



**UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

**MARINE SAFETY ALERT**

**Inspections and Compliance Directorate**

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Safety Alert 06-03

**FLOATING ELECTRIC WATERLIGHT SAFETY**  
*Don't get lost in the dark!*

Recently the following problems have been reported regarding Floating Electric Waterlights:

- Installation of incorrect replacement batteries which cause the waterlights to sink (batteries too heavy).
- Improperly installed batteries and missing flotation foam.
- Installation into a bracket not designed for that waterlight (will not properly release).
- Lanyard deterioration due to sun damage.
- Not using a Coast Guard Approved Floating Electric Waterlight when required.

46 CFR 161.010-2 requires that floating electric waterlights meet the requirements of UL 1196, which includes float testing, bracket release testing and labeling. Though laboratory re-testing is not typically required after a model has been approved, waterlights must be properly maintained to retain the required characteristics. Clearly a waterlight that sinks is not able to fulfill its purpose. Waterlight owners should pay close attention to manufacturers' instructions, particularly regarding battery replacement.

General Information:

- Floating Electric Waterlight approval information is contained in [46 CFR 161.010](#)
- Testing is carried out by a Coast Guard Accepted Independent Laboratory upon initial certification of a model of waterlight. ([approved laboratory list](#))
- A list of approved waterlights may be found by selecting "FLOATING ELECTRIC WATER LIGHT" in the Approval Series field of the Search page at the [USCG Maritime Information Exchange](#).
- Waterlights that have met the additional SOLAS requirements are listed under "FLOATING ELECTRIC WATER LIGHT (SOLAS)" at the [USCG Maritime Information Exchange](#).

Please address any questions or reports of Floating Electric Waterlight problems to your local Marine Safety Office, or LT Patrick Nelson at: (202)267-0027, [psnelson@comdt.uscg.mil](mailto:psnelson@comdt.uscg.mil)

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