



Stronger Together

The Leading Voice for Camps in Massachusetts

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N A N C Y ' S C O R N E R

Nancy's Corner



Nancy Hartmann - MCA Board President

If you have questions for Nancy, please email her at: 978-725-6294 or call nhartmann@brooksschool.org

December Greetings MCA Members!

Where does the time fly! I can hardly believe that the holidays are just around the corner and most of us our well into our registration and hiring for the 2012 season.

As busy colleagues I encourage each of us to take the time to note the wonderful educational and networking opportunities that MCA has put together for us this upcoming year. The topics are loaded with value for each of us and it is free for members!

Our volunteer board has been active this year with establishing our new membership strategies, developing educational opportunities, and actively monitoring legislation.

Please take the time to read through this newsletter to have a good understanding on important news that may have an effect on camps throughout our state.

Happy Holidays and remember ... camp is a gift for life...

Thank you for all you give,

Nancy Hartmann
MCA President





Legislative Alert

Bill to Require Lifejackets for All Swimmers in Non-Pool Swim Areas *Action Item*

The Massachusetts Camping Association supports the safety of children in camps and works with the MA Department of Public Health on regulations that govern licensed camps in MA. One of the bills we have been following recently passed through the Senate and has been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee.

The bill, “An Act to Improve Water Safety for Children in the Commonwealth” ([Senate bill 2075](#)) would require all camps to have a lifejacket for every minor that is present in a non-pool swimming area. You may

wish to read the exact language of the bill [here](#).

The bill is a result of a tragic drowning at a Municipal Camp in 2007. We support child protection and safety issues, but are unsure of the practicality of the bill as written – specifically regarding whether it could be implemented properly. We are also concerned about unintended consequences of the requirements, such as expanding to encompass swimming areas. There is no question that lifejackets are necessary and needed in boats, but some research may be required to determine whether the approach is necessary, appropriate, and would actually improve child safety.

We recently met with staff in House Ways and Means and have proposed language

changes that would not require a PFD for everyone, but perhaps only the at-risk and non-swimmers. They understood our concern and seemed to agree with our approach. We will now contact the sponsor of the bill to see if he would be amenable to the change. Members will soon be asked to send a formula letter off to their legislators in support of our proposed amendment.

Should this pass the House, it will go to the Governor’s desk to be signed into law.



The MCA is committed to providing you with the latest news on legislative issues occurring in the Massachusetts State Legislature. By following bills from start to finish, we ensure that Massachusetts camps have a “voice” in the process and can implement legislative changes that are critical to the camping industry’s health and survival.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN IN CAMPS

Action Item At the request of MCA, Rep. Turner of Dennis presented [HB 2272, Turner](#) legislation to prohibit sex offenders from employment or volunteer status at camps for children - Joint Committee on the Judiciary has the bill. The goal of this bill is to provide a disqualifier enabling camps to once again ask about Criminal History on Initial Applications. This would reverse the “Ban the Box” Provision for camps. We are asking camps to write letters of support to the committee.

KAYAK SAFETY BILL

Monitor [HB 664, Straus](#) This bill has been introduced for many years and a watered down version recently passed the House. It has provisions for certification and training for Kayak Instructors and some expanded oversight outside of our current DPH review of these provisions for camps. MCA met with the committee on 3rd readings to discuss the resulting duplication of oversight for camps. We support all the provisions of the bill but do not support answering to two separate regulatory agencies for the same provisions. We are waiting to see whether the Senate adopts the same bill or adds amendments. The Bill would require instructors to have either ACA Instructor Certification, Red Cross Certification or equivalent, CPR and FA. The bill also requires wet exit training when using a spray skirt. There is no reference to mandatory use of PDFs as was included in the 2010 version supported by MCA.

