

NEWS From BoatUS

Boat Owners Association of The United States

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BoatUS Press Room at <http://www.BoatUS.com/pressroom>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photo Available at: <http://www.BoatUS.com/pressroom/previewImg/hiRes/647.jpg>

Photo Caption: Without any public comment, the US Army Corp of Engineers has instituted a new mandatory life jacket regulation at Pine Flat Lake, CA (shown). (Photo Credit: USACE)

Boaters and Swimmers at Pine Flat Lake Have New Life Jacket Rule

Increasing Federal Regulation for Many Boaters, Says BoatUS

PINE FLAT LAKE, Calif. April 7, 2011 -- Jumping off your boat for a swim in Pine Flat Lake, California, without a life jacket? As of April 1, anyone found swimming more than 100 feet from shore without a life jacket – including boaters who routinely jump in to try to beat 100-degree-plus temperatures – could result in a \$175 fine as part of the new life jacket regulations put in the place by the US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE), which manages the lake.

In addition to life jackets now being mandatory for all swimmers outside of designated swim areas, new USACE regulations say that US Coast Guard-approved life jackets must be worn by:

- Everyone aboard all non-motorized vessels, regardless of length, at all times.
- Everyone aboard motorized vessels up to 16-feet in length, at all times.
- Everyone aboard motorized vessels 16-feet in length or larger when underway (except when powered by trolling motor or if you are inside a fully-enclosed cabin or the boat is stationary.)

The US Army Corps of Engineers is the nation's largest provider of outdoor recreation, operating more than 2,500 recreation areas at 456 projects (mostly lakes) in 43 states and leasing an additional 1,800 sites to state or local park and recreation authorities or private interests.

With nearly 372 million visits a year at the Corps lakes, beaches and other areas, the overall number of Corps water-related fatalities nationwide averages around 150 annually. Boating-related fatalities at Corps facilities nationwide average 32 deaths a year (not including those who voluntarily left their boat to swim).

“Unlike state agencies, or even the US Coast Guard, the Corps of Engineers can make this kind of change without any public comment,” said Boat Owners Association of The United States ([BoatUS](http://www.BoatUS.com)) Vice President of Government Affairs Margaret Podlich. “As part of a multi-year study, they have instituted similar requirements in the Pittsburgh, PA, area and some lakes in Mississippi. While the word ‘study’ implies a temporary ruling, the Corps says they are considering more permanent life jacket rules in the future that would cover much larger geographical areas.”

Boaters are encouraged to share their thoughts about these requirements by logging in at www.BoatUS.com/gov/action to send email comments to the Pine Flat Lake Park Manager and their members of Congress.

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About BoatUS:

BoatUS – Boat Owners Association of The United States – is the nation’s leading advocate for recreational boaters providing over half a million members with government representation, programs and money-saving services. For membership information visit www.BoatUS.com or call 800-395-2628.