

# REGULATIONS

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Marine Sanitation Devices (MSDs)

## Know the Law

### **Boarding Preparations**

You've been stopped by the local marine patrol for a routine equipment check. According to your recent Courtesy Marine Exam, you are carrying all required and recommended equipment. But, do you know what else marine officers are likely to check?

### **Numbering and Registration**

Just as you wouldn't drive your car without a license plate, current sticker, and registration, your boat must be properly numbered, stickered, and your registration on board. Boat numbers must be affixed on both bows with three inch contrasting letters, with spaces or hyphens between numerals and letters, as: MD 1234 AB or MD-1234-AB. This is a Federal and State requirement.

Also, the State requires a current sticker immediately after or before the boat numbers on the port side. Many boaters like to carry their boat papers on a floating key ring handle so they will always have them close at hand.

Your vessel will also have (if manufactured since 1972) a Hull Identification Number which is the serial number of your vessel. This number is usually located on the upper right portion of the vessels' transom. This number indicates the boat manufacturer, its serial number, and the month and year of production. This number is used to register the boat, and to identify an individual boat.

### **Required Safety Equipment**

One personal flotation device (in good condition) for each person on board plus a throwable cushion or ring is required. You must have the PFDs out of the plastic and in an accessible location. The throwable should be close by the steering station. Three current-dated, hand-held, approved flares are minimum equipment to serve for day and night distress signals, both inshore and offshore. The correct number of approved fire extinguishers, readily available for use is based on the size of your vessel. You must have a sound device and of course, working running lights. Don't Leave Port Without It !We've put together a list of required and recommended boating equipment.

# U.S. COAST GUARD MINIMUM EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

## EQUIPMENT

boats less than  
16 feet

### Personal

Recreational boats must carry Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Devices, in good and serviceable condition, and of the appropriate size for the intended user.  
(Cont. Next column)

### Fire

At least one B-1 type (see below) Coast Guard-approved hand portable fire extinguisher. Not required on outboard boats less than 26 feet long and not carrying passengers  
(Cont. Next column)

### Visual

Must carry approved visual distress signals for nighttime use.

### Bella, Whistle

Every vessel less than 39.4 feet (12 meters) long must carry an efficient sound-producing device.

### Ventilation

At least two ventilator ducts fitted with cowls or their equivalent for the  
(Cont. Next column)

### Ventilation

At least two ventilator ducts for the purpose of efficiently ventilating every closed compartment that contains a gasoline

16 to less than  
26 feet

### Flotation

Wearable PFDs must be readily accessible, not stowed in bags, locked or closed compartments or have other gear stowed on top of them. Throwable  
(Cont. Next column)

### Extinguishers

for hire if the construction of such motorboats will not permit the entrapment of explosive or flammable gases or vapors, and if fuel tanks are not permanently installed.

### Distress

Must carry visual distress signals approved for daytime and nighttime use. For pyrotechnic devices (hand-held or aerial red flares, floating or hand-held orange smoke, and launches  
(Cont. Next column)

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Every vessel less than 39.4 feet (12 meters) long must carry an efficient sound-producing device.

### Boats Built After

purpose of properly and efficiently ventilating the bilges of every closed  
(Cont. Next column)

### Boats Built After

engine and every closed compartment containing a gasoline tank, except those having permanently installed tanks

26 to less than  
40 feet

### Devices

devices must be immediately available for use. There must be one Type I, II, III, or V PFD for each person on board or being towed on water skis, etc., PLUS one Type  
(Cont. Next column)

### (Coast

At least two B-1 type approved portable fire extinguishes; OR at least one B-2 type.

### Signals

for aerial redmeteors or parachute flares) a minimum of three required, in any combination that totals 3 for daytime and 3 for night use. Three day/night devices will suffice. Devices must be in serviceable condition, dates not  
(Cont. Next column)

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Every vessel less than 39.4 feet (12 meters) long must carry an efficient sound-producing device.

### April 25, 1940

engine and fuel tank compartment of boats constructed or decked over after

### August 1, 1980

vented outside the boat and containing no unprotected electrical devices. Also, engine compartments containing a

40 to not more  
than 65

### (Life Jackets)

IV throwable device. Throwable, Type IV PFDs may no longer be substituted for wearable types on boats less than 16 feet. State laws on mandatory PFD wear may vary

### Guard Approved)

At least three B-1 type approved portable fire extinguishers; OR at least one B-1 type PLUS one B-2 type.

