



Vessel Safety Check - Measure Twice, Cut Once - and Free!

by VINCENT PICA

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UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY



There is no greater "on the water" act of love for your fellow boaters, kids, spouses and friends than having a Vessel Safety Check conducted right in here. Oh, and it's your favorite price. Free. This column is about that.

Pedal to the Metal

The United States Coast Guard has declared to all its partners that, beginning with National Safe Boating Week, there is to be a concerted effort to get the word - and the deed - out there that all boaters and boats are entitled to, deserve and need a Vessel Safety Check (VSC). National Safe Boating Week starts May 19th and runs through May 25th. During this time frame, a highly focused and concentrated effort will be organized to perform VSCs at ramps, marinas, yacht clubs and other locations throughout our community.

Why Most Pass on the First Try and Why Some Need Two Tries

First, the VSC is NOT a regulatory event. If the boat doesn't meet USCG requirements for its size class, no one reports you to anybody. What is most likely to happen is one of two things:

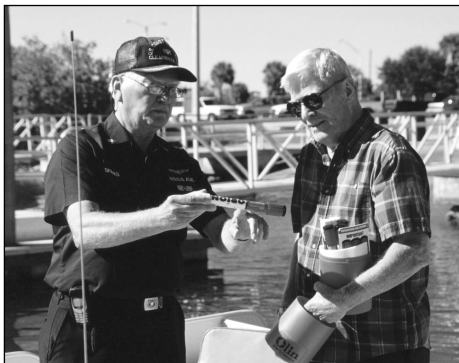
1. Examiner: "Your flares are expired. Why don't you walk up to the boat house and buy yourself some current ones. I'll wait."

Boat Owner: "I'll be right back."

2. Examiner: "Here are the three things you need to address. Here's my cell phone #. Call me when you have them and I'll take a ride down to your marina."

Boat Owner: "Thanks so much."

As you saw back on April 12, 2012, (SSP, "No Fuss, No Muss - and Your



Favorite Price (Free!) - Vessel Exams"), there are a lot of reasons why a boat might not pass muster, but that is the point of the exam. You don't want to find out, after you scream, "honey, put on a life-jacket!" that they are no longer serviceable enough to save your loved one(s). And, as implied above, the most likely reason that the boat won't pass muster is because your flares have expired. I just had my inspection yesterday and I did pass - but now I realize that my flares will expire in six weeks. Time for new ones - now. (see SSP, "Visual Distress Signals & the Private Boat Captain", April 19, 2012.)

Here is a quick review of when and how many flares (Visual Distress Signals) are needed.

When:

1) At all times, boats 16 feet or more in length must carry VDS suitable for day use AND VDS suitable for night use OR VDS suitable for both day and night use.

2) Between sunset and sunrise, boats less than 16 feet in length must carry VDS suitable for night use.

3) The following vessels are not

required to carry VDS suitable for day use, but must carry VDS suitable for night use when operating between sunset and sunrise:

a. boats participating in organized events such as regattas, races or marine parades

b. manually propelled boats

c. sailboats of completely open construction, less than 26 feet in length and not equipped with propulsion machinery.

How Many:

Only one approved orange flag need be carried to meet the requirements for a "day" signal. Only one approved electric distress light need be carried to meet the requirements for a "night" signal. The minimum required number for pyrotechnic VDS is three for day AND three for night, OR three that are suitable for day or night. Hand held and aerial flares are generally approved for day and night use, while orange smoke devices are only approved for day use. The boater can carry any number of expired devices, as well as any other type of distress signaling device, but if VDS are required, the boat must carry at least the minimum number of serviceable devices.

Next?

How about your fire extinguishers? That might trip you up and there are hardly any more frightening events at sea that a boat afire (see SSP, "Boat's Afire - Now What?" 3/14/07.) No one will ever get to you in time (unless you are one lucky sailor to be on fire just as USCG Cutter comes up alongside!) and the fire is doubling in size every five

minutes. So, let's focus on fire extinguishers in here.

Fire Extinguishers: "To Tap or Not To Tap...that is the question."

The USCG Auxiliary recently put a report together in our "For Safety's Sake" e.magazine about fire extinguishers and the practice of shaking a fire extinguisher to "feel the powder moving inside or to tap the bottom to free up any caked material." I've done that a million times and never felt it myself. What I was always hoping for was NOT to feel the "thunk" of caked up retardant going back and forth in the cylinder. In reviewing this practice with the Coast Guard's Lifesaving and Fire Safety Division, they indicated that there "is no official guidance requiring or recommending the shaking or inverting of an extinguisher to correct packed powder. It is not a practice recommended by NFPA or others. The issue of the powder packing was an issue on the first extinguishers. It has ceased to be an issue for users." (BTW, A good discussion of packing and caking of dry chemicals in fire extinguishers can be found in the technical bulletin issued by ANSUL available at: http://safetyseal.net/pdf_files/AnsulTechBul45.pdf.)

Old habits die hard. But remember this. Measure twice. Cut once.

BTW, if you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at JoinUSCGAux@aol.com or go direct to the D1SR Human Resources department, who are in charge of new members matters, at DSO-HR and we will help you "get in this thing..."



County Clerk Update

by SUFFOLK COUNTY CLERK

JUDY PASCALE

OBTAINING A VETERAN PEDDLER'S PERMIT

Suffolk County Clerk Judith A. Pascale would like to remind all honorably discharged members of the United States Armed Forces, and their spouses, that they are eligible to apply for a Veteran's Peddler License. This license provides veterans with the right to sell goods, wares and merchandise.

"Service to our Country is amongst the highest of callings in a person's life," commented Suffolk County Clerk Judith A. Pascale. "I am proud to offer this service to our veterans and sincerely thank them for their service."

To apply, you must present a valid driver's license or photo identification, proof of residency for at least 6-months (a local utility bill can be used), and a copy of your DD-214 or Military Discharge papers. Licenses are issued free of charge and are valid as long as you maintain residency within the county. To get a license, you must appear in person and bring two (2) passport photos with you.

In addition to obtaining a Veteran's Peddler's License from the County Clerk, you will also be required to comply with village or town ordinances related to street peddling. Information can be obtained directly from the individual towns and villages in which the business will be conducted.

"Be sure to contact the respective municipality to learn about their rules and regulations regarding the peddling of wares within their town or village," commented Pascale.

Non-veterans who are interested in obtaining a peddlers permit may contact their respective town or village government for more information.

For a better understanding of all the services available to veterans within Suffolk County, individuals should contact the Suffolk County Veterans Services Agency at (631) 853-VETS (8387).

Legislator Muratore Recognizes Coach Kevin Foley



Legislator Tom Muratore presenting proclamation to Coach Kevin Foley with Dr. Shaun Mackay, President, SCCC.

Legislator Tom Muratore (R-Ronkonkoma) recently recognized Mr. Kevin Foley, Suffolk County Community College's Head Women's Basketball Coach. Mr. Foley was voted Region XV Coach of the Year. This is the 8th time Coach Foley has won the Region XV Coach of the Year award.

"Congratulations to Coach Kevin Foley on his Region XV Coach of the Year award," remarked Legislator Muratore. "Suffolk County Community College is lucky to have such a great coach and leader. I'm sure Mr. Foley will continue to be an inspiration to his team."

To contact the office of Legislator Tom Muratore, please call 631-854-9292 or email tom.muratore@suffolkcountyny.gov.