** Watercraft and recreational activity restrictions on Lake H. Taylor Blalock [SC ST SEC 50-25-1330]

(A) Watercraft may not operate on Lake H. Taylor Blalock with an engine greater than thirty horsepower or greater than twenty-five feet in length, and in the case of a pontoon boat, the engine may not be greater than forty horsepower or greater than twenty-five feet in length, unless:

(1) the gas line has been disconnected and the engine or prop is trimmed out of water; and

(2) an electric trolling motor or engine of thirty horsepower or less is mounted.

(B) It is unlawful on Lake H. Taylor Blalock to:

(1) operate personal watercraft, including jet skis;

(2) operate watercraft between midnight and one hour before sunrise;

(3) operate watercraft with an outboard motor having horsepower in excess of the United States Coast Guard rating for the watercraft or with the Coast Guard rating plate missing or changed;

(4) operate watercraft of any type within five hundred feet of any pump station, water intake of a dam, or spillways, and these restricted areas must be clearly marked with signs designed and installed by the Spartanburg Water System;

(5) operate watercraft or anchor within one hundred fifty feet of public fishing piers;

(6) operate sailing craft with a mast height in excess of thirty feet;

(7) wade, bathe, or swim within two hundred feet of any public landing, bridge, or restricted area, and these restricted areas must be clearly marked with signs designed and installed by the Spartanburg Water System.

(C) The lake wardens may limit entrance of watercraft onto the lake via the public landings when conditions including, but not limited to, overcrowding or adverse weather create an unsafe boating environment.

**SECTION 50-25-1340.** Waterskiing and towing of floating devices prohibited on Lake H. Taylor Blalock [SC ST SEC 50-25-1340]

On Lake H. Taylor Blalock, it is unlawful to waterski or tow rafts, discs, or any other similar floating devices.

**SECTION 50-25-1350.** Waterskiing and towing restrictions on Lake William C. Bowen; times boating prohibited. [SC ST SEC 50-25-1350]

On Lake William C. Bowen it is unlawful to:

- (1) waterski or tow rafts, discs, or other similar floating devices within three hundred feet of any bridge or within one hundred feet of public dock facilities of the Spartanburg Water System;
- (2) waterski and tow rafts, discs, or other similar floating devices upstream and west of the Interstate Highway 26 bridge which crosses over Lake William C. Bowen;
- (3) pull more than two skiers at one time from any boat or to waterski while carrying one or more persons piggyback;
- (4) operate a watercraft between midnight and one hour before sunrise.

**SECTION 50-25-1360.** Special permits waiving restrictions of this article. [SC ST SEC 50-25-1360]

The department, after consultation with the Spartanburg Water System, by special permit, may waive the restrictions and provisions of Sections 50-25-1310 through 50-25-1350 to allow for boat testing, water and ski shows, and similar activities. It is unlawful to violate the terms and conditions of the permit.

**SECTION 50-25-1370.** Penalty for violation. [SC ST SEC 50-25-1370]

A person violating a provision of this article is guilty of a misdemeanor and must be punished as provided in Section 50-1-130.

# Appendix B

## Dock Placement Example For Non-Cove Properties

