Written by Carol Pomeday
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Town residents say noisy watercraft disturb shoreline tranquility

Department of Natural Resources Warden Michael Clutter will be invited to the June 7 Belgium Town Board meeting to discuss what the town can do to regulate personal watercrafts on Lake Michigan.

Michael Mierzwa of Sandy Beach South, who with several neighbors complained last month about noise from the machines launched at the end of Sandy Beach Road, told the board Monday that the noise continues to disturb the tranquility of the neighborhood.

He again asked the board to prohibit launching or retrieving personal watercrafts after 6 p.m. at the site.

Trucks are no longer parking on the beach at the end of Sandy Beach Road as before, he said.

While some watercrafts are going farther out in the lake, Mierzwa said some are within the 200-foot protected area established by state law.

Prohibiting personal watercrafts after 6 p.m. would greatly limit his enjoyment of the lake, which is for everyone, said a Jet Skier who asked to be anonymous.

“I don’t want to respond to the complaints because then it would appear we are doing something wrong. We’re not doing anything wrong. The warden has been down to see us and we meet all codes and regulations. We’ve paid $30 (for a license) to use the lake the same as

any other watercraft," he said.

The skiers stay within the 66-foot right-of-way at the end of the road when on shore, he said, and ride beyond the 200-foot limit and 100 feet apart as required.

They prefer jumping three to five-foot waves.

"Riding on smooth water is boring to us," he said. "We're not teenagers. I'm a 39-year-old man enjoying a sport."

AN SUV WAS driven on the beach at the end of Sandy Beach Road in the Town of Belgium to launch personal watercrafts last month. Some lakefront residents have complained about the noise created by the watercraft. Photos by Sam Arendt