

Best Practices for Boating Facilities During COVID-19

California State Parks

Division of Boating and Waterways

The California State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways (DBW) works with cities, counties, and districts throughout the state to promote safe and clean boating access. During the COVID-19 pandemic, DBW advises the boating community to follow public health guidelines consistent with the [Governor's Stay-at-Home Orders and local county public health departments](#). DBW has identified a set of COVID-19 safety best practices for boating facilities based on state and national guidelines. This document is for informational purposes only. DBW assumes no liability or responsibility in connection with the use or misuse of this information. The following best practices are dynamic and DBW urges all boating facility operators to know and follow local restrictions in addition to customary navigation rules.

General Recommendations

- Follow state and local County and City Public Health Office's guidelines for outdoor recreation and for face coverings.
- Develop a written plan for your facility operations and staff.
 - Review your policies, processes and procedures and make adjustments in line with the new health guidelines to ensure that your business is prepared to safely open.
 - Some components of the plan may include: List of personal protective equipment (PPE), location, how to put on, take off, and properly dispose of; daily cleaning process; important phone numbers; social distance protocols; [what to do in case an employee gets sick](#), among others.
 - Communicate and train your staff about the revised policies, processes, and procedures.
 - Consider adding signage to your facility to remind staff and customers of the new safety practices.
- [Sanitize your facility regularly, at least daily](#), especially commonly touched areas (ex: Door handles, security gates, bathroom door and sink handles, toilet flushers, credit card machines, fueling stations, etc). Increased traffic in the facility may warrant increasing the cleaning schedule to twice daily (or more often). [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) has offered guidance on how to clean these areas](#).
 - The CDC recommends using products identified by the EPA to disinfect surfaces. A list of cleaning products that meet the EPA's criteria for use against COVID-19 can be found [here](#).
 - For electronics including computers, tablets, touchscreens, keyboards, remote controls, ATMs and credit card machines, follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfecting, or consider using wipeable covers for the electronics. If no manufacturer guidance is available, consider using alcohol-based wipes or sprays with at least 70% alcohol.

- When cleaning, staff should wear gloves and clean their hands often.
- If staff is interacting with customers and touching the same things they are, such as credit cards, gas pumps, or products, provide your staff with [gloves](#). You may consider adding plexiglass barriers between your staff and customers in areas where there may be close contact, such as the facility office or service desk.
- Train your staff that if they are wearing gloves, they should still not touch their eyes, nose or mouth. They should dispose of the gloves and wash their hands when their glove-requiring task is complete, or before breaks or the end of the workday.
- Make sure you have enough hand sanitizer and face coverings for your staff.
- Make sure you stay up to date with the CDC, EPA and [OSHA](#) guidelines during this crisis.

Safe Practices around your Facility

- Remind boaters that we all must follow the state and local County and City Public Health Office's guidelines for outdoor recreation and for face coverings. Ask your patrons to wear [cloth face covering](#) when around others.
- Emphasize to your boating patrons and to your staff to always maintain a safe distance of six feet or more at the fuel dock, sewage pumpout, dump station, boat launch ramp, facility office and store.
- If boaters cannot maintain a safe distance, recommend they leave the area and return when it is safe to do so.
- Stress to boaters and staff the need to wash hands frequently or use hand sanitizer after touching items such as a marina gate, fuel pump, sewage pumpout, dump station, and handcarts.
- Recommend boaters only use the boating facility as a gateway to the water and limit socialization in the parking area or on docks. Request boaters take a direct route to their boat.
- Consider limiting customer entrance to the marina office or store unless they have made a prior one-on-one appointment or in case of emergency.
- Place hand sanitizer dispensers on areas such as docks, gates, boat launch ramps, sewage and dump station and fuel dock areas, at the top/bottom of gangways, and in the office/clubhouse.
- **Docks and Boat Launch Ramps**
 - On narrow docks, recommend boaters use finger floats, ramps, and to wait their turn in order to maintain social distancing.
 - Recommend boaters take turns to walk up/down ramps before proceeding.

