



Residential boat safety

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Keeping everyone safe in their homes



We want everyone to be safe in their home and that includes people who live on any one of London's busy waterways.

Living on the water can present its own unique risks. Firefighters attend between 50–60 boat incidents each year; these include fires, carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning or water rescues. This booklet will help you

to identify these unique risks and provides advice on detection, early warning systems and planning for emergencies. Following these simple safety steps can help to keep your home, you and others safe.

Is your boat safe from the dangers of carbon monoxide?



Children can be more vulnerable to CO poisoning.



Pets can be affected by CO as well.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a highly poisonous gas which is very difficult to detect because you can't taste, see or smell it.

WHY IS IT DANGEROUS AND WHO IS AT RISK

CO is formed when there is not enough oxygen present to completely burn fuels such as coal, gas, oil and wood. It can occur when appliances are faulty, not regularly serviced or if they are incorrectly fitted or used. It can also happen when flues and chimneys are blocked or poorly maintained.

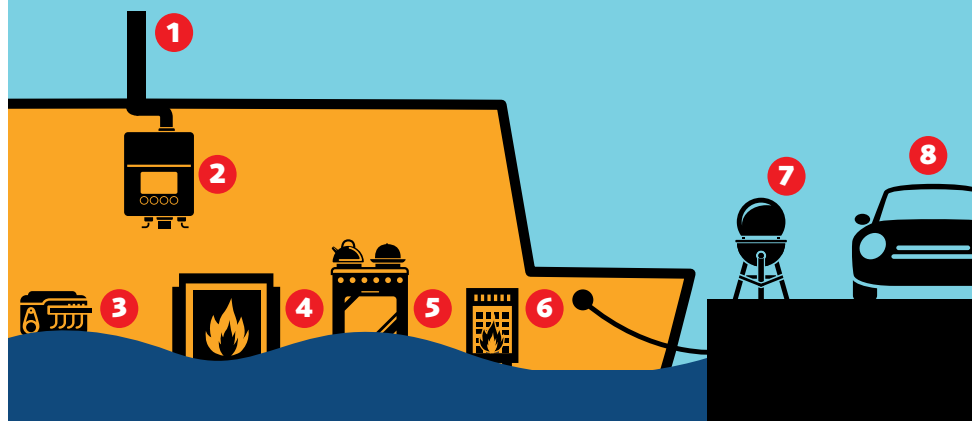
This toxic, dangerous gas can also seep into cabin spaces through walls, floors and ceilings, travelling from one neighbouring boat to another. Every year, boaters die or become seriously ill due to CO.

Everyone is at risk although some are more at risk than others.

Pregnant women, children, older people, or anyone with a chronic or long term illness can be more vulnerable. People who spend extended periods of time at home may also be at increased risk.

Smoking tobacco increases the CO content of your blood and can also cause a build up of CO fumes indoors.

Sources of CO on boats



CO CAN BE PRODUCED BY:

1. blocked or poorly maintained chimneys or flues
2. gas boilers and appliances including fires
3. boat engines and generators
4. wood and coal burners
5. gas cookers or fridges
6. portable heaters using liquid petroleum gas (LPG)
7. BBQs – charcoal or gas
8. car engines.

Remember

- Never use barbeques on board or in any confined space such as a tent or caravan.
- Even when extinguished, they can continue to produce CO for many hours afterwards.

Warning signs



WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

- Yellow instead of blue flames coming from gas appliances or flames that are not fully formed (eg if the flame isn't all the way round on a gas ring).
- Black, sooty marks on the front covers of gas fires.
- Sooty or yellow/brown stains on or around boilers, stoves or fires and the corresponding flues.
- Pilot lights frequently blowing out or difficulty lighting appliances.
- Increased condensation on the windows.
- An unfamiliar or burning smell when gas or oil appliances are on.
- Smelling or seeing smoke escaping into the cabin when your log burner or coal stove is on.

SIMPLE SAFETY STEPS

Follow these simple steps to prevent CO build:

- Never attempt to install, repair or service appliances yourself.
- Keep cabins well ventilated. Open windows for extra ventilation when cooking.
- Only buy appliances that meet the recommended British Standard and have them serviced regularly.
- Check flues and chimneys are free from damage and blockages (no cracks/missing cover plates/warped doors).
- Maintain your engine and exhaust systems in line with operating instructions.

How to recognise symptoms of CO poisoning



Poisoning from CO can happen in a matter of minutes or over an extended period of time; it just depends on the amount of CO present.

It's easy to see why some of these symptoms can be mistaken for flu, food poisoning, tiredness or even a hangover!

**EXAMPLES OF HIGH LEVEL
CO EXPOSURE OVER A SHORT
PERIOD OF TIME INCLUDE:**

- breathlessness and chest pain
- seizures
- racing heart beat
- ataxia – a loss of coordination
- vertigo
- feelings of being intoxicated and confusion
- loss of consciousness and death.

**A SLOW BUILD UP OF CO OVER
A LONG PERIOD OF TIME CAN
LEAD TO SERIOUS HEALTH
PROBLEMS SUCH AS:**

- headache
- tiredness
- confusion
- dizzy spells
- stomach pain
- nausea and vomiting
- shortness of breath and difficulty breathing
- paralysis
- death.

Remember

CO may be present if symptoms only occur when you are in your home then disappear or get better when you leave. Get a medical check up immediately.

