

## Smoke Detectors On Boats - What You Need To Know

Tips from the Marine Insurance Experts at ACE Recreational Marine Insurance®


Do you have a smoke detector installed on your boat? Should you? Must you?

To help answer the last question, we first examine the standards set forth by The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). NFPA 302, Fire Protection Standard for Pleasure and Commercial Motor Craft, as updated in 2004, contains for the first time, a recommended requirement that smoke detectors be installed aboard pleasure boats. "All vessels 26 ft. or more in length with accommodation spaces intended for sleeping shall be equipped with a single station smoke alarm that is listed to UL 217, Standard for Single and Multiple Station Smoke Alarms, for recreational vehicles and is installed and maintained according to the device manufacturer's instructions."

Since there are currently no smoke detectors that are UL (Underwriters Laboratories) listed for marine applications, the UL 217 NFPA listing refers to those types of smoke detectors acceptable for use in a recreational vehicle. Unfortunately, when purchasing a smoke detector for your boat, you may find it as "UL listed" but without a specific UL standard number or application noted on the device or its packaging. This may make it difficult to find an appropriate smoke detector unless you are buying from a specialty store dealing with recreational vehicle or marine accessories and supplies. Smoke detectors designed for home use are not recommended for use on a boat as they will likely not withstand the harsh marine environment.

So, should you have a smoke detector on your boat? The answer is yes. Must you? At this time only if the standards as recommended and set forth in NFPA 302 have been adopted or incorporated by an applicable jurisdiction or entity. Is anyone going to enforce the NFPA recommended standards at this time? Probably only marine surveyors and the insurance companies they work for.

While, to date, no other regulatory entity has promulgated a requirement or recommendation to install a smoke detector aboard a pleasure vessel, it may only be a matter of time before this newest NFPA recommended standard for boats is adopted by the American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC) or in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) issued by the Federal Government and enforced by the U.S. Coast Guard.

So, go ahead and beat everyone to the punch and be one of the first in your marina to install the appropriate smoke detector on your boat. Isn't your life and that of your family and guests worth the minimal investment of installing one? Also, installing one now allows you to be compliant ahead of time should the NFPA recommended standards become enforceable in your area. 

## Reducing Fuel Consumption In Marine Engines

Tips from ValvTect Marine

With fuel prices expected to reach record high levels at marinas this summer, getting the most mileage out of a tank of gasoline or diesel is more important than ever.

Many boaters, unfortunately, may not know that by using marine-grade gasoline or diesel specially-formulated to clean-up fuel-robbing carbon deposits in marine engines, they can significantly reduce fuel consumption and save a lot of money.

Carbon deposits, commonly called gunk, build up in all engines during the combustion process. As deposits build up in fuel injectors, carburetors, intake valves and combustion chambers, they reduce the engine's fuel efficiency, increasing fuel consumption. Because marine engines can use up to 10 times more fuel per hour than a car or truck engine, the amount of detergents in automotive-grade gasoline and diesel typically are not enough to effectively clean-up deposits. Additionally, automotive brands and grades of gasoline and diesel don't contain other important additives needed in marine engine operations to prevent ethanol and ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel problems.

ValvTect Marine Gasoline & Diesel Fuel are specially-formulated for heavy-duty marine engines to prevent and clean-up power-robbing deposits. Compared to automotive-grade gasoline or diesel fuel, ValvTect Marine Fuels contain more detergents and other important additives needed for more difficult marine operating conditions. While ethanol gasoline and ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel are used without trouble in cars and trucks, the high levels of moisture, humidity, heat and periods of non-use can cause significant problems when these fuels are used in boats. ValvTect products contain additional additives to prevent phase separation, allowing the gasoline and diesel fuel to remain stable up to a year or more. They also prevent premature wear and bacteria in diesel. So this summer try these specially formulated ValvTect products. 

