



*See Note on pages 2 and 3

Boating Safety Circular 73*

The following is a chronological summary of the regulations and amendments the Coast Guard has issued under the authority of Title 46, of the United States Code:

Especially Hazardous Conditions, 33 CFR 177. Describes specific unsafe boating conditions in which use of a boat could be especially dangerous. Issued Jul 7, 1972; effective Aug 7, 1972.

Defect Notification, 33 CFR 179. Requires manufacturers to notify consumers of safety defects in boats and associated equipment. Issued Aug 4, 1972; effective Sept 3, 1972.

Manufacturer Requirements, 33 CFR 181. Requires certification of compliance for manufacturers of recreational boats subject to federal standards. Also requires manufacturers to assign hull identification numbers to their boats. Issued Aug 4, 1972; effective Nov 1, 1972.

Boat and Associated Equipment Standards, 33 CFR 183. Requires basic flotation and sets load and horsepower capacities for boats under twenty feet in length. Issued Aug 4, 1972; effective Nov 1, 1972, except for the flotation standard, effective Aug 1, 1973.

Vessel Numbering and Accident Reporting, 33 CFR 173 & 174. Establishes uniform system for registering and numbering boats with propulsion machinery. Establishes procedures for reporting boating accidents. Issued Oct 7, 1972; effective Jul 1, 1973.

Personal Flotation Devices, 33 CFR 175. Establishes new requirements for carriage of personal flotation devices (PFDs). Classifies PFDs into types I, II, III, IV, and V to indicate the general level of performance. Issued Mar 28, 1973; effective Oct 1, 1973.

Hazardous Bars, 33 CFR 177. Defines unsafe boating conditions which can exist in certain coastal bars and inlets in Oregon and Washington. Issued Jan 23, 1974; effective Feb 22, 1974.

Manifestly Unsafe Voyage, 33 CFR 177. Defines unsafe conditions that can exist for recreational boats in prolonged open-sea voyages. Issued Mar 18, 1974; effective Apr 17, 1974.

Amendment to Inboard Safe Loading Standard, 33 CFR 183. Relaxes the safe loading standard for inboard boats, particularly as it applies to high performance boats. Issued Aug 13, 1975; effective Feb 9, 1976.

Amendment to Safe Loading and Safe Powering Standards, 33 CFR 183. Clarifies terms in the standards that had been misunderstood, e.g., "level", "beam", "length". Issued Sept 23, 1975; effective Mar 23, 1976.

Amendment to Flotation Standard, 33 CFR 183. Amends the table used to calculate the weight of outboard engines. Adds a new category of outboard engines over 150 HP. Issued Mar 18, 1976; effective Sept 15, 1976.

Amendment to Numbering Regulations, 33 CFR 173 and 174. Updates information in the numbering regulations. Primarily, notes that the District of Columbia and Guam have approved numbering systems. Issued Jun 10, 1976; effective Jun 10, 1976.

Amendment to PFD Regulations, 33 CFR 175. Revokes the provision which permits a person using a white water canoe or kayak to use a non-approved life saving device because approved PFDs that are suitable for white water use became available. Issued Jun 14, 1976; effective Oct 1, 1977.

Amendment to Safe Loading and Flotation Standards, 33 CFR 183. Clarifies the meaning of certain terms in the standards, e.g. "boat weight" and "permanent appurtenances". Excepts submersible boats, surface effect vehicles, and amphibious vehicles from the flotation standard. Issued Jan 13, 1977; effective Jul 22, 1977.

Amendment to Safe Loading Requirements for Low- and Non-Powered Boats, 33 CFR 183. Establishes a more reasonable formula for calculating the safe loading capacity of low-powered and non-powered boats, e.g. dinghies, dories, rowboats. Issued Jan 13, 1977; effective Jul 22, 1977.

Fuel and Electrical Standards for Boats, 33 CFR 183. Establishes fuel and electrical standards for the manufacture of boats using inboard gasoline engines for propulsion or electrical power in order to prevent fires and explosions. Issued Jan 31, 1977; effective dates of the requirements vary from Aug 1, 1977 to Aug 1, 1978.

Flotation Standards for Boats, 33 CFR 183. Establishes level flotation standards on rowboats and outboard boats less than 20 feet in length, the boats most often involved in swamping and capsizing accidents, so that the boat will float level when swamped and provide a safe platform until rescue. Issued Apr 18, 1977; effective Aug 1, 1978.

