

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security
**United States
Coast Guard
Auxiliary**



Director
National Directorate of
Vessel Examination and
Recreational Boating Safety
Visitation Programs

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From: Michael S. Klacik, DIR-V

To: All U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and U.S. Power Squadrons Certified Vessel Examiners

Subj: USCG Office of Boating Safety Guidance on NFPA 10 and the Vessel Safety Check

MEMORANDUM

As a result of numerous inquiries from our Vessel Examiners and in an attempt to resolve the confusion surrounding the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA10 provision dealing with the 12 year fire extinguisher expiration requirement) and the Vessel Safety Check, the following guidance has been provided by the U.S. Coast Guard Office of Boating Safety.

The information in the Vessel Safety Check Manual COMDTINST M16796.8A regarding fire extinguisher inspection is the current, most accurate guidance. This information is the only reference that should be used by Vessel Examiners conducting Vessel Safety Checks, and providing instruction.

Vessel Examiners may encounter some fire extinguishers that have a 12 year expiration date on the device during a Vessel Safety Check. Extinguishers found beyond this 12 year date should not be considered unserviceable, and should not fail a Vessel Safety Check because of this fact.

The 12 year expiration date found on some fire extinguishers and discussed in the NFPA 10 provision are still in rule making and **not applicable** in determining serviceability and acceptance of a fire extinguisher during a Vessel Safety Check or a Coast Guard Law Enforcement Boarding at this time.

The extinguisher should be inspected to ensure it is Coast Guard approved, fully charged, has no sign of corrosion, leakage, or is otherwise physically damaged such as missing or broken hoses, nozzles. If it meets these standards, then it is acceptable.

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