What to do if you suspect CO poisoning



- Leave the property immediately.
- Seek medical attention as a priority. See your doctor or go to hospital and tell them that you suspect CO poisoning. They can do a blood or breath test to check.
- Before you return to your boat, contact one of the organisations listed on page 44 for more information. You will be given safety advice, even if the suspected source is not a gas appliance. A boat engineer may need to inspect your appliances and flues to ensure they are safe to use.



Landlords and tenants – your responsibilities

LANDLORDS

If you are a landlord, ensure that the gas and solid fuel appliances onboard the boat you are renting out comply with Boat Safety Scheme regulations. Get them checked regularly by a registered boat engineer.

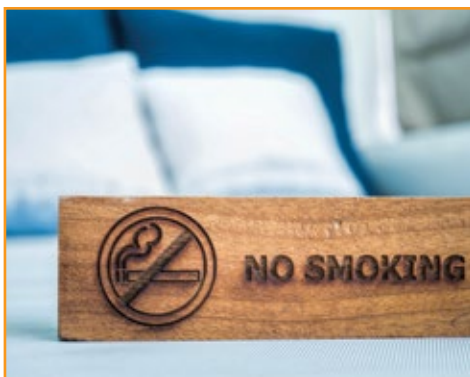
TENANTS

If you are a tenant in a rented boat with concerns about CO, raise the issues with your landlord or letting agent without delay.

Smoking



Never smoke when refuelling.



Never smoke in bed.

LFB do not recommend smoking on board at any time.

If you do smoke on board, make sure cigarettes are put right out and disposed of properly.

FOLLOW THIS SAFETY ADVICE WHILE ONBOARD

- Never smoke when refuelling or changing a gas cylinder.
- Don't smoke in an armchair or sofa if you think you may fall asleep.
- Never smoke in bed.
- Use deep, heavy ashtrays that are less likely to tip over on the boat.
- Add a small drop of water to the ashtray and stub cigarettes out properly.
- Don't leave lit pipes or cigarettes unattended or on the edge of an ashtray.
- Empty ashtrays carefully and never use a waste bin that could catch fire.
- Take extra care when you're tired, if you drink alcohol or take drugs (prescribed or recreational).
- Avoid buying counterfeit cigarettes, they are less likely to self extinguish – increasing fire risk.
- Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach.
- Never smoke on or close to an airflow pressure relief mattress.
- Keep medical oxygen away from naked flames and cigarettes, both during and after use.
- Emollient creams are flammable – keep these away from cigarettes and other heat sources.
- Consider additional safety measures such as flame retardant bedding, nightwear or throws.

Remember

If you want to quit, help is available. There are support groups that provide lots of advice and top tips to help you to stop smoking. Contact an advisor at 'Stop Smoking London' on **0300 123 1044**.



VAPES AND E-CIGARETTES

E-cigarettes (also known as vapes) can be helpful for stopping smoking but they still need to be used safely.

Follow the instructions provided carefully and pay close attention to any warnings supplied with the product.

- Buy e-cigarette devices from reputable retailers.
- Only use the charger that came with the device.
- Never leave e-cigarettes charging unattended or overnight.
- Always make sure that e-liquids are out of reach of children and pets.
- Never use e-cigarettes close to medical oxygen or where emollient creams or airflow mattresses are being used.
- Don't buy counterfeit goods – they could pose a serious fire risk.

Remember

It is illegal to smoke in a car (or other vehicle) with anyone under 18. This is to protect children and young people from the dangers of secondhand smoke.

Alcohol



Be responsible on and around water. LFB urges not to mix alcohol and boating. It is important to understand how alcohol can affect your safety and the safety of others.

ALCOHOL AND SAFETY ON BOATS

Follow these steps:

- Do not drink alcohol whilst in charge of a boat.
- Take care when walking home after a night out close to water.
- Do not swim or jump off the boat when you have drunk alcohol.

Further information

Visit rlss.org.uk/about-dont-drink-and-drown

Cooking



Don't cook if you've been drinking.



Take care when cooking with oil.

More fires and fire injuries occur in the cooking area than anywhere else in the home. Follow the tips below.

PREVENT COOKING FIRES

- Fit a heat alarm and test once a month (see page 31 for more information).
- Never leave cooking unattended. If you have to leave the area, take pans off the heat and turn off the hob.
- Don't cook if you are tired, have been drinking alcohol or taking medication that might make you drowsy.
- Keep area well ventilated.
- Use spark devices to light gas cookers.
- Keep the area clean and in good working order. A build up of fat and grease can ignite and cause a fire.
- Supervise children (and pets) in the cooking area at all times.
- Loose clothing can easily catch fire – take care not to lean over a hot hob and keep tea towels and cloths away from the cooker and hob.
- Double check the cooker and hob are turned off when you've finished cooking.
- Check toasters are clean and not placed under cabinets or close to anything that can catch fire.
- Never put anything metal in the microwave.

COOKING WITH OIL

- Never fill the pan more than one third full of fat and/or oil. If the oil starts to smoke, turn the heat off and leave to cool.
- Make sure food is dry before putting it in the hot oil.
- Never throw water over an oil fire as it could create a fireball.
- If the pan catches fire do not attempt to move it. Instead, turn off the heat and gas valves, if it is safe to do so and leave the boat, closing the doors behind you.
- Raise the alarm by shouting to neighbouring boats and call the fire brigade by dialling 999.