Amendment to Fuel and Electrical Standards for Boats, 33 CFR 183. Revises several unnecessary requirements. Issued Jul 14, 1977; effective Aug 1, 1977.

Personal Flotation Device Pamphlet, 33 CFR 181. Requires manufacturers of personal flotation devices (PFD) to provide with each PFD a pamphlet containing information on the selection, care, and proper use of PFDs. Issued Mar 9, 1977; effective Sept 1, 1978.

U. S. - Canadian Agreement on Assignment of Hull Identification Numbers, 33 CFR 181. Advises of agree-

ment between the U. S. and Canadian Coast Guards to coordinate assignment of Manufacturer ID codes, allowing a manufacturer to use the same hull identification number system when marketing boats in U. S. and Canada. Issued Apr 10, 1978; effective Apr 10, 1978.

Amendment to Numbering Regulations, 33 CFR 173. Permits owners of leased or chartered vessels to retain the certificate of number when the rental is for less than seven days. Issued Apr 27, 1978; effective Apr 27, 1978.

Amendment to Fuel Systems Standard, 33 CFR 183. Delayed effective date of fuel pump and carburetor requirements from Aug 1, 1978 to Feb 1, 1979 to give industry more time to comply with new regulations. Issued Sept 17, 1978; effective Sept 17, 1978.

Amendment to Electrical Systems Standard, 33 CFR 183. Delayed the effective date of ignition protection requirements from August 1, 1978 to Feb 1, 1979 to give industry more time to comply with the new regulations. Issued Sept 17, 1978; effective Sept 17, 1978.

Amendment to Flotation Systems Standard, 33 CFR 183. Allows use of flotation material that is not resistant to gasoline or other solvents if it is installed in a part of the boat where it will not come in contact with these liquids or vapors. Establishes performance specifications for flotation material to help manufacturers determine if their flotation material will meet the standard. Issued Dec 4, 1978; effective Aug 1, 1979.

Amendments to Numbering and Accident Reporting Regulations, 33 CFR 173 & 174. Clarifies circumstances of a reportable injury. Extends the time limit for reporting accidents that don't involve death or personal injury from 5 to 10 days. Increases the maximum property damage in a non-reportable accident from \$100 to \$200. Clarifies that the rulemaking authority must determine the causes of reported accidents. Issued Jan 25, 1979; effective Feb 26, 1979.

Amendments to Numbering and Accident Reporting Regulations, 33 CFR 174. Leaves to the states the manner in which an invalid number sticker must be removed, conditions under which the number and validation sticker must be removed; and content of the report required of the operator in case of death or disappearance. Issued Jul 19, 1979; effective Aug 20, 1979.

Amendment to Electrical System Standard, 33 CFR 183. Permits circuit breakers located up to 7" away from the power source, or up to 40 inches away if the conductor is additionally protected by a sheath or enclosed box, if it is physically impossible to locate the circuit breaker at the power source. Issued Nov 5, 1979; effective Nov 5, 1979.

Operator Requirement for Visual Distress Signals, 33 CFR 175. Requires operators of boats used on coastal waters to carry approved (for both day and night) visual distress signals, e.g. orange smokes, orange distress flags, flares, electric distress lights. Exempts boats used in approved regattas, open sailboats less than 26 feet, rowboats, canoes, and other boats under 16 feet in length during daylight hours. Issued Dec 17, 1979; effective Jan 1, 1981.

Ventilation Standard for Boats, 33 CFR 175 and 183. Requires closed compartments with gas engines, including generators, on boats built on or after August 1, 1980 to be ventilated by a blower system of a certain standard. Requires

engine compartments, and in certain circumstances fuel tank compartments, to have natural ventilation. Requires operators of such boats to keep certain parts of the blower system operable. Issued Dec 17, 1979; effective Aug 1, 1980.

Amendment to Capacity Information Label on Boats, 33 CFR 183. Requires a bright yellow background on the label. Requires the capacity to be shown in number of persons as well as pounds on boats less than 20 feet in length. Adds a method to determine the number of persons a boat can safely hold. Issued Jan 10, 1980; effective Aug 1, 1980.

Amendment to Visual Distress Signal Regulations to Accept Hand-Held Red Flares, 33 CFR 175. Adds hand-held red flares to the lists of visual distress signals (see item 30). Issued Jul 3, 1980; effective Jan 1, 1981.

