

CARRIAGE OF FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

The U.S. Coast Guard requires recreational boats to carry a certain number of fire extinguishers when one or more of the following conditions exist:

1. Closed compartments where portable fuels tanks may be stored
2. Double bottoms not sealed to the hull or not completely filled with floatation material
3. Enclosed living spaces
4. Closed stowage compartments where combustible or flammable materials are stored
5. Permanently installed fuel tanks

All extinguishers must be Coast Guard approved marine type extinguishers, and have a UL rating of 5-B or higher, which can be found on their label. Vessels up to 65' long must carry a minimum number of extinguishers based on their length and whether or not they have a fixed fire extinguishing system (e.g. pre-engineered) installed in their machinery space:

Less than 26':

- Must have at least one (1) 5-B fire extinguisher on board; zero (0) if fixed fire extinguishing system installed.

26' to 40':

- Must have at least two (2) 5-B fire extinguishers on board; one (1) if fixed fire extinguishing system installed.

40' to 65':

- Must have at least three (3) 5-B fire extinguishers on board; two (2) if fixed fire extinguishing system installed.

65' and greater:

- Must carry a minimum number of fire extinguishers based on their gross tonnage (a volumetric measurement). See 46 CFR 25.30-20(c) for further details.

A boater may replace two (2) 5-B extinguishers with one (1) 20-B extinguisher, or replace any 5-B extinguisher with a Coast Guard approved fixed fire extinguishing system.

At least once a month a boater should ensure their fire extinguishers are in an accessible location on their boat, display a good operating pressure, and have been maintained to any additional manufacturer recommendations.

Many boaters have never used a fire extinguisher, so it's important to take the time to read the directions before it is needed in the event of a fire.

More Information

[Boating Safety Tips](#)

[Carbon Monoxide](#)

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