

Vessel Safety Checks

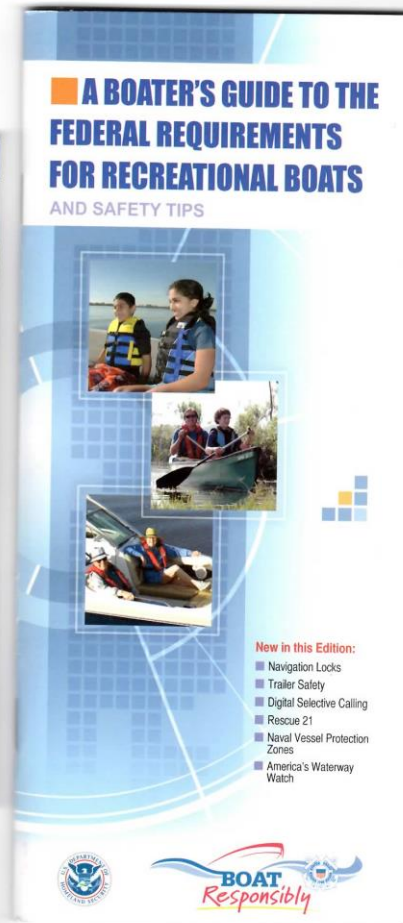
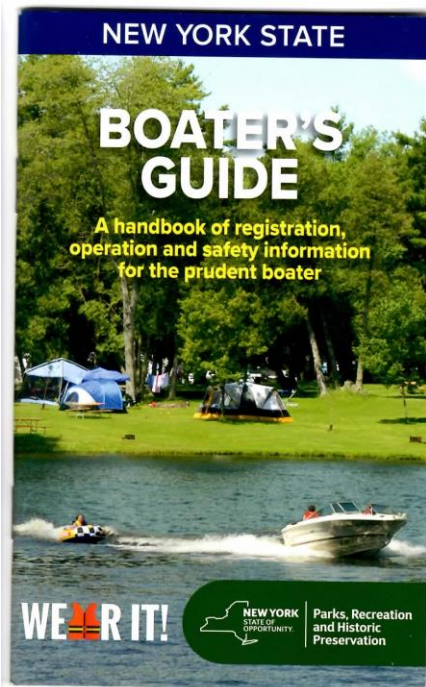
Presented by Captain Bob Wood

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What are VSCs?

- ▶ Vessel Safety Checks are voluntary vessel inspections conducted upon the request of a recreational boat owner/operator
- ▶ Can be performed by certified examiners of the Coast Guard Auxiliary or the United States Power Squadrons (aka America's Boating Club)
- ▶ Purpose is to check that all equipment required by Federal and State regulations is available, approved, accessible, unexpired and in good condition
- ▶ Recreational vessels under 65 feet are eligible, including PWCs and paddle craft but will not be covered in this presentation
- ▶ There are no penalties or fines for inspection failures and such are not reported to authorities

Excellent Sources for State/Federal Boating Regulations (Available to download online)



Vessel Description

One of the first items of information that the Examiner will determine is the length in feet of the inspected vessel as that will affect the equipment required.

As shown by the following chart, the rules define four classes:

1. Less than 16 feet
2. 16 feet to less than 26 feet
3. 26 feet to less than 40 feet
4. 40 feet to less than 65.6 feet

Recreational Vessel—Required Equipment Checklist

Vessel Length (in Feet)				Equipment	Requirement	Page
<16	16<26	26<40	40<65.6			
		X	X	Navigation Rules (Inland only)	The operator of a vessel 39.4 feet (12 meters) or greater must have on board a copy of these rules.	11
X	X	X	X	Boater Education Certificate or Operator License	Required for certain operators in some states	26
X	X	X	X	Certificate of Number (State Registration)	All undocumented vessels equipped with propulsion machinery must be state registered. Certificate of Number must be on board when vessel is in use. (Note: Some states require all vessels to be numbered.)	25
X	X	X	X	State Numbering	(a) Plain block letters/numbers not less than three inches in height must be affixed on each side of the forward half of the vessel (contrasting color to background). (b) State validation decal(s) must be affixed within six inches of the registration number.	25
	X	X	X	Certificate of Documentation	Applies to "Documented" vessels only: (a) Original and current certificate must be on board. (b) Vessel name/hailing port marked on exterior part of hull—letters not less than four inches in height. (c) Official Number permanently affixed on interior structure—numbers not less than three inches in height.	25–26
X	X	X	X	Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)	(a) One wearable Type I, II, III, or V PFD for each person on board (must be USCG approved)	29
	X	X	X		(b) In addition to paragraph (a), must carry one throwable Type IV device	
X	X	X X	X X	Fire Extinguishers	(a) One 5-B (when enclosed compartments) (b) One 20-B or two 5-B (Note: Fixed system equals one 5-B) (c) One 20-B and one 5-B, or three 5-B (Note: Fixed system equals one 5-B)	30
X	X	X	X	Backfire Flame Arrestor	Required on gasoline engines, except outboard motors	31
X	X	X	X	Ventilation	(a) All vessels that use gasoline as their fuel with enclosed engine and/or fuel tank compartments must have natural ventilation (at least two ducts fitted with cowls). (b) In addition to paragraph (a), a vessel built after July 31, 1980, must have a power exhaust blower.	31
X	X	X	X	Navigation Lights	Required to be displayed from sunset to sunrise and during period of reduced visibility.	32
X				Visual Distress Signals (VDSs)	(a) One electric distress light or three combination (day/night) red flares (Note: Required to be carried on board only when operating between sunset and sunrise)	33
X	X	X	X		(b) One orange distress flag and one electric distress light, or three handheld or floating orange smoke signals and one electric distress light, or three	

Official Checklist Form (ANSC7012)



VESSEL SAFETY CHECK (VSC)

To be completed by a U.S. Coast Guard approved Vessel Examiner.
See the back of this form for a brief explanation of required items.
A Federal Requirements pamphlet is also available.

