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MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN 06-15

Marine Fire Systems Servicing in Western Alaska

BACKGROUND: Coast Guard vessel examiners in Western Alaska have discovered that a number of vessels have been carrying fire safety equipment that had been serviced incorrectly or incompletely. Servicing reports provided by third-party fire equipment surveyors did not correlate with what the Coast Guard observed onboard. Some examples of discrepancies include:

- Serial numbers and the number of CO2 bottles listed on servicing reports did not match to what was installed in the rack and connected to the system and were not weighted or refilled as reported.
- The number of fusible links that were recorded as having been changed on the servicing report did not match what was actually aboard.
- Hydrostatic tests were not performed or notified to the vessel's captain, port engineer, or chief engineer.

RESPONSIBILITY: Ultimately, a vessel's master is responsible for the vessel's safety systems. Servicing of fire safety equipment should be conducted by appropriately trained personnel and in accordance with applicable regulations and standards, including those of the National Fire Protection Association. However, the prudent master will closely oversee the work of fire safety equipment servicers to ensure work is completed as expected and contracted for.

ACTION: Vessels with improperly serviced fire safety systems pose a serious safety risk. The Officer in Charge of Marine Inspection has considerable discretion in expanding examinations of fire safety systems. In light of recent servicing discrepancies, Coast Guard examiners in Western Alaska will spend additional time verifying fire safety systems to ensure they have been properly serviced. They may require additional testing and demonstrations if not satisfied that the servicing reports reflect the true condition of the equipment in question.

CONTACTS: Questions about fire system servicing requirements in Western Alaska should be directed to Sector Anchorage Inspections at 907-428-4172 or anchorage.inspections@uscg.mil.

Sincerely,



S.D. MONTOYA

Commander, U. S. Coast Guard
Acting Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection
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