

Recreational Boat Operator License

New regulations requiring operators of all power driven recreational boats in Canada to obtain an "Operator Card" (an operator license) were adopted by the government during the week of January 11, 1999.

Operators of power driven boats will have to obtain "Operator Cards" according to the following schedule:

- **September 15, 1999** - All operators born after April 1, 1983.
- **September 15, 2002** - All operators of craft under 4 m (a little over 13 feet) in length, including personal watercraft.
- **September 15, 2009** - All other operators (including people over the age of 55).

These requirements also apply to sailboats equipped with an engine.

Also effective after April 1999, if you are under 12 years of age, and not directly supervised*, you will not be able to operate a power-driven boat of more than 10 hp.

If you are over 12, but under 16, and not directly supervised*, you will not be able to operate a power driven boat of more than 40 hp.

**Directly supervised means accompanied and directly supervised in the boat by a person 16 years of age.*

You must be 16 years of age to operate a personal watercraft.

Foreign boats visiting Canada for less than 45 consecutive days are exempt.

American boaters who have an operator card, license or the equivalent, issued by their State will not be restricted to the 45 consecutive day limit before having to obtain an "operator card" in Canada.

For more information on Boating Safety & Regulations contact the Canadian Coast Guard at:
http://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/eng/CCG/WM_Report_Obs

or go to the Transport Canada site at:

<http://www.tc.gc.ca/marinesafety/debs/obs/menu.htm> .

Of the many training agencies for boating courses, the Canadian Power & Sail Squadrons offers an 8 hour classroom course for those that require their Pleasure Craft Operator Card.

They also offer many other courses for the more advanced boater. Their website address is: <http://www.cpss.ab.ca>

The following site has information and an online course available:
<http://www.boaterexam.com/>

You can write the test for \$44.95.

Another online site where you can view the information free of charge and take the test for a \$25 fee is:
<http://safetyafloat.ca/prices.html>

Some Alberta Registries offer the boating course: prices will vary on the cost of the materials and for the cost of the test.

Phone around to get the best deal.

The Alberta Safety Council offers the test only for a fee of \$30.00.

You need to call ahead to book the time to take the test.

Their web address is:
<http://www.safetycouncil.ab.ca/>

Why the licenses are staggered:?

Boating licenses were staggered in order to meet the high demand of Canadians who would suddenly need to acquire their boating licenses.

There are only a limited number of certified organizations in Canada that are able to teach boating laws and safety, so

they broke the regulations into three categories.

First the younger boat operators were required to obtain their licenses, as this group had the highest incidence of serious or fatal accidents.

Then the smaller boat operators were required to obtain licenses, as this was the next group that had a higher incidence of accidents.

And then finally the larger boat operators will need to acquire a license. (People with larger boats often have taken navigational courses because of the cost of their units.)

By September 15, 2009 all Canadian operators of a motorized vessel will have to show proof of operator competency.