- Remind boaters to wear life jackets near the water and to use sanitizer after using pay stations and self-registration stations.
 - Make sure gates, PIN pads, card readers, and handles are sanitized regularly.
 - Post signage about marina policy-related distancing and cloth face covering.
- **Handcarts**
 - If your facility has dock-carts, consider minimizing their use.
 - Consider making sanitizing wipes and a trash can available where handcarts are stored.
 - Recommend wiping down the cart handle and other surfaces after each use.
- **Fuel Docks**
 - If you do not have an attendant at your fuel dock, remind boaters to always maintain social distancing.
 - Consider offering disposable gloves for customers when handling hoses and nozzles.
 - Remind boaters to properly dispose of the gloves and wash their hands when fueling task is complete.
 - Keep sanitizer and/or wipes nearby to clean commonly touched surfaces like credit card machines, hoses and fuel nozzles, or to clean hands after passing credit cards back and forth.
 - Provide a trashcan nearby and secure it.
 - Fuel dock operations should institute a payment process that limits touching the same surfaces. Consider implementing a pay-by-phone policy to limit close person to person interaction.
 - In a full-service fuel dock, employees should remain socially distant from customer, use appropriate PPE, and wash hands or use hand sanitizer at the end of each transaction.
 - Post signage about marina policy-related distancing and cloth face covering.
- **Sewage and Dump Stations**
 - Remind boaters to always maintain social distancing and use gloves when handling the pumpout system and dump station.
 - Remind boaters to properly dispose of the gloves and wash their hands when finishing using these systems.
 - Keep sanitizer and/or wipes nearby to clean commonly touched surfaces.
 - Provide a trashcan nearby and secure it.
 - Post signage about marina policy-related distancing and cloth face covering.
- **Parking and Public Docks**
 - Boaters should be reminded about social distancing and recommend cloth face covering when around others and while at parking areas and public docks.
 - Post signage about marina policy-related distancing and cloth face covering.

- **Transient Boaters**
 - Boating facilities should follow the state and local County and City Public Health Office's guidelines and restrictions.
- **Restrooms and Showers**
 - Follow the [CDC cleaning Guidelines](#) more than once a day if possible.
 - Inspect restrooms to ensure soap dispensers are stocked.
 - Post a public cleaning schedule and checklist around common areas like bathrooms and showers.
 - Limit number of people using these areas at any one time
- **Laundry Facilities**
 - If you decide to open your laundry facility, follow the [CDC cleaning Guidelines](#) more than once a day if possible.
 - Limit the number of people in the laundry room at one time and remind users of the required social distancing
 - Limit laundry room visits to the loading and unloading of washers & dryers only
 - Request patrons wait outside the laundry room while the wash and dry cycles are in progress and not to fold clothes in the laundry room.

Multi-use Equipment and Life Jackets

If your facility offers life jackets and other equipment to the public on a loan basis, follow the [CDC cleaning Guidelines](#).

Additional cleaning tips for life jackets, include:

- Hand wash or sponge down life jackets in warm, soapy water. (Do not submerge inflator on inflatable life jackets.)
- Follow by rinsing life jackets with clean water and hang to dry.
- Clean buckles, zippers, other hardware and hook/loop fasteners (e.g. Velcro®) with a 60 – 90% alcohol solution.
- Do not dry-clean, machine launder, use chlorine bleach, or apply direct heat to a life jacket.
- Always store life jackets in a warm, dry, well ventilated place out of direct sunlight.

Communicate with your Boaters

Remember, communication with your tenants, customers, guests and liveboards about your facility's new operational guidelines is critical. You'll be able to manage the facility more effectively by setting expectations clearly and quickly, especially if certain amenities have been closed or limited, you are operating with reduced staff, or hours of operation changed. A few ideas for communicating with your boaters and visitors about your guidelines include:

- Your website
- Your social media platforms

- Your newsletter
- Email
- Texting
- Post signs around the commonly used areas of the property to get the message out and about.

Best Practices for Boating during COVID-19. DBW has identified a set of COVID-19 boating safety best practices for boaters based on state and national guidelines. Please visit www.parks.ca.gov/FlattenTheCurve for more information