Used safely, BBQs can be fun and quick to use but always follow the safety instructions provided and take extra care.

FOLLOW THIS ADVICE

- **Never** use BBQs on boats.
- It is never safe to have a lit or cooling BBQ in a cabin or covered cockpit area – even when extinguished they can continue to produce CO for many hours afterwards.
- Don't change gas canisters inside the cabin or covered areas.
- Never use petrol, paraffin or biofuel to ignite the BBQ or to revive it.
- Only use a BBQ onshore and keep it well away from anything that might catch fire such as boat furnishings, clothing, wooden jetties, boardwalks or dry grass and vegetation.

Remember

Open spaces – only use BBQs in designated areas and always follow any local rules or guidance on their use.

Candles

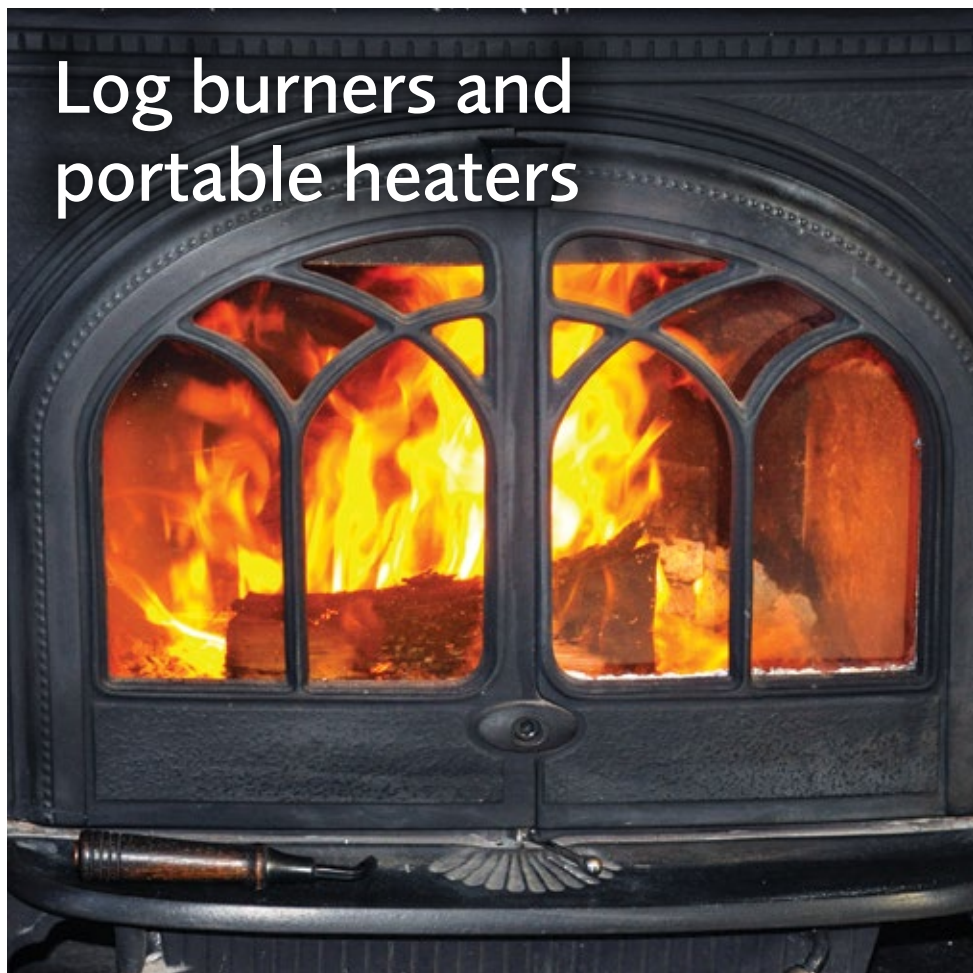


Candles have started fatal boat fires. Consider other safer options such as LED flameless candles, tealights or potpourri and oil-reed diffusers.

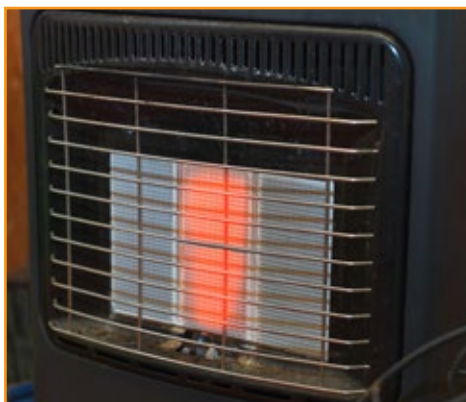
IF YOU USE CANDLES:

- Ensure lit candles are in secure fireproof holders and never leave them unattended.
- Always put out any candles, incense and oil burners when you leave the room and before going to bed.
- Keep them away from materials that may catch fire such as curtains, furniture, clothes, taking into account movement on board a boat.
- Tealights get very hot and without proper holders can melt through plastic surfaces like a TV or bath.
- Keep candles and other naked flames out of reach of children and pets.

Log burners and portable heaters



Use a fire guard.



Never use portable gas heaters.

A log burner can be warm and cosy but always make sure you follow our top tips.

