

CONTROLLING FIRE ONBOARD

The 5 areas of fire protections are : PREVENT, DETECT, EGRESS, SUPPRESS & MANAGE.

90% of fires onboard start in the engine area. Keep it clean and neat, no dirty oily rags, cleaners, heaters or lamps. We have smoke detectors in our homes. Do you have a smoke alarm and a carbon monoxide (CO) alarm near all sleeping areas onboard. Replace the batteries at the beginning of each boating season & replace the units every 5 years. Always buy marine rated units, not residential as they are not designed for use in the marine environment. High moisture can cause false alarms. You should have 2 exits from all sleeping areas. Check your hatches & plan how to exit through them. Have everyone practice opening and exiting through the second way out. It is a good idea to have more than the required fire extinguishers on board. Always consider adding larger units & a fixed unit in the engine room. Test & inspect your alarms and extinguishers frequently . Teach everyone how to use your fire equipment. Remember the PASS system. P: pull the pin, A: aim at the base of the fire, not the top, S: sweep the unit back & forth, S: use a series of short blast but not too close to the fire as this could feed the fire. As the boat owner/captain, it is up to you to manage any emergency situation. Try to compose yourself. Call for help on your VHF radio (not cell phone as other nearby boaters can't hear your need for help). Assign jobs to other crew members. Have everyone put on their PFD. A BETTER IDEA IS TO ALWAYS WEAR A PFD WHEN UNDERWAY.

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Safety Officer