Date of VSC: _____

Decal Awarded: Yes No

Owner/Operator Name: _____

Owner/Operator has attended a CGAUX, USPS, State or _____ Boating Safety Class: Yes No

Location of VSC - County: _____ State: _____

Replaced decal was: Last Year Outdated First time

VESSEL INFORMATION:

Registration or Documentation Number: _____

HIN: _____

Length: <16 16-25 26-39 40-65 >65

Powered by: Gas Diesel Sail Other

Area of Operations: Inland Coastal

Type: PWC Open Cabin Other

VESSEL SAFETY CHECK DECAL REQUIREMENTS

Item	Yes	No	N/A
1. Display of Numbers			
2. Registration/Documentation			
3. Personal Flotation Devices (PFD)			
4. Visual Distress Signals (VDS)			
5. Fire Extinguishers			
6. Ventilation			
7. Backfire Flame Control			
8. Sound Producing Devices/Bell			
9. Navigation Lights			
10. Pollution Placard			
11. MARPOL Trash Placard			
12. Marine Sanitation Devices			
13. Navigation Rules			
14. State and/or Local Requirements			
15. Overall Vessel Condition: as applies			
a. Deck Free of Hazards / Clean Bilge			
b. Electrical - Fuel Systems			
c. Galley - Heating Systems			

RECOMMENDED AND DISCUSSION ITEMS (While encouraged, items below are not VSC requirements)

Item	Yes	No
I. Marine Radio		
II. Dewatering Device & Backup		
III. Mounted Fire Extinguishers		
IV. Anchor & Line for Area		
V. First Aid and PIW Kits (**over)		
VI. Inland Visual Distress Signals		
VII. Capacity/Certificate of Compliance		
VIII. Discussion Items: as applies		
a. Accident Reporting - Owner Responsibility		
b. Offshore Operations		
c. Nautical Charts / Navigation Aids		
d. Survival Tips / First Aid		
e. Fueling / Fuel Management		
f. Float Plan / Weather & Sea Conditions		
g. Insurance Considerations		
h. Boating Check List		
i. Safe Boating Classes		
j. Maritime Domain Awareness		

I certify that I have personally examined this vessel and find it meets the above requirements at the time of this Vessel Safety Check. I am a qualified Vessel Examiner of the: CGAUX , USPS , State of _____ , or _____ .

Printed Name of the Examiner _____ Examiner Number _____

Examiner Signature _____ Telephone Number _____

Additional Comments: *This is not an official boarding for law enforcement purposes. It is recommended that you correct any deficiencies noted. This checklist is furnished for your information. There is no assumption of liability of any kind for advice given or opinions expressed in connection to this examination. By accepting the Vessel Safety Check decal you are pledging to maintain your boat and equipment to the standard of safety exhibited during this examination. Please remove the Vessel Safety Check decal if the boat is sold or no longer meets these requirements.*

I am consenting to this Vessel Safety Check of my watercraft with full knowledge that it is provided to me as a public service on a volunteer basis without cost, and I understand and agree that my receipt of a Vessel Safety Check shall not constitute or be construed as a warranty or guarantee as to either the qualification, knowledge, or skills of the operator; the seaworthiness of the vessel; or the serviceability or adequacy of any equipment on board.

Owner/Operator Signature: _____ Date: _____

Vessel Safety Checklist

Decal (Mandatory) Requirements:

- **Display of numbers**
- **Registration/Documentation**
- **Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)**
- **Visual Distress Signals (VDS)**
- **Fire Extinguishers (Older than 12 years must be replaced)**
- **Ventilation**
- **Backfire Flame Control**
- **Sound Producing Devices**
- **Navigation Lights**
- **Pollution Placard**
- **MARPOL Trash Placard**

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Vessel Safety Checklist (Cont'd)

Decal (Mandatory) Requirements:

- Marine Sanitation Devices
- Navigation Rules (Vessels 49 feet and over)
- State and Local Requirements (Anchor and line required by NYS)
- Overall Vessel Condition
- Engine Cutoff Switch (Federal requirement only at this time)

Vessel Checklist, Cont'd

Recommendations and Discussion Items (Not required for Decal Award):

- ❑ Marine Radio
- ❑ Dewatering Device and Backup
- ❑ Mounted Fire Extinguishers
- ❑ Anchor and Line for Area
- ❑ First Aid Kit
- ❑ PIW (fna, Man Overboard) Kit
- ❑ Accident Reporting
- ❑ Nautical Charts
- ❑ Fuel management

Vessel Checklist (Cont'd)

- ❑ Float Plan
- ❑ Weather and Sea Conditions
- ❑ Boating Checklist
- ❑ Safe Boating Classes
- ❑ Maritime Domain Awareness

How to sign up for a VSC



Both the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and the United States Power Squadrons have certified vessel examiners who will perform a free Vessel Safety Check ("VSC") at your boat, at a time of mutual convenience.

Go to www.cgaux.org, click on "Get A Vessel Safety Check" and you will be taken to the Coast Guard Auxiliary site to fill out a contact form. The closest examiners from both organizations will contact you.

Preparing for an Inspection

Inspections generally run from 30 to 60 minutes. You can expedite the process by being well prepared. By reference to the Boater's Guide books mentioned in this presentation, you can anticipate the Examiner's requests thus ensuring that you have the required equipment on board, it is up-to-date and in good condition.

Congratulations Safe Boater!