LOG BURNERS

- Make sure chimneys are swept regularly by a qualified sweep and kept free from any blockages.
- Ensure the cabin space has enough ventilation and the air vents are not blocked.
- Use a fire guard to protect against flying sparks and hot embers.
- Before you go to bed, make sure fires or hot embers are under control and guarded. Store logs away from solid fuel burners. Radiated heat can cause them to burn.
- Fireboxes and containers should always be placed on a stable surface.
- Never add fuel to a burning fire, or refill a firebox fuel container that is still hot.

PORTABLE HEATERS

- Always sit at least one metre away from a heater as it could set light to your clothes or chair.
- Keep heaters clear of furniture and away from bedclothes and curtains.
- Never use a portable heater for drying clothes.
- Never use portable (cabinet style) gas heaters – they are not suitable for use in boats and create an additional fire safety hazard.

Remember

Follow the manufacturers guidance regarding suitable fuel sources.

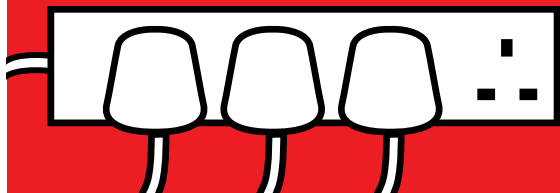
Electrics



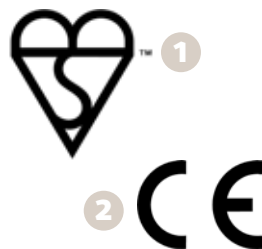
DON'T OVERLOAD PLUG SOCKETS. Keep to one plug per socket.

$$5 + 5 + 3 = 13$$

AMP AMP AMP AMP



TOP TIP: Know the limit!



1 British Standards safety mark.

2 European safety mark.

Electrical fires are common, but many can be easily avoided. Scorch marks, flickering lights, hot plugs and sockets, fuses that blow or circuit-breakers that trip for no obvious reasons could all be signs of loose or dangerous wiring.

If in doubt, contact a trained marine electrician to install and service electrics.

PREVENT ELECTRICAL FIRES

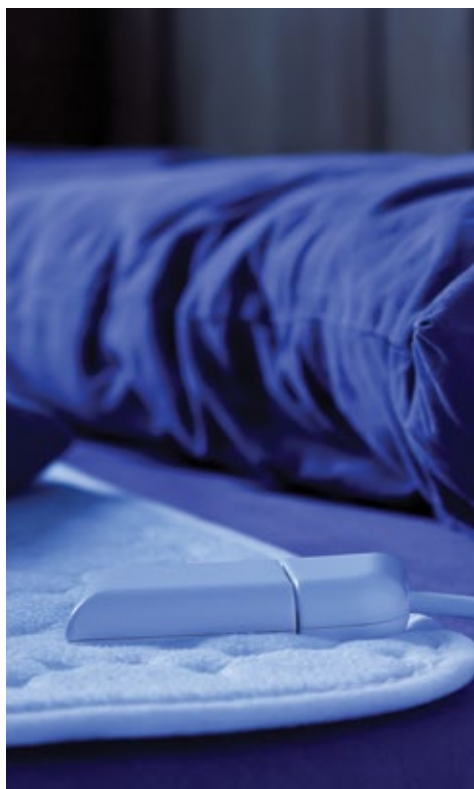
- Make sure electrical appliances have a British or European safety mark when you buy them.
- Unplug appliances when they're not in use or when you leave the boat.
- Keep electrical appliances clean and in good working order.
- Empty fluff regularly from tumble dryers in line with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Don't overload adaptors. Keep to one plug per socket. Use the correct fuse or circuit breaker to avoid overheating.
- High powered appliances such as washing machines and electric heaters, should have a single socket to themselves.
- Always check that you're using the right fuse, typical examples include:
 - 3A fuse** – table lamp, television, computer, blender, fridge, freezer.
 - 13A fuse** – washing machine, dishwasher, microwave, kettle, toaster, iron.
- If you have to use an adaptor, use a fused 'in line' type but don't overload it by adding an extra plug-in adaptor. Know the limits.
- Cable drum extension leads should be completely unwound to avoid overheating.
- Hair straighteners get extremely hot; always switch them off and leave them to cool on a heatproof surface.



LIGHT BULB SAFETY

When fitting new bulbs, always read the packaging carefully. Lumens are a measure of how bright the light is, whilst wattage indicates how much power it consumes.

- Replace halogen bulbs with LED bulbs, if the fitting allows.
- Use bulbs of the correct size, type and wattage.
- Make sure bulbs are fitted or screwed in securely – loose bulbs may overheat.
- Never drape anything over a lamp, keep areas around them clear and ensure wires and cables don't present a trip hazard.



USING AN ELECTRIC BLANKET

Old, damaged or faulty electric blankets can cause fires injuries and death. Always follow the manufacturer's instruction on safe use.

- Never use an electric blanket if you have an air flow pressure relief mattress or use emollient creams, as these are flammable and must be kept away from heat sources.
- Unplug the blanket before you get into bed, unless it has a thermostat control for safe all-night use.
- Do not buy second-hand electric blankets.
- Check regularly looking for scorch marks, worn fabric or damaged wiring.
- Store electric blankets flat, rolled up or loosely folded to prevent damaging the internal wiring.
- Replace your electric blanket every 10 years or earlier if you spot signs of damage or wear and tear.



