Fire Extinguishers

Properly operated, fire extinguishers can help stop a small fire before it has a chance to grow out of control. Coast Guard approved extinguishers required for boats are hand portable, either B-I or B-II classification and have a specific marine type-mounting bracket. Look for the part of the label that says "Marine Type USCG". It is recommended the extinguishers be mounted in a readily accessible position, away from the areas where a fire could likely start, such as the galley or the engine compartment.

Remember the P.A.S.S. Word

There are four basic steps to using a fire extinguisher.

Pull the safety pin by grabbing the ring and twisting.

Aim the hose at the base of the fire.

Squeeze the handle.

Sweep the hose from side to side while discharging

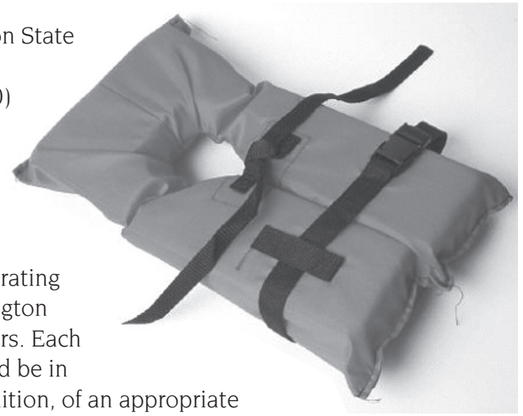
and Be Prepared

Training and practice are the best ways to prepare for emergencies. Make certain you know the P.A.S.S. system and understand how to safely use a fire extinguisher before you ever need to.

- Don't force yourself to fight a fire that makes you uncomfortable or puts you at risk.
- Fire extinguishers are small quick fixes. If you are unable to put out the fire with one extinguisher, leave.
- Don't let the fire come between you and your exit. Keep your back to the exit and the fire in front of you.

Personal Flotation Device

More than 90% of boating-related deaths are from drowning. And 80% of those drowning victims were not wearing a personal flotation device or PFD! Anytime anyone is boating, there's a chance of falling overboard.



Washington State Law (RCW 79A.60.160) requires PFDs for each person aboard a vessel operating on Washington State waters. Each PFD should be in good condition, of an appropriate size, and readily accessible. A PFD is not considered readily accessible for children twelve years old and under unless the child wears it. Children must wear a PFD whenever the vessel is underway and the child is on an open deck or open cockpit of the vessel.

When buying a PFD, always check the labels to make sure the U.S. Coast Guard approves it. Pick a life jacket that fits you, and fits the type of boating you will be doing. For your PFD to work, it has to be kept in good condition. Always air-dry your PFD thoroughly before stowing it. Check it twice a year for mildew, leaks, insecure straps, or hardened stuffing.

Life jacket, life-vest, PFD, or personal flotation device. No matter what you call it, **it won't work if you don't wear it.** Don't take chances, wear your PFD!

For information on marine-type fire extinguishers and personal flotation device requirements, visit www.uscgboating.org

Seattle Fire Department • Fire Prevention Division • Public Education Office

MARINA FIRE SAFETY

Ideas to keep you safe at play.

Marina fires are violent and devastating events. They are difficult and dangerous fires to fight. Marina fires can progress so rapidly that firefighters can only hope to limit their growth. Rapid extinguishment of a fire of this nature is not likely. The real opportunity to save lives and property lies in prevention.

Most boat owners and marina managers only think about fire prevention after news stories have aired pictures of boats on fire and interviews with distraught owners. After the flames are doused there is much more for marina managers and boat owners to contend with. Insurance claims are just the start of a lengthy clean-up and rebuilding process.

These facts emphasize the need to prevent fires from starting. Protecting our marine investments is only possible if all of those involved work together. Marina fire prevention should be of utmost concern for marina managers and boat owners alike.

Many boat owners do not have the knowledge or skills to recognize fire hazards that may exist aboard their boats. The greatest opportunity to prevent a fire is to educate boat owners to recognize hazards for the safety of the marina. Marina managers are best positioned to provide fire safety information to their tenants through a variety of methods, including classes, newsletters and mailings. A marina occupied by knowledgeable and caring occupants will be a safer marina.

