

## Division of Boating and Waterways

August 2020

**REPORT:** Boating Education and Outreach, Interpretation and Education Division

**PRESENTER:** Melissa Miranda, Boating Education and Outreach Manager

**SUBJECT:** Youth Boating Safety Education

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### Summary

In accordance with Section 51879.7 of the California Education Code, Boating and Waterways is responsible to provide fundamental water safety training for all the children of the state so that California's youth will be able to enjoy water recreation while avoiding its hazards. DBW provides the AquaSmart program and other youth outreach to fulfill this requirement.

The AquaSmart activity book was upgraded in 2017 to become a multi-grade level publication and continues to be one of the most popular publications offered by DBW. The activity book meets the current Next Generation Science Standards and is appropriate for grades K-8. This publication is distributed at education and outreach events and to schools statewide. It is available to boating safety partners such as the Coast Guard Auxiliary and US Power Squadrons to order in bulk from the Division for additional reach. The activity book is also available to order through the DBW Online Ordering site. Over 33,000 books were distributed at boating safety events and through safe boating partners from August 2019 to August 2020.

DBW's AquaSmart Live! Puppet and Game shows are traditionally performed at schools in high boating accident target areas. In the 2019/2020 school year, 71 shows were performed to live audiences at school sites.

Due to Covid-19, schools began shutting down in March 2020. By utilizing professional online resources already established by the Parks Online Resources for Teachers and Students (PORTS), the program was able to pivot with a very short turnaround from live, in-person performances to successful live streamed AquaSmart Live! puppet shows on the digital platform. From April-June 2020, 76 performances were live-streamed for schools.

Since emerging on the digital space, AquaSmart Live! quickly became a popular and well received resource and has since been incorporated into multiple virtual events including Earth Day and World Ocean's Day events with thousands of views curated through the PORTS team with State Parks.