BATTERY AND CHARGING SAFETY

Rechargeable batteries, when used safely, power millions of devices every day such as mobile phones, laptops, tablets and mobility scooters. However batteries can present a fire risk when used incorrectly. Follow these safety tips when charging your devices.

- Always use the charger that came with your phone, tablet, e-cigarette or mobile device or use a genuine replacement.
- Counterfeit electrical chargers can be deadly, and many fail to meet UK safety regulations.
- Don't leave items continuously on charge (after the charge cycle is complete).
- Avoid storing, using or charging batteries in extremes of high or low temperatures.
- Protect batteries against being damaged, crushed or punctured and don't immerse in water.
- Do not cover devices in use, or batteries that are on charge, in case they overheat.
- When you travel, avoid keeping all your items containing rechargeable batteries together, especially on a plane. Check with your flight carrier for additional information or advice.



PRODUCT RECALLS

Faulty electrical appliances, including white goods, can cause fires. If you are concerned about the safety of a product, stop using it and contact the retailer, manufacturer and your local Trading Standards office.

A list of recalled products is available on the gov.uk 'Product Recall' page.

- Take extra care with second-hand appliances, ensure they have been safety checked and are not listed on the product recall register.

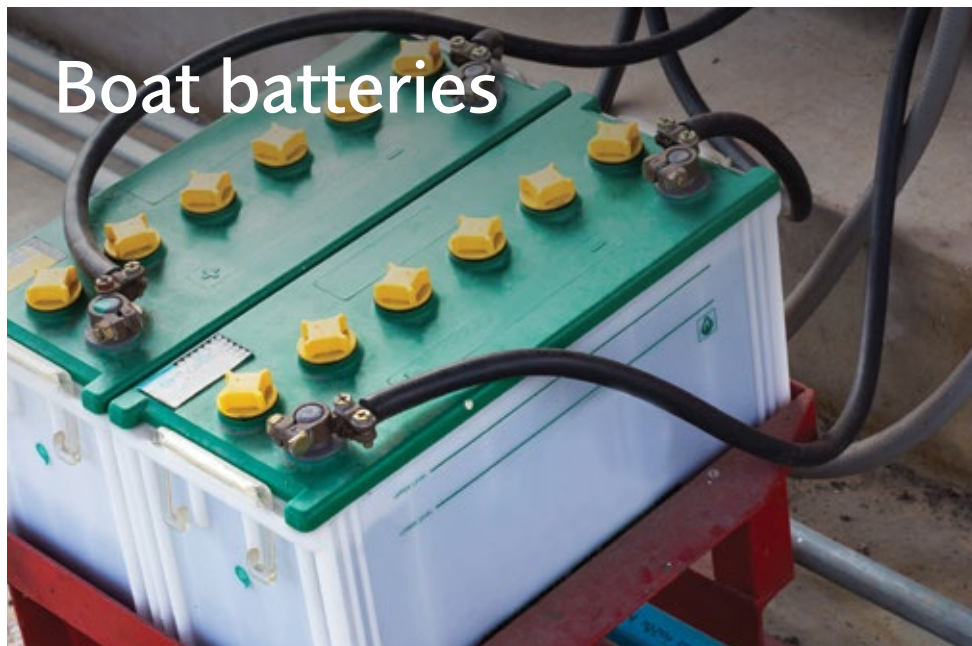
- Make sure you register your electrical appliances so that you are the first to know of any safety repairs or recalls. You can do this through the manufacturers' websites, or through the register my appliance website: registermyappliance.org.uk

*'White goods' are large appliances like tumble dryers, washing machines, fridges and freezers.

Remember

Electrical intake equipment (meters and/or consumer units) and lighting in storage cupboards should be kept clear of items such as coats and cleaning materials that can ignite easily.

Boat batteries



Fully charged batteries contain an enormous amount of stored energy.

REDUCE FIRE RISK – FOLLOW THIS ADVICE

- Some batteries emit explosive gases. Batteries should be held securely to prevent them moving around.
- Ensure battery compartment is secured permanently to the structure of the vessel and is well ventilated.
- The battery should be insulated from the metal hull as any leakage of electrolyte can eat through the metal structure of the boat.
- It should not be beneath any LPG or petrol installation including lockers, pipework and fuel tanks.
- Always keep the lid or cover over the battery. It is designed to prevent the terminal coming into contact with any conducting object.

Need more help?

If in doubt, refer to your local boat engineer, the Boat Safety Scheme examiner or marine surveyor for up to date compliance advice.

Engine maintenance



Using the checklist below will help keep your engine running smoothly and safely.

CHECK:

- fuel lines and tanks regularly for any cracks or leak
- oil or debris does not build-up in the bilge
- the lagging of engine and heater exhausts for damage or deterioration
- nearby items for heat damage or charring
- exhaust systems of inboard engines for leaks
- loose fuel joints, damaged fuel tanks or deteriorating hoses
- the engine compartment is ventilated before starting it up and after any maintenance.

Fuel



Sources of power can vary on boats; many of which are highly flammable.

REFUELLING

- Stop the engine before refuelling and ensure all smoking materials and naked flames are extinguished.
- Prevent petrol vapour from entering the boat by closing the doors, windows and hatches.
- Make sure outboard engines and generators are well away from the boat.
- Petrol vapour can ignite easily. Clean up any leaks and spills straight away.
- Fuel tanks should not be overfilled.
- Make sure filler caps are secure.
- No passengers should be on board.

