

S.F. No. 553 – Safety Education and Watercraft Operator’s Permit - Transportation Committee Issues (1st Engrossment)

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S.F. 553 requires certain watercraft operators to obtain a watercraft operator’s permit by completing a water safety course and written test administered by the Department of Natural Resources.

Of relevance to the Transportation Committee, **Section 7** adds language to the statutes that relate to the inclusion of a watercraft operator’s permit information (“operator’s permit”) on driver’s licenses. The proposed language (Minn. Stat. §171.07, subdivision 20) is nearly identical to the endorsement established for all-terrain vehicle safety certificates in Minn. Stat. §171.07, subdivision 18.

Paragraph (a) requires the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to maintain information on those who have been issued a watercraft operator’s permit. **Paragraph (b)** requires DPS to provide a graphic or written indication that the person has received the operator’s permit on all subsequently issued driver’s licenses and identification cards. If the DNR has not transmitted the information to DPS by the time the person applies for a driver’s license or identification card, **paragraph (c)** allows the person to present a copy of the operator’s permit to receive the indication on their license or identification card.