

FIRE PROTECTION

Recreational vessels are required to carry fire protection equipment in accordance with the *Marine Safety Regulations 2012 (Vic)*.



Depending on the type of vessel and equipment on board, fire protection equipment may include one or more of the following:

- > portable fire extinguishers.
- > fire blankets.
- > bucket with lanyard.
- > fixed fire extinguishing systems.

Portable fire extinguishers

Portable fire extinguishers are required on all powered recreational vessels equipped with an electric start motor, gas installation, fuel stove or where any fuel is carried. They must be of a dry chemical type that complies with the relevant Australian Standards.

The following table describes the number of fire extinguishers that are required on a given vessel.

Vessel size	Number required
Less than 8 m	One
8 m to 12 m	Two
Greater than 12 m	Three

The table below describes the minimum required size of one of the fire extinguishers on a given vessel.

Capacity of flammable or combustible liquids that are able to be carried on vessel	Minimum capacity of one of the required fire extinguishers
Less than 115 litres	0.9 kg
115 to 350 litres	2.0 kg
351 to 695 litres	4.5 kg
More than 695 litres	9.0 kg

Fire blankets

A fire blanket must also be carried on vessels where cooking facilities are located in an enclosed space, for example the galley on a yacht.

Bucket with lanyard

A bucket with lanyard must be carried on all powered recreational vessels. A bucket with lanyard allows water to be used to extinguish fires derived from wood, paper and plastics.

Fixed fire extinguishing systems

Instead of using a portable fire extinguisher, the master may fit their vessel with an approved fixed fire extinguishing system to the enclosed engine compartment, as long as it is of the equivalent size.

If the vessel must have multiple extinguishers, the fixed fire extinguishing system must be equivalent to the nominated portable fire extinguisher size and the additional portable fire extinguishers can be any size.

Examples

4.2 metre vessel

Michelle's 4.2 m aluminium boat with a 25 HP engine has a fuel carrying capacity of 40 litres. The minimum fire fighting requirements are:

- > One 0.9 kg dry chemical portable fire extinguisher (vessel less than 8 metres, with less than 115 litre fuel capacity).
- > One bucket with lanyard.



Inverted fire extinguisher



Discharged fire extinguisher gauge



Old fire extinguisher

Examples (continued)

10 metre vessel

John's 10 m Sports Cruiser can carry 1000 litres of fuel (including cooking gas) and has a galley below deck. The minimum fire fighting requirements are:

With fixed fire extinguishing system

- > Fixed fire extinguishing system of at least 9.0kg capacity.
- > One dry chemical portable fire extinguisher of any size.
- > One fire blanket.
- > One bucket with lanyard.

Without fixed fire extinguishing system

- > Two dry chemical portable fire extinguishers, one of which must be a 9.0kg dry chemical portable fire extinguisher.
- > One fire blanket.
- > One bucket with lanyard.

Don't think that it won't happen to you - having access to the correct fire fighting equipment will give you the best chance of extinguishing a fire before it gets out of control.

Fire extinguisher maintenance

Portable fire extinguishers are required to be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications. While some maintenance inspections must be carried out by a qualified professional there are many checks that should be conducted regularly. This will ensure that extinguishers are in good working order at all times.

Below is a list of items to be checked regularly on fire extinguishers:

- > determine that the extinguisher is the correct size and type for the vessel.
- > invert the extinguisher and ensure that the powder remains free flowing by shaking it during regular checks.
- > check the contents by viewing the gauge. Does the needle indicate recharge is required?
- > is the safety pin in place to prevent accidental discharge?
- > is the bottle showing any signs of peeling paint, rust or external damage?
- > if fitted, does the service tag indicate more than 12 months since the last inspection?

If the extinguisher has not been inspected for more than 12 months it should be taken to an approved service agent. Check with your supplier for more details.

Where to get more information

- > **Phone:** 1800 223 022
- > **Website:** www.transportsafety.vic.gov.au
- > **Email:** information@transportsafety.vic.gov.au

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