

By Carolyn Lee

The Imperial Republican

Enders Reservoir is spruced up and ready for the Memorial Day weekend campers and boaters.

Superintendent Beau Licking said crews have updated eight padded electrical sites on the north side, and installed nine new electrical pedestals in the same area, for a total of 17 pads with electrical capabilities of 50, 30 and 20 amps.

In addition, he said the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC) is working on more campground facilities along the lake on the north side of the rock jetty at the north boat ramp.

Licking said the project in the trees is a “work in progress,” allowing campers to be tucked in among the trees.

Both boat ramps on the north side of the lake are available for unloading boats. Licking said the water level at Enders is five to six feet lower than at the same time last year, but won’t affect the ramps.

The beaches at Crappie Bay and No-Name Bay on the south side of the lake by the dam are being upgraded for camping, with the Game and Parks providing picnic tables and trash barrels.

Licking said he’s also trying to get bathroom facilities located in those areas, but they aren’t in place yet.

A park permit will be required in those south locations, unlike in past years.

Park permits are \$25 for annual, \$12.50 for duplicate and \$5 for daily use. Permits may be purchased at Laker’s in Enders or at the Nebraska Game and Parks headquarters near the dam.

As far as concerns about the weekend, Licking hopes everyone will camp and boat safely, so there are “no injuries, deaths or incidents.”

The NGPC has a number of suggestions for reducing the risk of incidents and to help ensure a safe and enjoyable weekend on the water.

Wear a life jacket

Children under age 13 and anybody on a personal watercraft are required by law to wear a United States CoastGuard-approved personal flotation device. People being towed by a boat on skis, a tube, or other similar device also must wear a life jacket.

Avoid alcohol

Boat operators can become impaired with less alcohol than motor vehicle drivers due to heat and dehydration. Boating Under the Influence is a criminal violation and is enforced actively in Nebraska.

Have all required safety equipment on board

This will help boaters be prepared if an emergency occurs. Life jackets, throw cushions, fire extinguishers, and bailing devices are required on most boats. For a list of what is required on a boat, check out the 2013 Boating Guide at BoatSafeNebraska.org.

Be wary of surroundings

The best boat operators constantly are looking around for other boats, personal watercraft, swimmers, stumps and other hazards.

Speeds in excess of five miles per hour are prohibited if within 30 yards of any other vessel, swimming area or dock.

Take a boating safety course

Anyone born after Dec. 31, 1985 who operates a motorboat or personal watercraft in Nebraska must have successfully completed the Nebraska boating safety course.

Nineteen youths took advantage of the boating safety class in Imperial April 15-22, taught by Dan Lenners.

The class was co-sponsored by NGPC and Mid-Plains Community College.