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Gold Key Boathouse

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Until recently, El Dorado County boat owners looking for storage faced a dilemma. Now Gold Key Storage has the answer. With estimates of more than 15,000 boats registered in the county and only one marina on Folsom Lake, storage with convenient lake access is in hot demand. Currently, wait times for a wet slip in Folsom Lake Marina at Brown's Ravine run anywhere from four to five years for boats less than 22 feet and up to ten years for larger boats. Dry storage wait times at Brown's Ravine are only a little shorter—one to two years. However, the summer sun and heat will age a boat's canvas cover and vinyl seats seven times faster than if a boat is stored indoors and away from the elements. A new option in the region is indoor, dry-stack storage, which is a better use of space. Though common on the East Coast, this alternative is now beginning to appear in California.

Dry-stack storage facilities are a little like a high-rise apartment for boats. This type of indoor storage facility uses specifically designed hydraulic lifts to stack trailers and boats on racking systems that are up to four stories high, keeping them safe from the elements and protecting them against theft and vandalism. Owners call ahead to arrange pick-up and arrive to find their boats parked by the exit and ready to go. Gold Key's dry-stack storage facilities even provide valet services that deliver boats to the water with a full tank of gas, picnic lunch and a cooler full of iced drinks.

According to Brian McCarthy, president of Southfork Development Company, "The first question a new boat owner asks is when their boat will be delivered. The second question they ask is where do they store it? Dry-stack storage is just a good idea. It helps take some of the hassle out of boating while insuring that the boater's investment is being well maintained."

—C.C.