

# VESSEL REPAIR LAW

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**EXCERPTS FROM  
THE HARBORS AND  
NAVIGATION CODE**

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## **PREFACE**

The Department of Boating and Waterways has prepared this booklet to inform the public on the Vessel Repair Law. This booklet contains excerpts from the Harbors and Navigation Code.

The excerpts describe the requirements of repairpersons with regard to vessel repair and the customers they serve.

We hope that this material will be helpful to you. If you have any questions regarding vessel repair laws, please write to:

Department of Boating and Waterways  
Vessel Repair  
2000 Evergreen Street, Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA 95815

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# HARBORS AND NAVIGATION CODE

## Article 1.5. Vessel Repair

**410. Definitions.** As used in this article the following definitions apply:

(a) “Customer” means any person who requests a repairperson to do work on a vessel which is in the possession of that person.

(b) “Repairperson” means any person engaged in the business of repairing vessels.

(c) “Vessel” means any vessel which is subject to registration with the Department of Motor Vehicles and which is manufactured or used for noncommercial purposes or is leased, rented or chartered to another for noncommercial use.

**411. Application.** This article applies only to work done on a vessel with an estimated cost of one hundred dollars (\$100) or more.

**412. Limitation.** Notwithstanding Section 502\*, a repairperson has no lien on a vessel under this article for compensation for services rendered to the vessel, unless the repairperson has complied with this article.

**413. Authorization from customer.** No repairperson shall commence work for compensation without specific authorization from the customer or his or her agent in accordance with all of the following requirements:

(a) The repairperson shall give to the customer either of the following:

(1) A written estimated price for labor and parts for a specific job.

(2) A written estimate of the maximum cost for a specific job which does not differentiate between labor and parts, but which shall not be exceeded by the actual cost of the job, including labor and parts.

\* Boater's Lien Law, H & N Code, Article 4, Sec. 500-509

No work shall be done or parts supplied in excess of, or different from, the original written estimate without the separate oral or written consent of the customer. If the consent is oral, the repairperson shall make a notation on the work order and on the invoice of the date, time, name of person authorizing the additional work or change in work, and the telephone number called, if any, together with a specification of the additional parts and labor and the total additional cost.

(b) If it is necessary to disassemble a vessel or its component in order to prepare a written estimated price for required work, the repairperson shall first give the customer a written estimated price for disassembly and reassembly. The estimate shall also include the cost of parts and necessary labor to replace items such as gaskets, seals, and O rings that are normally destroyed by disassembling the component. If the disassembling might prevent the restoration of the component to its former condition, the repairperson shall write that information on the work order containing the estimate before the work order is signed by the customer.

The repairperson shall inform the customer orally, and conspicuously in writing on the work order, of the maximum time it will take the repairperson to reassemble the vessel or its component if the customer elects not to proceed with the work. The repairperson shall not charge the customer for more time than the specified maximum time if the customer elects not to proceed with the work.

After the disassembling has been performed, the repairperson shall prepare a written estimated price for labor and parts necessary for the requested work. Before performing the requested work, the repairperson shall obtain the customer's authorization to either perform the work or to reassemble the vessel or its components.

(c) When the customer is unable to deliver the vessel to the repairperson during business hours, and the customer has requested the repairperson to take possession of the vessel for the purpose of performing work on the vessel or estimating the cost of the work, the repairperson shall not undertake work on the vessel for compensation unless the repairperson has done all of the following:

(1) The repairperson has prepared a work order stating the written estimated price for labor and parts necessary to preform the work.

(2) By telephone or otherwise, the customer has been given all of the information on the work order, and the customer has approved the work order.

(3) The customer has given oral or written authorization to the repairperson to make the repairs pursuant to the work order.

If the authorization is oral, the repairperson shall make, on both the work order and the invoice, a notation of the name of the customer, the date, the time, and the telephone number called, if any.

**414. Completion of work.** Any repairperson who gives an original estimate in good faith, shall not be obligated to complete a job within the quoted or written estimated price if additional, unforeseen work is necessary to complete the job and the customer refuses to consent to payment for the cost of that additional work.

**415. Invoice requirement.** All work done by a repairperson, including all warranty work, shall be recorded on an invoice and shall describe all work done and parts supplied.

Work and parts shall be listed separately on the invoice, which shall also state separately the subtotal prices for work and for parts, not including sales tax, and shall state separately the sales tax, if any, applicable to each.

If any used, rebuilt or reconditioned parts are supplied, the invoice shall clearly state that fact. If a part of a component system is composed of new and used, rebuilt, or reconditioned parts, the invoice shall clearly state that fact.

One copy of the invoice shall be given to the customer and one copy shall be retained by the repairperson.

**416. Invoice contents.** The invoice shall show the repairperson's business name and address.

If the repairperson's telephone number is on the invoice, it shall be the telephone number that appears in any advertisement or on an advertising sign, and shall be the same number as that listed for the repairperson's firm name and address in the telephone directory, or on the telephone company records if the number is assigned to the repairperson subsequent to the publication of the telephone directory.

**417. Time and materials basis.** Notwithstanding Section 413, upon authorization from the customer as to a specific job, a repairperson may work on a vessel on a time and materials basis.

**418. Exemptions.**

(a) This article does not apply to a vessel in distress which is in need of immediate work critical to its preservation and safety, for which consent cannot expeditiously be obtained.

(b) This section does not include any situation or accident caused to the vessel by the negligence or conduct of the repairperson or the repairperson's agent.