ADA COMPLIANCE FOR SWIMMING POOLS

NEW for 2011 – The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. On September 15, 2010, the ADA Guidelines finalized on July 23, 2004 (ADAAG 2004) were signed into law and now require compliance by all Title II (Public Entities) and Title III (Public Accommodations and Commercial Entities) by March 15, 2012. This includes recreation facilities, swimming pools, wading pools and spas. <http://www.acacamps.org/publicpolicy/ada-revisions> This is a Federal law that impacts camps and now requires all pools to have ADA accessibility. In some cases, camps will need a Lift and another alternative entry point such as stairs or transfer wall. http://www.recreonics.com/fyi/ada_pool_guidelines.htm

HOOD and VENT INSPECTIONS IN DINING HALLS

NEW for 2011 Commercial hood cleaners and inspectors must now be licensed by the state to clean and inspect your kitchen hoods and vents. Fire inspectors will look for these inspection stickers on your hoods. [Hood Cleaning Regulations](#)

LEAD PAINT REMOVAL LICENSE and CERTIFICATIONS

NEW for 2011 On July 9, 2010, the MA Division of Occupational Safety took over administration and enforcement of the Lead Paint Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) regulations. This requires a Lead Safe contractor’s license to do this sort of work in MA. It also requires firms to get an EPA RRP Certification. Camps that do their own work and have buildings older than 1978 will need to look into this immediately. If you hire contractors to do this work, be sure to see their certificates.

[MA Lead RRP Requirements](#)

CORI REFORM

NEW The Governor pushed a CORI reform bill through this past summer. It should not affect the access that camps currently have to the expanded CORI check for camp staff. It will have an impact on checks for organizations/businesses that do not have access to the expanded CORI Checks. The Reform allows for records to be locked after 5 years in most cases; It does not allow an employer to ask if the candidate has been arrested or convicted on the written application form; and it allows for keeping CORI records on file for up to 7 years. [MA CORI Reform Information](#)

CHANGES TO PERSONAL RECORDS LAW

NEW 2011 On August 5, 2010, Governor Patrick signed into law an economic development bill, *An Act Relative To Economic Development Reorganization*, Chapter 240 of the Acts of 2010. Chapter 240 includes an amendment to the Massachusetts Personnel Record Law, M.G.L. c. 149, § 52C that, among other changes, require Massachusetts employers to notify employees within 10 days when certain documents (negative remarks) are placed in their personnel records. Chapter 240 took effect when signed by the Governor and the changes to the Personnel Record Law are retroactive to August 1, 2010. This pertains mostly to the inclusion of any negative assessment that might impact future employment.

IDENTITY THEFT and DATA STORAGE REGULATIONS

NEW 2011 Requirements for businesses to ensure secure storage and transmission of personal data are now in effect . The intent is to have the response scaled to the size of the perceived threat to data security. Small organizations with no Credit Cards, Drivers License Numbers or SS Numbers in their computer systems will have less to do. All will need written plans to assess the data that must be protected and then steps to protect that data, both in computers and office file access and storage. We continue to educate members. [201cmr 17.00 Compliance Checklist](#)

J1 VISA REFORM

WATCH – This is a federal issue but impacts camps greatly. The ACA Public Policy committee is working on this. Be aware that your staff on a J1 Counselor Visa generally cannot work another dissimilar job. [Article on J1 Visa Abuses in CA](#)

REWRITE OF DPH REGULATIONS FOR POOLS

WATCH – The MA Department of Public Health has been looking to revise the current pool regulations. They have plans to run this out in Spring 2012. A recent call to the DPH indicates they are still planning for a Spring Hearing. Some issues they may be addressing are ADA compliance, pool alarms, pool fencing, chlorine levels and staffing requirements.

ANTI BULLY BILL

The Anti Bully Legislation in MA public schools will require training and written procedures for handling bullying. It is now directed at Public Schools and not Camps, but we know that many camps have included this sort of training with their campers and staff already. It may be prudent to follow some of the models adopted in the public schools and to include this as a Best Practice.