GOOD TIPS WHEN RESTARTING

- Do not overstock fuel.
- Only carry spare fuel if necessary and store it in a self-draining locker or on an open deck.
- Make sure that all empty cylinders are collected regularly.
- When using biofuel always follow the manufacturer's guidelines and instructions.



Have a gas routine and regularly check your gas appliances and equipment.

REDUCE GAS LEAKS – FOLLOW THIS ADVICE

- Gas appliances such as a cooker or boiler should comply with the Boat Safety Scheme regulations. Ensure they are installed and maintained routinely by a qualified boat engineer.
- Never restrict airflow by blocking vents or air gaps.
- Make sure gas cylinders are secure after they've been changed.
- Store spare propane or oxygen cylinders upright and in an isolated external gas cylinder locker which should be well-ventilated.
- Never store cylinders in cupboards containing electric equipment.
- Test for leaks with detection fluid.
- Ensure fuel lines have a direct shut-off valve that works.
- Whenever possible, turn gas valves off before you go to bed or leave the boat.

Remember

If you suspect a gas leak, leave the boat immediately, turning off appliances if it is safe to do so. Do not operate electrical equipment. Contact the Gas Safety Register for more information (see page 45).

Domed deck lights/bullseyes



Deck lights/bullseyes are thick glass lenses fitted in the roof or the deck, admitting light into the boat. The rays from the sun pass through the lenses magnifying the light creating a possible fire risk.

SIMPLE SAFETY STEPS

- Keep an eye (and nose) on any signs of overheating, scorching, or charring to the material around a bullseye.
- Keep items such as towels and aerosol away from the focal path of the lens.
- Items should be kept at least 300mm away from bullseyes.

Did you know

They can scorch and set fire to the wood linings of a boat as well as objects lying on it.

Alarms



Fit CO alarms.



Test your alarms monthly.

Fitting alarms provide early warning systems in the event of a fire, CO, water or gas leak. So test your alarms monthly and make sure they can be heard throughout your boat.

SMOKE ALARMS

- Fit at least one smoke alarm at each end of your vessel, and in any room where a fire could start.
- Optical sensor alarms with hush buttons and a 10 year, long-lasting 'sealed for life' batteries are best for boats. Never try to remove or replace the batteries.
- Consider fitting linked alarms that will sound at the same time.
- Make sure any alarms you buy are marked with a British Standards or European (CE) safety mark.
- Always follow the manufacturer's fitting instructions. Poorly sited alarms may cause lots of false alarms.
- Keep smoke alarms away from cooking areas or bathrooms as steam can set them off by mistake.

CO ALARMS

- Fit CO alarms in all rooms with fuel burning appliances in sleeping area.
- Only buy alarms specifically designed for use in houseboats, marked with the current British Standards BS EN50291-2. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how and where to fit.

BILGE ALARMS

Bilge alarms can be installed easily – follow the manufacturer's instructions on how and where to fit them. There are two types of bilge alarm: water detectors and bilge-pump alarms.

If you are concerned about your boat sinking, contact the Canal and River Trust. See page 44 for more information.

Remember

Fit a heat alarm in the cooking area. This will detect the increase in temperature caused by a fire but will not be set off by cooking fumes.

Gas leak indicators



Risk of explosion is one of the greatest fire hazards faced by boaters.

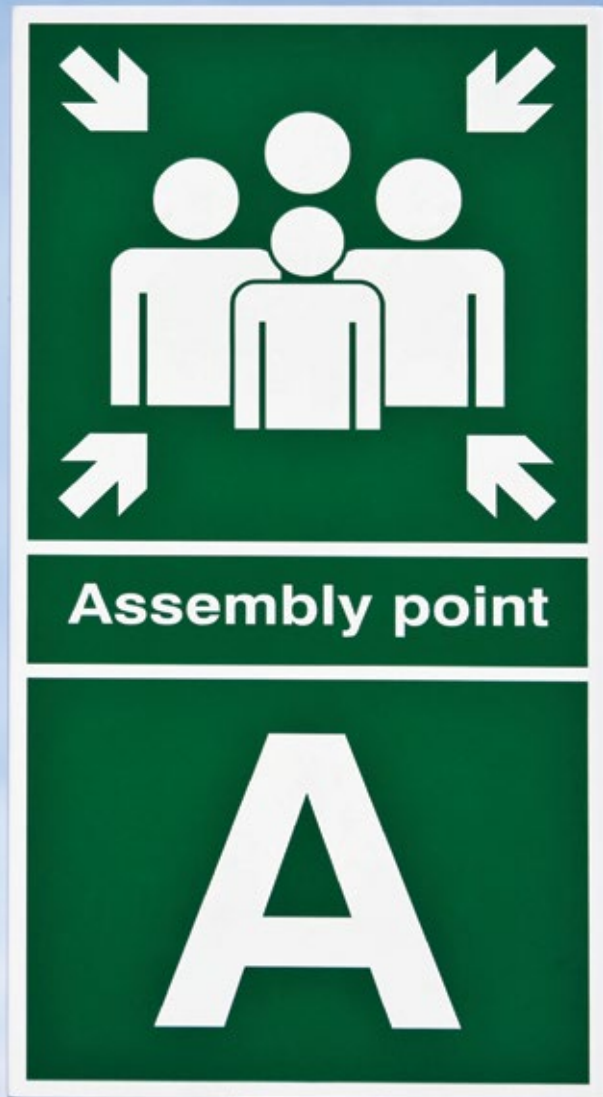
SIMPLE SAFETY STEPS

These devices are used to detect the presence of gases in an area, often as part of a safety system.

