

VESSEL SAFETY CHECKS FOR RENTAL AGENCIES (LIVERIES)

For those Vessel Examiners who plan to conduct VSCs at locations which rent out small boats, we suggest you take a few minutes to once again review Chapter 5 (Paddle Craft) in the Vessel Safety Check Manual (COMDTINST M16796.8) before heading out.

Obviously you will not be meeting with the individuals who will actually be renting the boats. You will need to rely on the agency to provide the necessary safety information. Take the time to emphasize the importance of their stressing **boater safety** and that everyone should always wear their life jacket. Ensuring the rental agency is providing their customers the necessary boater safety information is just as important as you ensuring their equipment meets state and federal requirements

Here are a few additional tips to keep in mind:

- 1- You are dealing with a business and you are representing the Coast Guard, please act accordingly.
- 2- Look each vessel over closely. They get a lot of use by "non-boaters" and may not always be in the best condition. If you are not satisfied that the vessel is "safe", it should be rejected. Take your time and examine each vessel. As you read in the manual, there are specific items to be aware of when examining different paddle craft.
- 3- Life jackets should be examined individually for wear, broken zippers, tears, missing hardware, etc.
 - a. Are there enough life jackets, in different sizes, for the number of boats?
 - b. It's recommended, but not required, that a whistle be attached to each life jacket.
- 4- If a whistle isn't attached to each life jacket, are sufficient whistles available for each customer?
- 5- The vessels are generally rented for day time use. It is recommended, but again not required, that a flashlight be on board (a necessity when suddenly caught during a period of reduced visibility such as fog or a passing shower).
- 6- Look over their selection of paddles (oars) to ensure they meet the necessary standards.
- 7- Complete a 7012A for each paddlecraft you examine. After signing and dating each form, give a copy to the owner/manager for their records. As a side note, remember ANSC Form 7012A is not to be used when certifying Vessel Examiner candidates.
- 8- Ask the owner/ manager to place a decal on each vessel (which passed the examination) as described in the VSC manual. It's important that you observe the decals being installed.

Boating rental liveries, by nature, attract the NOVICE and NON BOATERS – ensuring every boater returns safely to the dock is one of the key reasons we consider these vessel safety checks to be critical in our campaign to reduce boating fatalities.

One final suggestion, within a day or two of completing the vessel safety checks, send a letter (preferably by the U S Postal Service) thanking them for participating in our program. This more formal THANK YOU will go a long way in you being invited back next year.

THANK YOU for participating in the Vessel Safety Check Program!