Start-in-Gear Protection Devices on Outboard Motors, 33 CFR 181 & 183. Requires manufacturers of an outboard motor with 115 lbs. or more of static thrust (7-9 hp) to provide built-in start-in-gear protection in the outboard motor or a label stating that the outboard motor must be installed with a compatible remote control which contains the start-in-gear protection. All manufacturers of remote starting controls must affix a label to their controls telling whether or not the control system has start-in-gear protection. Dealers installing an outboard motor with remote controls must insure that start-in-gear protection is provided. Issued Jan 15, 1981; effective Aug 1, 1982.

Application for Certificate of Numbers, Change in Required Contents, 33 CFR 174. No longer requires states to obtain information on date of birth and citizenship of vessel owners applying for Certificates of Number. Issued Feb 25, 1982; effective Mar 29, 1982.

Amendment to Visual Distress Signal Requirements, 33 CFR 175. Amendment clarifies the language concerning the carriage requirements. A revised table shows the approval numbers of acceptable pyrotechnic signal devices. A grandfather clause was inserted to allow pyrotechnic signal launchers manufactured before 1 Jan 1981 to be continued to be used in launching of approved signals. Issued Jun 7, 1982; Effective Jun 7, 1982.

Amendment to Correction of Especially Hazardous Conditions Aboard Boats, 33 CFR 177. Amendment is editorial in nature and reflects changes made in other Statutes cited by the "Hazardous Conditions" regulations. These changes include reference to the Inland Navigational Rules Act of 1980. Issued Aug 23, 1982; Effective Aug 23, 1982.

Amendment to Boat Hull Identification Numbers, 33 CFR 181. Amendment makes alteration or removal of the HIN more difficult; requires the placement of an additional HIN which will enable identification of the boat even if primary HIN is altered or removed; requires a single HIN format; and makes the removal or alteration of a HIN a violation of federal law. Issued Sept 9, 1983; Effective Aug 1, 1984.

Amendment to Electrical and Fuel System Standards, 33 CFR 183. Amendment repeals and revises standards determined to be no longer necessary. These changes were made after a review effort to lessen regulatory burden upon recreational boat manufacturers, while insuring that an adequate level of safety is maintained. The amendment makes numerous changes to regulations affecting batteries, conductors, overcurrent protection, fuel tanks, fuel stop

*NOTE: This is a revised **Boating Safety Circular 73**. Every 5 years the Coast Guard conducts a review of the boating safety regulations to determine whether they are necessary, beneficial, cost-effective, and are in step with current technology. The latest review will be

valves, hose clamps, seals and gaskets, hose identification, and anti-siphon protection. Issued Dec 15, 1983. Effective Jun 11, 1984.

Amendment to Visual Distress Signal Requirements, 33 CFR 175. Amendment revises definition of “coastal waters” where visual distress signals are required to be carried on vessels. Issued Feb 27, 1984. Effective Aug 27, 1984.

Amendment to Certification, Safe Loading and Flotation Standards, 33 CFR 181 & 183. Amendment revises or removes sections of the regulations which have been determined to be no longer necessary or to have limited value in improving boating safety. Weights of outboard motors, which are used to determine safe loading capacities, are updated. The amount of flotation material required to be installed in boats is also revised. Issued October 5, 1984. Effective April 3, 1985.

Amendment to Certification, Safe Loading and Flotation Standards, 33 CFR 181 & 183. Amendment clarifies the intent of the regulations after the amendment issued October 5, 1984. Manufacturers of boats rating a maximum persons capacity of less than 550 pounds must not exceed the lesser calculated value obtained by performing the two tests described in §§ 83.39 & 183.41. Issued May 2, 1985. Effective May 2, 1985.

Amendment to Certification and Safe Powering Standards, 33 CFR 181 & 183. Amendment establishes a performance test as an alternative to the existing calculation method to allow higher horsepower capacities for certain high performance boats. The alternate test applies to recreational outboard boats 13 feet or less in length with remote wheel steering, a minimum 19-inch transom height or equivalent, and a capacity rating not to exceed two persons. Issued Oct 23, 1986. Effective Aug 1, 1987.

Amendment to Ventilation Standard, 33 CFR 183. Amendment removes the requirements for ventilation openings to face forward and for testing to show airflow. The requirements had virtually no impact on achieving necessary ventilation and their removal relieves a regulatory burden on recreational boat manufacturers. Issued Oct 23, 1986. Effective Aug 1, 1987.