- Fit a 'bubble type' gas leak indicator in the LPG cylinder locker.
- Push the gas leak indicator test button routinely to check for leaks in the gas system.

- In the event of a gas leak, turn off all gas cylinders valves, close any fuel systems and follow advice on page 28.

In an emergency



Make sure you have an escape plan, practise it regularly to make sure everyone knows how to get out safely.

HAVE A PLAN

- The best escape route is the normal way in and out of your boat.
- Keep all escape routes clear from clutter or items that will block your escape.
- If anyone on board is slow to react or has mobility issues, adapt the plan to suit their needs.
- Review your plan if your circumstances change. If you need support or advice with this contact your local fire and rescue service, Boat Safety Scheme or your local coast guard.

HAVE A SAFETY ROUTINE

- Keep door and window keys where everyone on board can find them. Don't lock or bolt doors and hatches from the outside.
- Always keep lifejackets in good condition and have enough for everyone on board.
- Make sure everyone on the boat knows where the rescue equipment is eg lifebelt, throwline, and understands how to use it.
- Get into the habit of a bedtime safety check before you go to bed.
- Keep a torch readily available and make sure you have spare batteries.
- Make sure if you use a VHF radio it is ready for use at any time and know your location.

RAISE THE ALARM

- Know your location in cases of emergency. Use the FRS postcode finder to locate the contact details of your local fire and rescue service: cfoa.org.uk/frs?postcode=
- If you are inland or moored near to land, get everybody off the boat and call 999 as soon as it is safe to do so.

Remember

Don't rely on a mobile phone. There could be no signal and it may not be waterproof.



Don't open engine doors or hatches unless you have to.

IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE OR OTHER EMERGENCY

Even a small fire can spread quickly. Get out, stay out, call 999 as soon as it is safe to do so. In the event of an emergency follow this advice:

- Know how to close emergency valves and switches (if safe to do so).
- If any of your smoke alarms sound, never assume it is a false alarm.
- Shout 'FIRE' to alert others in the boat and nearby.
- Don't waste time investigating what has happen or rescuing valuables.
- Don't try to tackle a fire you might inhale dangerous toxic smoke or get burnt.
- Before you open a door check if it's warm with the back of your hand. If it is, don't open it, there may be a fire on the other side.
- If you are in a smoke filled space, keep low down where the air is clearer.
- Keep calm and get out, closing doors behind you to slow down the spread of fire and smoke.
- Starve the fire of air. Don't open engine hatches or doors unless you have to.
- Never go back onto the boat once you are safely outside.



IN THE EVENT OF AN OFFSHORE FIRE/FIRE AT SEA/TIDAL THAMES

- If the boat is moving and it is safe to do so, steer the boat to a safe location, away from petrol pumps, bridges and other boats.
- Move as far away from the fire as you can on deck.
- Ensure everyone is wearing a lifejacket.
- Take your handheld VHF radio on deck with you to call for help.
- Notify the Coastguard by radio, make a Mayday call and/or display a distress signal.

Clothes on fire



STOP



DROP



AND ROLL

If someone's clothes have caught fire, get them to stop, drop and roll, then smother the flames with heavy material, like a coat or blanket.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CLOTHES CATCH FIRE

- Don't run around, you'll make the flames worse.
- Lie down and roll around. It makes it harder for the flames to spread.

HEALTH ADVICE: FIRST AID FOR BURNS

Treat burns or scalds as soon as possible to limit the amount of damage to your skin. Follow our simple first aid tips and seek medical attention if required.

REMEMBER: Burns caused by acid, alkaline or chemicals can cause serious injuries and may need urgent medical attention, call 999 immediately.

1



Cool the burn with running water for at least 20 minutes.

2



Remove all clothing around the burn area and jewellery (**unless** it is melted or firmly struck to the wound).

3



Cover the burn by placing a layer of cling film over it – a clean plastic bag could also be used for burns on your hand.

4



Keep warm but take care not to rub fabrics against the burnt area.

Further advice

To find out more, search 'NHS burns' or visit: [nhs.uk/conditions/burns-and-scalds](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/burns-and-scalds)



Extinguishers and fire blankets

LFB do not recommend fighting fires.

To comply with the Boat Safety Scheme's licensing safety requirement for boats, it is mandatory that houseboats carry extinguishers and fire blankets.

FOLLOW THIS ADVICE

- Know how to use any equipment on board.
- Keep fire blankets and extinguishers within easy reach, close to exits and risk points, such as the galley and engine area.
- Only choose extinguishers that carry recognised approval marks. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Important

Using equipment to fight fires should only be considered when putting out small fires and to assist escape. LFB do not recommend fire extinguishers and fire blankets in a domestic setting.

Water safety



Cold water shock can be fatal.



Avoid trip hazards on deck.

All water in the UK is cold enough to cause cold water shock.
Follow this advice to stay safe when living on the water.

