



United States Coast Guard

U. S. Coast Guard Headquarters
Washington, D.C.

SAFETY ALERT/Media Advisory

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Coast Guard Announces Safety Recall of SOS Inc. Inflatable Life Jackets Equipped With The Hammar Model MA1 Manual/Automatic Inflators

CONTACT: Martin Jackson	Life Saving & Fire Safety Division	202-372-1391
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SOS Inc., (SOSPENDERS brand), of Fruitland, ID, alerted the United States Coast Guard, distributors and public that they are recalling approximately 7,200 automatic inflatable personal flotation devices (PFDs or life jackets) to investigate a safety defect involving the Hammar model MA1 Manual/Automatic inflators.

SOS, Inc. makes PFDs using two different types of automatic inflators for their inflatable vest. They emphasized, that only PFDs using the Hammar model MA1 Manual/Automatic inflators are affected by this recall. To date, SOS Inc. has not received any reports of PFDs malfunctioning in the field, and no injuries have been reported.

The PFDs involved are listed at the bottom of this media advisory. The Coast Guard and the manufacturer noted that all the identified inflatable PFDs should be returned to the SOS Inc. factory in Fruitland, ID.

The Coast Guard and SOS, Inc. stressed: it is important that **consumers stop using the identified PFDs immediately and return them to SOS Inc.** To assist distributors and consumers the following information is provided:

- (1) Follow the procedure provided by SOS at their web site (click on "**• warning • SOSpenders Recall Notice**") www.sospenders.com, or by
- (2) Contacting SOS Inc. customer service department at **1-800-858-5876** between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. PST, Monday through Friday for shipping instructions.

The Coast Guard appreciates that the manufacturer immediately took action and alerted the distributors and the Coast Guard of the recall as soon as they discovered the defect in the Hammar model MA1 inflator. SOS Inc. indicated that approximately 300 defective Hammar inflators in one lot of 500 were assembled incorrectly and will not inflate the PFD with CO₂ gas either automatically or manually. Only oral inflation of the PFDs with the incorrectly assembled inflators will provide any buoyancy to the user.

Since there may be a significant risk of drowning if these PFDs are not inflated, SOS Inc. has made the decision to recall all products using the Hammar inflator for a 100% safety inspection. SOS Inc. will apply an additional marking on each inflator that passes this inspection.

The Coast Guard points out that this recall demonstrates why it is so **important for consumers to register their inflatable PFDs or any consumer product with the manufacturer.** When a safety recall such as this is necessary, the manufacturers must have a registration on file to effectively contact the affected consumer in a timely manner.

(more)

Unfortunately, it appears that less than 5 % of owners have registered their inflatable PFDs. Therefore, the Coast Guard strongly recommends that consumers always fill out and return the consumer registration card;

regardless of the product. As this action shows, such promotes safety as well as economic protection. Fortunately, it appears that West Marine, who sold most of these PFDs to recreational boaters, can identify about 75% of their customers.

The affected PFDs have the brand name *SOSPENDERS*. These PFDs can be identified by the Yellow Hammar MA1, Manual/Automatic Inflator Cap (see Figure 1):

FIGURE 1

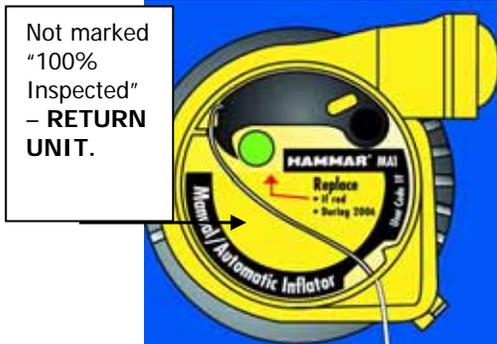
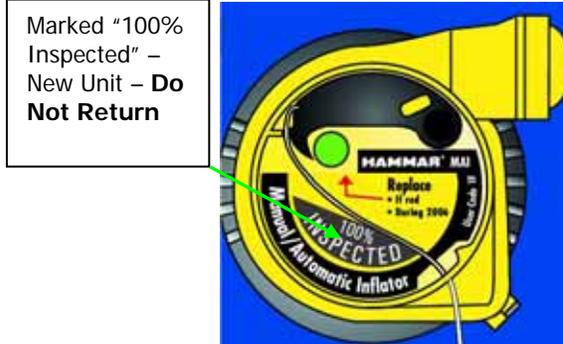


FIGURE 2



Model Numbers of affected units:

SOS, Inc. Coast Guard Approved PFD Model and approval Numbers of affected PFDs:

SOS Model Number	Description	USCG Approval Number	Watermark SKU	West Marine SKU
38HSTD-M-W	STD 38 MILLENIUM (West Marine)	160.076/2001/0	8030264	2659159
38HSTD-M	STD 38 MILLENIUM		8030266	
38HHAR-M-W	HAR 38 MILLENIUM with OCR Harness (West Marine)	160.076/8601/0	8030265	2659167
38HHAR-M	HAR 38 MILLENIUM with OCR Harness		8030267	
38CMH	Recreational Type II PFD Commercial Inflatable Lifejacket Type V SOLAS	160.076/2003/0 160.176/2/0	8030313	2658391
38HPRO-M	PRO 38 MILLENIUM	160.076/2002/0	803018	
CMH38ARP	REARM 38 AUTO HAMMAR (ACCESSORY)	USCG Accepted Component	8030233	2659142

SOS Inc. Non-Coast Guard Approved PFD Models of affected PFDs::

SOS Model Number	Description	Watermark SKU	West Marine SKU
38HTV/9	TACT VEST W/POC-AUTO HAM	8030268	2659134
38HTV/9-CG	TACT VEST W/POC-AUTO HAM	8030315	
38HSTD/7	MILLENIUM,AUT,LNG,BLK	8030354	
38HUL/9	ULTRA LITE 38 HAMMAR	8030316	

Model number is located on PFD label, rear left side of cover.

Please refer to above chart to determine if your model is affected by recall.