MIN WAGE and SEASONAL EMPLOYMENT EXEMPTIONS

Minimum Wage in MA is currently \$8.00 with no immediate schedule for increases. The Fed Minimum wage was on the table but may not get the attention that Health Care received. If the Fed bumps their wage, MA will respond as MA must be higher than the National Rate. Not likely to move in this economy. Camps need to continue to file early for their 80% Min Wage certification, Overtime Pay Exemption and Seasonal Employer Exemptions. [Look for our Getting Ready For Camp Newsletter in February.](#)

TAXATION ISSUES

With many municipalities looking to balance budgets in tough times, we have heard of increased pressure to raise taxes on meals and rooms as well as a push to collect Use Taxes (Internet Sales) and Personal Property Taxes outside of Corporate Excise Taxes. Camps do enjoy a Meals Tax Exemption so we watch this carefully. If anyone has additional information on any of these, please let us know. Most of the activity is at a local level.

8th EDITION of the MA BUILDING CODES

This new version of the state building codes was shared in August 2010 and became totally applicable in February 2011. Your Facilities Manager may be interested in purchasing a copy or visiting some of the sites that discuss some of the changes. [MA Building Code Webpage](#)

ITEMS WE CONTINUE TO WATCH 2011 – 2012:

- Re-introduction of Kayak Regulations – Passed Senate – in House – [HB 664, Straus](#)
- CORI lifting ban the box – SB 0872, Tarr & [HB 2272, Turner](#) – in Committee, getting support.
- CORI Online Training and Possible Fee Increases (Awaiting more information)
- Wage and Hour issues (monitor)
- Pools/Swimming - [HB655 Pool Alarms Bill, Puppolo](#) (May also be included in Pool Regs Draft)
- [S01181 Swimming Pool Fencing](#)
- Boating Safety - [HB02913](#) Motor Boat Licensing for youth operators.
- Camp Regulations (Changes may come after DPH finishes with Pool regs)
- Employment Law (Changes in notification of record information and CORI reform got through without our input last summer.)

Disclaimer: The observations are by non- legal professionals and are intended to help you become more aware of legislative and regulatory issues that may effect the operation of Massachusetts camps. All business decisions must be carefully reviewed and in some cases discussed with your own legal council. For a copy with active links, email your request to dave@capecodseacamps.com



The Spirit vs the Letter of the Law

How to begin teaching staff the rules of your camp and how to apply them.

— Noel Pardo

Every year, I struggle with putting together training for summer staff that is effective, memorable, and applied throughout the summer. During a brainstorming session with the Tabor Summer administrative team, we decided to add a section to our week long orientation training called “The Spirit vs Letter of the Law.” The idea behind this session is to teach staff to know when to apply the rules the way they are written and when to interpret them to fit the child. No small task in an hour long session.

We began the training with two skits where returning staff applied the rule of lights out to a 9 year old camper and then a 15 year old camper. The returning staff knew the scenarios beforehand, but had to respond to the actors in both situations. With the 9 year old, our “child” bounced a ball, jumped on a bed, and was simply rambunctious. The staff member calmed the child down and let him know how important it was to get a good night sleep so the camper would be rested and ready to go (letter of the law). In the second scene, a 15 year old camper is reading in bed when the staff member lets the camper know it’s past the time to go to bed. Rather than scold the camper for being up late, the staff members asks what the camper is reading, where the camper is in the book, and lets the camper read until the end of the chapter (spirit of the law). Same rule - two different applications that allowed a staff member to see the gray in the way the rule could be applied to a camper.

After the skits, I formed an imaginary line at the front of the room going from the left wall to the right wall. I told staff that the left wall was the spirit of applying rules and the right wall represented the letter of the rules. I then asked staff to stand on the line depending on how they felt about applying rules. The majority of the staff were spread somewhere over the middle of the line, but we had a small group of staff standing right next to either side of the walls. I then asked staff to make eye contact with other staff members who were living in the same dormitories, leading/assisting activities with them, and on the same residential teams. This exercise allowed the staff to visually and physically see where their coworkers were on this “spirit/letter of the law” line. I then announced to them to consider where their coworkers were coming from as they applied the rules to the campers and let them know that could be a potential source of tension between them. BUT it provided a place for the staff to begin conversing on how they would apply the rules in each of the areas of the camp. To finish the exercise, the staff broke into groups to discuss applying five more rules in the context of the spirit versus the letter of the law.

