



# SHIP SAFETY BULLETIN

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**Subject:** Maintaining fire safety systems and equipment

## Scope

This bulletin applies to vessels that must comply with:

- the *Vessel Fire Safety Regulations*
- the *Small Vessel Regulations*, and
- the *Fishing Vessel Safety Regulations*

## Purpose

This bulletin is to remind the marine community about maintaining fire safety systems and equipment.

## What you need to know

Transport Canada would like to remind the marine community of the following:

- visually check your systems and equipment as required
- confirm that the systems and equipment are accessible and available for immediate use
- keep the systems and equipment in safe operating condition, and
- consider the manufacturer’s instructions or recommendations when inspecting and maintaining the systems and equipment

Requirements for the maintenance of fire safety systems and equipment can be found in:

- [Subsection 102\(2\) of the Vessel Fire Safety Regulations<sup>1</sup>](#)

<sup>1</sup> Refer to the [Revised guidelines for the maintenance and inspection of fire protection systems and appliances](#) (MSC.1/Circ.1432), the [Revised guidelines for the maintenance and inspections of fixed carbon dioxide fire-extinguishing systems](#) (MSC.1/Circ.1318/Rev.1) and the [Improved guidelines for marine portable fire extinguishers](#) (A.951(23)).

**Keywords:**

1. Fire safety
2. Manufacturer
3. Maintenance

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- [Section 307 of the Vessel Fire Safety Regulations](#)
- [Section 5 of the Small Vessel Regulations](#), and
- [Section 3.04 of the Fishing Vessel Safety Regulations](#)

### ***Fixed fire-extinguishing systems***

Visually inspect all accessible components to confirm their proper condition and that they are rust-free and have no signs of damage. Make sure that the system is leak free, all valves are in the correct position, pressure gauges are in proper range and flexible hoses are kept in good condition.

When the vessel is fitted with a **foam system**, make sure foam concentrate is adequate.

When the vessel is fitted with a **gas system**, check the hydrostatic test date on all containers, verify instructions are correct and explain that stop valves should be opened before cylinders. Make sure to maintain records of compressed air blow-through maintenance for CO<sub>2</sub> discharge lines. Manual local operation of CO<sub>2</sub> cylinders requires that portable actuation levers fitted into the top of the valves be free from obstructions and labelled clearly as they must be easily found in an emergency.

For more information on hydrostatic testing of pressure containers requirements, see [SSB No.: 20/2021](#).

For more information, read the [Marine Transportation Safety Information Letter 03/23](#) from the Transportation Safety Board of Canada.

### ***Fire detection***

Make sure that flame and smoke detectors are working as per manufacturer's specification. Check that the alarm can be heard and detectors are accessible. Test all detectors and replace batteries (if fitted) every year.

### ***Fire doors***

Make sure fire doors are clear and closed properly. Make sure fire doors are **never** latched in the open position with ropes. If the doors can be remotely operated, test their proper release every year.

### ***Portable fire extinguishers***

Make sure portable fire extinguishers are fully charged and replaced immediately after discharge. They must also be marine-type approved extinguishers, properly latched, free of rust and easy to reach.

### ***Fire fighter outfits/fire hoses***

Make sure firefighting outfits are complete, kept clean, in good condition, stored in a dry storage cabinet and fully stocked. Replace damaged equipment immediately. Make sure

radios and flashlights are fully charged and that the breathing apparatus are fully charged. Records of annual air exchange in breathing air bottles must be maintained.

When compressors are used for on board refill, the air that is supplied by means of respiratory protective equipment or breathing apparatus and the system that supplies the air, including its cylinders, must meet the requirements set out in the Canadian Standards Association CSA Standard Z180.1, *Compressed breathing air and systems*, as required by [subsection 142\(1\) of the Maritime Occupational Health and Safety Regulations](#).

Fire hoses must be easy to access. Fire hose cabinets must be replaced if damaged, and they cannot be held closed by other means, such as with ropes or extra bolts.