

Always On Alert For You

By Caroline Ajootian

The BoatU.S. Consumer Protection Bureau collects important recall information

Like virtually every major consumer product sold in the U.S., recreational boats and marine engines must be built to specific safety regulations. Administered and enforced by the U.S. Coast Guard, manufacturing laws contained in the Federal Boat Safety Act cover boats' electrical and fuel systems in an effort to prevent fires and explosions, and require flotation features to help vessels less than 20 feet long stay above water in the event of capsizing or swamping.

When boats and marine engines don't comply with federal regulations or when products contain defects that "create a substantial risk of personal injury," the Coast Guard relies heavily on voluntary recall actions initiated by builders. The federal recall statute lasts 10 years from the date the boat or marine engine was built. Recall repairs are made at the manufacturer's "sole cost and expense." But the law requires only that manufacturers contact first owners, so subsequent owners may never receive word that their vessels have been recalled. To protect members, BoatU.S. launched the National Recall Alert Registry (www.BoatUS.com/Recall) so subsequent owners can register their boats, making it easier for manufacturers to locate them in the event of a recall. The site also posts recalls as they're issued each month by the Coast Guard. In a typical year, two to three dozen recall campaigns are opened. The Coast Guard has published the following defect-recall notices. For more detail, the complete defect notices are published at www.BoatUS.com/Recall. Also, contact the manufacturers, go to the Coast Guard's web site (uscgboating.org), or call 202-372-1073.

Bayliner, Brunswick Boat Group, 360-435-5571 (Recall 080032T): 2008-09 Bayliner 285 AND 300SB models (generator main-feed wiring)

Bombardier Recreational Products, BRP U.S., Inc., 618-439-8794 (Recall 080045S): 2004-09 Evinrude E-TEC 40hp-115hp outboard engines. (electric-start tiller steering)

Bombardier Recreational Products, BRP U.S., Inc., 618-439-8794 (Recall 080044T): 2004-08 Sea-Doo 200 Speedster and Speedster 200 Wake models. (wakeboard tower)

Cummins, MerCruiser, 866-549-6458 (Recall 090017T): Zeus 3500 and Zeus 3800 propulsion systems (#s 35216516 to 46988020). (clamp ring bolts)

Garmin, 800-800-1020, cartography@garmin.com, www.garmin.com/bluechartrecall. 2009 Garmin BlueChart g2 and g2 (Vision data cards)

Kawasaki Motors Corp., 949-770-0400 (Recall 080047T): 2000 JT-1100-CI; 2001 JT1100-F1 & JH1100-B1; 2002 JT1100-F2 & JH1100-B2; 2003 JT1100-G1, JH1100-B3 & JT1200-B1; and 2004 JH1100-B4, JT12009-B2 & JT1500-A1 models. (fuel hose)

Mastercraft Boat Co., 423-884-2221 (Recall 090012T): All ProStar 214 & X-14 direct-drive boats from the beginning of production through HIN MBCMTGV7B909. (steering rudder arm)

Mercury Marine, 920-929-5040 (Recall 090005T): Various 2007-08 Mercury engines. (Smartcraft digital throttle and shift)

Mercury Marine, 920-929-5399 (Recall 080041S): All multi-engine boats equipped with Mercury power steering and powered by 135hp, 150hp and 175hp Verado L4; or 200hp, 225hp, 250hp, 275hp and 300hp Verado L6 engines with serial numbers lower than 1B538684 should be inspected. (power-steering switch)

Mercury Marine, 920-929-5399 (Recall 080040T): Optimax and all EFI outboards, all model years: (shift-cable linkage)

Mercury Marine, 920-929-5399 (Recall 080039S): 2003-08 Mercury Marine Tiller Kit 75. (tiller-handle extension)

Mercury Marine, MerCruiser, 405-743-6566 (Recall 090004T): HP525EFI, HP600SCI, HP662SCI, HP700SCI, HP850SCI, HP1075SCI, & HP1200SCI model engines. (wiring harness)

Meridian Yachts, Inc., 360-435-5571 (Recall 080042T): 2008-09 Meridian 341NSB, 411SB, 441SB models. (shore-power breaker)

Sevca LLC, Wichita, KS; Sevylor, 800-356-3612; www.sevylor.com: 2005-09 Sevylor Tow Behind toys with Quick Hitch connectors. (Quick-hitch connector)

Tracker Marine L.P., 417-873-4540 (Recall 090002T): 2009 Sun Tracker Party Barge 200 Classic (Capacity labels)

Trophy, Brunswick Boat Group, 360-435-5571 (Recall 090003S): 1999-2007 2002WA FF, 1997-2009 2052WAFD, 2000-09 2352WA FN, 2000-09 2359WA FB, 2004-09 2502WA FX & 2005-09 2503CC FW models. (bow nav. lights)

Volvo Penta, 757-436-2800 (Recall 080046T): 2006-08 Volvo 3.0L AND 4.3L gas stern-drive engines. (carburetor float bowl)

Volvo Penta, 757-436-5100 (Recall 090008T): 2008 fuel injected 3.0GXI gasoline marine engines. (fuel-line connection)

Volvo Penta, 757-436-5100 (Service Bulletin 44-1-75): 5.70SXi & 8.10Si XDP (U-joint bellows)

Life Rafts And EPIRBs Compromised: A manufacturer of water-activated safety releases for life rafts, inflatable life jackets, and EPIRBs warns boaters that counterfeit copies of its releases are unlikely to work in an emergency. According to the alert issued by CM Hammar of Gothenburg, Sweden, fake "Hammar H2O" releases "will definitely not release a life raft or EPIRB." The hydrostatic device is designed to activate when exposed to water and is a key component of safety equipment. Life raft canisters are equipped with hydrostatic latches that release when the canister goes into the water. The company has tested several copies and "not one worked properly." Hammar says the copies are almost identical to the genuine product, bearing Hammar's logo and address on the label. Authentic serial numbers and production dates can be verified by contacting CM Hammar at info@cmhammar.com. For photos: www.cmhammar.com

The BoatU.S. Consumer Protection Bureau "Dispute-Mediation Program" handles hundreds of complaints from association members each year, and maintains the "Consumer Protection Database" containing reports about boats, marine engines, boating products, and related services for consumers wanting to report complaints or good experiences. Email consumerprotection@BoatUS.com or call 703-461-2856 or visit www.BoatUS.com/consumer