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expired and stowed accessibly. Exceptions are open sailboats less than 26 feet long and not equipped with propulsion machinery, and manually propelled boats; both required to carry only night signals.

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Every vessel 39.4 (12 meters) long, but less than 65.6 feet (20 meters) must carry a bell and a whistle.

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April 25, 1940, using gasoline as fuel and other fuels having a flashpoint of 110° F or less.

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gasoline engine with a cranking motor must contain power-operated exhaust blowers controllable from the instrument panel.

## EQUIPMENT

### BACKFIRE FLAME ARRESTOR

boats less than 16 feet	16 to less than 26 feet	26 to less than 40 feet	40 to not more than 65 feet
One approved device on each carburetor of all gasoline engines installed after April 25, 1940, except outboard motors. Device must be marked to show compliance with SAE J-1928 or UL 1111 Standards.	Same as less than 16 feet.	Same as less than 16 feet.	Same as less than 16 feet.

\* When fixed fire-extinguishing system is installed in machinery spaces, it will replace one B-1 type portable fire extinguisher.

Coast Guard minimum equipment requirements vary with the size of the boat, type of propulsion, whether operated at night or in periods of reduced visibility, and, in some cases, the body of water on which it is used. For a more thorough discussion and complete details on how many and what types of equipment you must have aboard your boat, request a free copy of the pamphlet "Federal Requirements for Recreational Boats" from the Coast Guard. For a copy, call their Infoline at (800) 368-5647. Many state requirements go beyond Coast Guard requirements. Contact your state boating office for details.

### **Recommended Equipment:**

Coast Guard minimum requirements are just that, minimum. It is suggested you carry additional safety equipment, such as:

1. Anchor with sufficient line/chain (at least five times water depth)
2. Bailer (bucket)
3. Oars or paddles
4. First aid kit
5. VHF radio
6. Extra fuel & water
7. Tool kit
8. Sun protection
9. Flashlight

### **Pollution**

#### Garbage

All boaters are required to dispose of garbage and waste properly. If your boat is over 26 feet long, you must have a Pollution Placard and a Trash Placard. If more than 40 feet in length, you need a written garbage disposal plan. This can be as simple as a posted letter saying that you collect the garbage on board and take it ashore for appropriate disposal. Although this may seem excessive, it does have roots in serious attempts at maritime

pollution abatement.

The placard must be permanently affixed in a prominent place, it must be made of a durable material, and it must be at least four by nine inches in size. Restrictions on dumping garbage vary based on your distance from the nearest shore; However, your best course of action is to not throw anything into the water--save it until you return to shore. For the purposes of this law, garbage includes things such as rags, paper, metal and glass, and any other thing that trash is normally composed of, with the exception of fish remains.

- Dunnage--This refers to packing materials normally associated with commercial shipping such as packing foam or pallets.
- Plastics-- This includes such things as chip or garbage bags, plastic bottles, fishing line, and cigarette butts.

There are special rules on the Great Lakes as well; There is NO dumping allowed at all, regardless of how far off shore you are. (There is a Great Lakes specific placard available for boaters who live in the region.)

## **OIL**

Oil and other petroleum products are also items that may not be discharged into the water. Like garbage, there are specific legal requirements that must be met by boaters. The oil placard must be made of a durable material, must be at least 5 inches by eight inches, and be displayed in machinery space or near the bilge controls.

The discharge of any oil can do serious damage to the environment, and can also lead to large fines and/or a prison sentence. All boats must be equipped with a fixed or portable container to hold waste oil such as a bucket or can. You may not discharge oil into the bilge. If you have a spill, the first thing you should do is contain the spill, then call the Coast Guard. By law, you must report oil spills to the Coast Guard at 1-800-267-2675 immediately!

## **Waste liquids**

Waste liquids such as dish water, shower water, and toilet discharge (raw sewage) may also be regulated depending on where you boat. Raw sewage may not be discharged in U.S. waters unless you are over three miles offshore (ocean only)--this has been the law for many years! Certain areas also restrict the discharge of the following;

Graywater-- This includes dish water, shower water, or laundry water.

Treated waste-- Includes chemically or otherwise treated solid or liquid human waste.

This includes waste treated in a Type I or II MSD.

Check your local laws to see what restrictions apply to you.