From the DNR’s “Minnesota Boating Guide 2016”

Rules of the Road

Passing

* When overtaking another watercraft going in the same direction, the craft being overtaken must maintain course and speed.
* The passing watercraft must keep a sufficient distance to avoid collision or endangering the other craft from its wake

Meeting

* When two watercraft approach each other “head-on,” each must alter course to the right to avoid collision.
* If the two watercraft are far enough to the left of each other, no change in direction is needed for safe passage. Both watercraft will maintain their course and speed to pass clear of each other.
* Keep to the right in narrow channels.

Crossing

If two watercraft approach each other at a right angle, the watercraft to the right shall have the right-of-way.

Nonmotorized Craft

Nonmotorized craft (sailboats, canoes, etc.) have the right-of-way over motorized craft in all situations, except when the nonmotorized craft is overtaking or passing.

Commercial Vessels

Small boats should not insist on the right-of-way when approaching large commercial vessels, which are limited in maneuverability.

Emergency Craft

All watercraft will yield right-of-way to an authorized watercraft displaying a red or blue flashing light.

Move Over Law

When approaching and passing a law enforcement watercraft with its emergency lights activated, the operator of a watercraft must safely move the watercraft away from the law enforcement watercraft and maintain a slow no-wake speed while within 150 feet of the law enforcement watercraft.