Did it work? From camper feedback I received, staff approached situations thoughtfully and applied the rules in a fair and equitable way. Certainly, there are rules that are non-negotiable and need to be applied as they are written (no one on swim dock without a lifeguard present), but coupled with a session on Tone Training, staff understood that flexibility in applying the rules teaches campers and staff a useful lesson for life.

If you have further questions about the exercise, please feel free to email me at npardo@taboracademy.org.



Upcoming Roundtables

A great way to connect with other Directors and learn more about an area of running a camp.

Round Tables and the MCA Spring Workshop are **FREE** to MCA members. There is a \$25 fee, per Round Table Session, for Non-MCA Members.

Please RSVP for these Round Tables by emailing: Joanna Lenahan at jlenahan@girlscoutseasternmass.org

1. interviewing Staff



Tabor Academy
Thursday, Dec. 15, 2011
10 AM to 1 PM
66 Spring St., Marion, MA

Join us for a presentation by the Association of Industries in Massachusetts (AIM), on interviewing guidelines. The presenter will discuss what is legal and what is not when interviewing potential staff for your camp. You will also learn best interviewing practices and take away questions that will help you determine the best staff for your camp.

Lunch is included and a representative of AIM will be on hand for you to discuss best practices and inquire about membership for your camp.

2. Camp Fairs, Marketing, and Social Media



Clara Barton Center
Thursday, Jan.19, 2012
10 AM to 1 PM
60 Clara Barton Rd., N. Oxford, MA

Join us for a group discussion concerning Camp Fairs, Marketing, and Social Media. Find out what everyone is currently doing or have your questions answered on how to move forward in the days of social media.

Come ready to share ideas and what is working for marketing in your camp!

Bring your own bag lunch.

3. Staff Training



Hill House
Wednesday, February 8, 2012
11:15 am - 1:00 pm
127 Mt. Vernon St., Boston, MA

Join us for a group discussion around Staff Training. Learn what is required for training and add new training segments to your orientation. If you want to do something new or you are new to being a camp director, find out new ways to spice up your training. Come ready to share ideas!

Bring your own Bag lunch.

MCA Board

Please feel free to email any of our board members with questions. If you are interested in becoming a member of the board, please email Nancy Hartmann.

Nancy Hartmann, PRESIDENT 2012

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B U S I N E S S M E M B E R S

Please feel free to contact our business members at anytime. They are happy to assist you with your camp needs!

Lice Treatment Center	917.648.3789	ampinnyc@aol.com	Adrian Picheny
Thurston Food, Inc.	800.982.2227	linda@thurstonfoods.com	Linda Fenton
A.M. Skier Insurance	570.226.4571	aimees@amskier.com	Aimee Skier
Sobel Affiliates, Insurance	516.745.0000	mlabadorf@sobelins.com	Michael Labadorf
Judy Kapner Website Design and Development	212.226.2438	judy@judykapner.com	Judy Kapner
Chalmers Insurance Group/Camp USA Insurance Program	800.486.3312	jchalmers@chalmers-ins.com	Jim Chalmers
Schwerdtle Stamp (promotional items)	800.660.3315	lnoonan@schwerdtle.com	Lisa Noonan
High 5 Adventure Learning Center	802.254.8718	jottinger@high5adventure.org	Jennifer Ottinger
Oakson, Inc. (water reuse, drip dispersal)	978.282.1322	mpeters@oaksoninc.com	Marianne Peters
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Massachusetts Camping Association

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To all our members, may you have a warm and fun filled holidays and give thanks for all of our wonderful staff and campers!