Amendment to Fuel System Standard, 33 CFR 183. Amendment requires gasoline fuel hose installed in new recreational boats to meet the performance requirements of SAE Standard J1527DEC85 instead of SAE Standard J30C. The change responded to safety concerns about the effects of increasing levels of aromatics and alcohols in fuels on permeation rates and longevity of hose meeting SAE Standard J30C. Issued Apr 20, 1987. Effective Oct 17, 1987.

Operating a Vessel While Intoxicated, 33 CFR 95, 173, 174, and 177. Rule sets independent Federal standards based on an individual’s behavior and blood alcohol concentration (BAC) for determining whether an individual operating a recreational vessel is intoxicated. It adopts enacted State BAC standards. It amends regulations to require specific information on the role of alcohol or drugs in reports of boating casualties. It allows Coast Guard personnel to terminate the use of a vessel when the operator is under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent that further operation of the vessel creates an unsafe condition. Penalties include a civil penalty up to \$1,000 and a criminal

penalty up to \$5,000, up to one year imprisonment, or both. Issued Dec 14, 1987. Effective Jan 13, 1988.

Amendment to Electrical System Standard and Incorporation by Reference, 33 CFR 183. Amendment revises electrical standards for new recreational boats by incorporating Underwriters Laboratories (UL) Standard 1426 - Cables for Boats - in lieu of a general reference to independent testing laboratories that is no longer considered useful, and by deleting UL Standard 83 - Thermoplastic Insulated Wires and Cables. The change added the UL listed boat cable standard (UL 1426) which is now widely used for marine cable installed in recreational boats and made minor changes to the list of other standards incorporated by reference in Part 183, to reflect current publication dates and one address change. Issued Sept 23, 1988. Effective Mar 22, 1989.

Amendment to Personal Flotation Device Pamphlet Requirements, 33 CFR 175 & 181. Updates PFD Pamphlet Requirements by incorporating by reference the PFD pamphlet design and packaging requirements in Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. (UL) Standard for Marine Buoyant Devices (UL 1123). The rule terminated an interim exemption for PFD manufacturers (issued Feb 23, 1989) on Feb 4, 1991. The rule also revised other PFD related sections to reflect approval of special purpose Type V PFDs, and removed an obsolete exemption from PFD carriage requirements for certain kayaks and canoes, prior to October 1, 1977. Issued Aug 6, 1990; effective Feb 4, 1991.

Exemption from Personal Flotation Device Pamphlet Requirements, 33 CFR 181. Exempts manufacturers subscribing to Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. (UL) Listing Services for Marine Buoyant Devices, Vests and Cushions from the burden of providing two pamphlets with each PFD, one under Coast Guard requirements and one under UL Standard 1123, while the Coast Guard conducts a rulemaking to update its PFD pamphlet requirements. Issued Feb 23, 1989; effective Feb 23, 1989.

Amendments to Numbering and Accident Reporting Regulations, 33 CFR 173. Corrected statutory citations and restatements of legislative text to reflect changes made in recodification of Title 46 of the United States Code. Updated the lists of issuing and reporting authorities to include additional State numbering and casualty reporting systems approved by the Coast Guard. Issued Jun 27, 1989; effective Jun 27, 1989.

Amendment to Personal Flotation Device Pamphlet Requirements, 33 CFR 175 & 181. Updates PFD Pamphlet Requirements by incorporating by reference the PFD pamphlet design and packaging requirements in Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. (UL) Standard for Marine Buoyant Devices (UL 1123). The rule terminated an interim exemption for PFD manufacturers (issued Feb 23, 1989) on Feb 4, 1991. The rule also revised other PFD related sections to reflect approval of special purpose Type V PFDs, and removed an obsolete exemption from PFD carriage requirements for certain kayaks and canoes, prior to Oct 1, 1977. Issued Aug 6, 1990; effective Feb 4, 1991.

Amendment to Backfire Flame Arrester Regulations, 46 CFR Part 25. Amends regulations to include flame arresters meeting SAE J-1928 or UL-1111 as acceptable means of backfire flame control. Issued Jul 29, 1991; effective Aug 28, 1991.

conducted at the May 1992 meeting of NBSAC. Attached to BSC 73 was a **Federal Register** notice soliciting comments from the public on specific questions related to the review. The notice requested receipt of comments by Dec. 31, 1991.