

## A Minimum Recommended List of Boat Safety Equipment

### Handout

#### Courtesy of the U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Division

At the beginning of each boating season, every owner of a recreational boat should conduct a thorough inspection of his or her boat and all of its equipment prior to that first outing. This will insure a fun and safe boating season. The following is the minimum equipment to be inspected for most boats.

- **Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs).** USCG approved, in good and serviceable condition, one wearable for each person on board of the appropriate size stowed in a readily accessible manner, and a throwable device (if required) stowed in an immediately available location.
- **Visual Distress Signals.** 1) Pyrotechnic devices (flares; smoke) USCG approved, not expired, in good and serviceable condition, in sufficient number, stowed in a readily accessible manner. 2) Non-pyrotechnic devices (day flag; night auto SOS lantern) USCG certified, in good and serviceable condition, batteries in good charge (lantern), stowed in a readily accessible manner.
- **Fire Extinguishers.** USCG approved, in good and serviceable condition, properly charged as per the gauge, of appropriate size and type for length of vessel (B-I or B-II), recommend mounting outside entrance to galley and engine room spaces.
- **Ventilation.** (for enclosed machinery with gasoline as its fuel) – All vent hoses and cowls are free of obstruction, vent hose has no holes or tears, exhaust hose is above the normal level of bilge water, blower (if fitted) is operable and all wiring is free of cuts and abrasions.
- **Backfire Flame control (for gasoline engines only)** – USCG, SAE, or UL approved, external mounted device should fit tightly to carburetor and is free of damage, if fitted re-breather hoses are connected, device should be free of dirt and oil build up for more efficient engine operation.
- **Sound Producing Devices and Bells.** If required, insure horn emits a clear audible sound, horn bells are free of water and obstructions, and portable horns using canned propellant are full. For mouth-operated horn, make sure you can make a constant sound for at least 6 seconds in duration. It is recommended having at least one back up device such as a police whistle. For a bell, if required, insure clapper is attached to bell, and bell emits a clear, bell-like tone.

Southern Region, B.S.A.

Yachting Initiative

Program Elements

- **Navigation Lights.** Check all lights to insure they burn bright and clear, and free of obstruction, lenses are of the appropriate color (red = portside; green = starboard side) and not cracked. Check all positions of light switch to make sure the lights displayed agree with the switch positions.
- **Navigation Rules.** If required, have a book for ready reference, It is recommended that you maintain an updated copy, as rules change from time to time.
- **State and/or Local Requirements.** Be sure to check for any additional safety requirements through your state and local boating agencies.

To insure that your vessel is truly ready for the water, have a free Vessel Safety Check conducted by your local U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary or U.S. Power Squadron. This vessel safety check is a courtesy examination of safety carried or installed on a vessel and certain aspects of the vessel's overall condition. VSC requirements parallel Federal and State requirements with regard to equipment and vessel condition. If the vessel meets or exceeds the VSC requirements, the examiner will award the owner or operator a Vessel Safety Check Decal. The VSC is not a law enforcement action and is not conducted by, nor is any information obtained or provided to any law enforcement organization. It is a free public service provided in the interest of boating safety.