STAYING SAFE LIVING ON WATER

- It is safer to walk through the inside of the boat to get to the front or back.
 - Always use the grab rail to hold on with one hand whenever moving about on the outside deck.
 - Take extra care. Avoid slipping on a wet deck or tripping over ropes or mooring stakes. Wear non-slip rubber soled shoes and keep decks clear.
 - Never jump off the front of a moving boat.
 - Only use a boat-hook or pole when the boat is still.
 - Don't wrap ropes around any part of your body or use your hands to try and stop the boat – it will have little effect and may cause serious injury.
 - Only swim in designated swimming areas where it is safe to do so. You don't know what dangers lie beneath the surface – eg, strong currents, sharp objects.
 - Water could be contaminated, putting swimmers at risk of waterborne diseases such as Weil's disease.
- If you fall in:**
- The RNLI's **FLOAT** advice is crucial to saving your life.
 - FIGHT:** your instinct to thrash around.
 - LEAN:** back in the water to keep your airways clear.
 - OPEN:** your body up, extend your arms and legs, push your stomach up.
 - ACTIONS:** Gently move your hands and feet to help you float.
 - TIME:** In 60 seconds you'll be able to control your breathing and call for help or swim to safety.
- If someone else is in difficulty in the water:**
- Do not go in after them – call 999.



LIFEJACKETS (PERSONAL FLOATATION DEVICE)

- Know where lifejackets are located.
- Have enough lifejackets for everyone on board, keep them in good condition.
- Children, non-swimmers, those with disabilities and lone boaters should wear lifejackets whenever they're on deck.
- Everyone should wear a lifejacket when moving around the exterior of the boat.
- Supervise children at all times when on board.
- Non-swimmers should stay inside when the boat is moving in open water.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

A guide to lifejackets and buoyancy aids is available from the RNLI: [rnli.org/-/media/rnli/downloads/rnli-guide-to-lifejackets-and-buoyancy-aids.pdf?fd=true](https://www.rnli.org/-/media/rnli/downloads/rnli-guide-to-lifejackets-and-buoyancy-aids.pdf?fd=true)

Please note: Swimming is not permitted in canals owned by the Canal and River Trust.

Berth

A sleeping area on a boat.

Bilge

The lowest section of a boat where water typically collects.

Bubble gas leak indicator

A device designed to be connected close to the outlet side of the gas regulator

Cabin

An enclosed and protected area on a boat. It can range from a small 'cuddy cabin' to large living spaces with multiple rooms, which themselves may be referred to as cabins.

Cockpit

Any semi-enclosed, recessed area on a boat where the controls of a vessel are located.

Deck

Essentially any exposed, flat exterior surface on a boat that people stand on.

Deck lights/bullseyes

A thick disk or lens-like piece of glass inserted in the roof or deck to admit light to the area below.

Galley

An area on a boat where food is prepared.

Hatch

The cover or door that closes over any opening in a boat's deck or cabintop.

Head

The bathroom on a boat.

Helm

The area of a boat where the steering and engine controls are located.

Lifelines

Cables or lines used to prevent people or gear from falling overboard.

Locker

An area on a boat where gear is stowed.

Liquefied or Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG or LP gas)

Referred to as propane or butane, these are flammable mixtures of hydrocarbon gases used as fuel in heating appliances, cooking equipment and vehicles.

Mobile/Portable gas heaters

A portable gas heater is also known as an LPG heater.

Keel

The lowest portion of a boat's hull as it sits in the water. Also, a hull appendage that improves stability.

Rudder

A vertical hull appendage that controls steering.

Useful information



USEFUL CONTACTS

Boat Safety Scheme(BSS)

For boat safety checks or to arrange a boat examination visit the BSS website: boatsafetyscheme.org/

British Marine Federation

For information on appliance servicing and maintenance for boat contact: britishmarine.co.uk. They will provide a list of recommended builders and service engineers.

Canal and River Trust

If there is an incident which is not an emergency – call the CRT 24 hour emergency contact number 0303 040 4040.

Or call 0800 47 999 47 if:

- there is a dangerously damaged lock, bridge or tunnel
- a boat is trapped in a dangerous situation eg on a weir or a lock
- there is serious flooding or a breach which risks lives or property
- there is serious pollution.

Environment Agency

For information on registering a boat, applying for a River Thames accommodation licence or to check river conditions and closures, visit the Environment Agency website: gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency

Port of London Authority

For information on navigational safety on the tidal Thames, visit the Port of London Authority website:
pla.co.uk

HM Coastguard

For information on the initiation and coordination of all maritime search and rescue within the UK Maritime Search and Rescue Region visit:
gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency/about

RNLI

RNLI runs free lifejacket clinics where trained staff will inspect lifejackets and show you how to carry out your own checks.

To find out about a clinic near you, or to book a clinic for your club or group, email:
community_safety@rnli.org.uk

Further links

Go to hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/faqtenant.htm for more information for tenants and to find advice on health and safety in privately rented accommodation.

For information on CO, fire safety on boats and routine safety:
boatsafetyscheme.org/stay-safe

For alarm information:
Council of Gas Detection and Environmental Monitoring (CoGDEM)
cogdem.org.uk/CoGDEMCOsite/index.html

For general CO advice:
Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
Gas Safety Advice Line 0800 300 363,
hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/co.htm

To find registered gas fitters:
Gas Safe Register,
gassaferegister.co.uk

To find local boatyards:
British Marine Federation,
britishmarine.co.uk

Further information on water safety:
Visit rnli.org/safety/know-the-risks
and rlss.org.uk/pages/category/water-safety-information



[london-fire.gov.uk](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk)



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE