

## Answers to Questions regarding the New California Boating Card

By Joe Powell, General Manager, CCAM-LS, CMCA, AMS

Starting January 1, 2018, California will require boaters to take a boater safety education exam and acquire a card proving compliance. The information and link below is taken directly from the State website.

The requirement by the State has been spread out over several years based on age (see below) so there is time for boaters to gain compliance with the law. Some members have asked if PML plans to provide a boater safety training course to the membership. This is not necessary as the Department of Boating and Waterways website offers online courses and exams.

Nevertheless, if enough members express an interest in taking an onsite course, we can investigate and determine if this option is available and look into arranging group training for a fee. For those members who already have boating experience, the Department of Boating and Waterways home study course and exam will probably be the most efficient process for them.

In any event, we recommend that boating members pay attention to these new State-mandated requirements.

As for questions about jurisdiction as PML is a private lake, Board policy resolution #05.01, PMLA Boating and Lake Rules addresses this in the first sentence, "For your safety, California Boating Laws Prevail." All boaters are required to be in compliance with State boating laws if they wish to use their watercraft on our lake.

For more information, please visit the California State Department of Boating and Waterways webpage.

Information directly from the DBW website:

The California Boater Card will show that its holder has successfully taken and passed a NASBLA/state-approved boater safety education examination. The new requirement will begin on Jan. 1, 2018 for all persons 20 years of age and younger who operate a motorized vessel on state waterways. On that date, these boaters will be required to carry a boater card issued by DBW, unless they meet certain exemptions stated below.\*

Each year after January 2018, a new age group will be added to those who are required to possess a valid card. By 2025, all persons who operate a motorized vessel on California waters will be required to have one. Once issued,

the card remains valid for a boat operator's lifetime. California Harbors and Navigation Code Section 678.11(b) contains the following phase-in schedule based on operator age:

- January 1, 2018 – Persons 20 years of age or younger
- January 1, 2019 – Persons 25 years of age or younger
- January 1, 2020 – Persons 35 years of age or younger
- January 1, 2021 – Persons 40 years of age or younger
- January 1, 2022 – Persons 45 years of age or younger
- January 1, 2023 – Persons 50 years of age or younger
- January 1, 2024 – Persons 60 years of age or younger
- January 1, 2025 – All persons regardless of age

The card will be issued by the California State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways (DBW). DBW plans to begin issuing the California Boater Cards prior to Jan. 1, 2018, implementation date. The Boater Card Technical Advisory Group anticipates that the cost of the card will be no more than \$10. The lost card replacement fee will be no more than \$5.

\*California age restrictions for operating a motorized vessel: According to California Harbors and Navigation Code Section 658.5, NO person under 16 years of age may operate a boat with a motor of more than 15 horsepower, except for a sailboat that does not exceed 30 feet in length or a dinghy used directly between a moored boat and the shore (or between two moored boats). The law allows children 12-15 years of age to operate boats with a motor of more than 15 horsepower or sailboats over 30 feet if supervised on board by an adult at least 18 years of age. Violating these provisions constitutes an infraction

<http://californiaboatercard.com/about-the-card/>