INSIDE

Marina Emergency Response Plan 2
Marina Fire Prevention Guidelines 2
Fire Prevention for Boat Owners 3
Fire Extinguishers 4
Personal Flotation Devices 4

Seattle Fire Department
Fire Prevention Division
220 3rd Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98104
For more fire safety information, visit our website at:
http://www.seattle.gov/fire

Marina Emergency Response Plan

It is important to take the time to prepare for a fire emergency. An emergency response plan should respond to the risk of fire as well as outline the responsibilities of staff and boat owners.

Establish a safety committee to develop an emergency plan that outlines the actions staff should follow in the event of a fire and the training guidelines needed to maintain their readiness. The following list includes many of the elements that should be included in your plan:

1. Call 911 to report the emergency.
2. Evacuate boaters and guests.
3. Shut off all electrical power to the fire area.
4. Shut down the fuel dock.
5. Move adjacent boats away from the fire area but don't untie burning boats to drift away.
6. Move any vehicles that may obstruct firefighting operations.
7. Assign personnel to direct incoming emergency responders to the right location and remain available as an information resource.
8. Work with Fire Department personnel during the development of your plan. Firefighters can assist you with procedural decisions and you can help them by providing pre-fire information particular to your marina.
9. Train staff to make decisions based on the plan. Training should include how to report a fire, conduct an evacuation, and extinguish a fire using on-site firefighting equipment as applicable. If you expect staff to use equipment, you need to provide the training to safely and properly use each piece.
10. Schedule drills for marina employees at least twice a year. Drills allow employees the opportunity to test and practice the marina emergency response plan. Drills also provide an opportunity to update and change the plan as needed. No matter how detailed or basic, the plan should be written down and updated regularly.

Marina Fire Prevention Guidelines

While marina employees can take preventative measures in public areas, they can not prevent fires that occur within the individual boats. It is up to the marina management to foster an attitude of prevention and cleanliness for the overall safety of the marina. Hopefully this attitude will transfer to each individual slip holder.

- Develop an addendum to the leasing contract that clearly spells out the marina fire prevention procedures for each boat owner.
- Review the insurance policies for both the marina and boat owners. Audit your files regularly to ensure that these insurance certificates have not lapsed.
- Post evacuation diagrams in public areas for tenants and guests.
- Keep public areas clean—docks, parking lots, landscaping, offices, etc.
- Institute an electrical inspection program to ensure that all shore power cordsets are marine grade, in good condition and that all permanent electrical fixtures are maintained in prime working condition. Educate boat owners so they can recognize faulty or dangerous electrical equipment.
- Contact owners of boats that see little use or are rarely at the marina to check on them. Neglect breeds fire.
- Conduct special training sessions for boaters prior to the start of boating season to remind them of fueling procedures and at the end of the boating season to discuss safe winterizing.
- Take control. Enforce the fire safety procedures you have developed.

Fire Prevention for Boat Owners

Most marina fires start aboard an individual boat. Many of the common fire prevention tips for homes apply to boats too.

- When choosing a marina, check around for fire protective measures such as fire extinguishers, cleanliness, clear dock passageways, security, good lighting, etc. If you don't feel safe, take your boat and your business elsewhere.
- Use Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) marine approved cordsets and connections. Do not hook up if you see burn marks or your cordset will not firmly connect.
- Routinely replace cordsets. Worn or overloaded cordsets and damaged shore power connections are a common cause of fires.
- Regularly inspect electrical and fuel systems. Have a professional upgrade the wiring to maintain the needs of your navigational equipment and other appliances.
- Never leave operating electrical equipment, including heaters, unattended. When leaving your boat for any reason turn portable heaters off.
- Smoke alarms are important life saving devices and should be installed in your boat.
- Plan your escape. Having an escape plan can save your life in an emergency.
- Have a U.S.C.G. approved fire extinguisher on board and know how to use it. Fire extinguishers should be mounted near an exit so you are moving toward an exit as you access the extinguisher.
- Keep the dock clean and clear. Don't leave engine parts, tools or other equipment on the dock.
- Properly dispose of oily rags in a metal container with a tight fitting lid. Leaving oily rags wrapped up in a grocery sack is not safe. The chemicals will begin to breakdown the rags, causing heat and possibly a fire.

Boat owners must take responsibility for preventing fires on their boat and in the marina. The most common causes of boat fires—electrical malfunctions, unattended portable heaters and poor housekeeping—are not particular to boating life.

If you see a fire hazard or have concerns, share them with marina management.