

## Extinguishers: Fire Extinguisher Requirements for Recreational Boats

The US Coast Guard (USCG) requirements for recreational boat fire extinguishers are being updated. The following questions and answers were copied from the website of the *USCG Office of Auxiliary and Recreational Boating Safety*<sup>1</sup> as an aid to understanding the new regulations.

The USCG clarifies the following information on their Q&A webpage:

- Annual servicing of rechargeable extinguishers by a trained and qualified technician is required.
- Rechargeable extinguishers remain in service after 12 years from date of manufacture.

Q. Where can I find the recently published regulations for fire protection for recreational vessels?

A. <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/10/22/2021-22578/fire-protection-for-recreational-vessels#sectno-reference-175.320>. These regulations will be incorporated into 33 CFR 175, Sub-Chapter S in the near future.

Q. What is the effective date of this new regulation?

A. April 20, 2022.

Q. What is the difference between a rechargeable and non-rechargeable portable fire extinguisher?

A. A non-rechargeable fire extinguisher, also referred to as a disposable fire extinguisher, is intended for one-time use only. A rechargeable fire extinguisher is recharged once used. A rechargeable portable fire extinguisher requires regular maintenance and servicing; a disposable does not. A disposable must be removed from service after 12 years from date of manufacturing stamped on the bottle.

Q. How do I tell if I need to replace my disposable old (non-rechargeable) fire extinguisher?

A. Disposable (non-rechargeable) dry chemical fire extinguishers must be removed 12 years after their date of manufacture. These extinguishers generally have their year of manufacturing stamped on the bottom or marked next to its UL label.

Q. Where do I find the date of manufacturing on a rechargeable fire extinguisher?

A. The date of manufacturing on a rechargeable fire extinguisher is printed on the label of the bottle. The first National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) certified inspection is due one year from the date of manufacturing and the bottle tag must indicate this inspection. **A rechargeable does not need to be removed from service after 12 years, instead, it must be maintained annually by a technician.**

We highly recommend boaters continue compliance with NFPA 10. Records of monthly inspections are important and only take a few seconds. Annual external examination of **ALL** extinguishers (including non-rechargeable extinguishers) **by trained and qualified technicians** improves safety and the reliability of **ALL** extinguishers.

References.

1. Fire Extinguishers Requirements for the Recreational Boaters,  
<https://uscgboating.org/recreational-boaters/fire-extinguisher-faq.php>

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