

Safety Inspections

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On a nice day on the ocean, if the Coast Guard sees your boat without a vessel inspection sticker, they may stop you and inspect your boat.



If the inspection has uncovered any violations, the Coast Guard can issue a summons that could include civil penalties. If the violations are minor, in the judgment of the boarding officer, he or she can also issue a warning and require a follow-up inspection to make sure all requirements are satisfied. Go here to see the required equipment: https://www.usps.org/national/vsc/conductvsc_files/USCGMinReq_2012.pdf

You can reduce the possibility of a Coast Guard boarding by getting your boat inspected by either the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary or the U.S. Power Squadron and display the sticker shown above. Each branch has certified vessel examiners who will perform a free Vessel Safety Check ("VSC") at your boat, at a time of mutual convenience. There is no charge for the inspection and no consequences if you don't pass it.

Go here to request a safety inspection from the Coast Guard Auxiliary: https://www.uscgaux.info/i_want_a_vsc/index.php or here to request one from the Power Squadron: https://www.usps.org/d1/vessel_safety_check.htm