

BROADS BOAT SAFETY SCHEME

The national Boat Safety Scheme applies in the Broads to all boats with engines and/or cooking, heating, lighting, refrigeration and other domestic appliances, including open boats propelled by outboard motors with fixed electrical systems such as electric starts. It does not apply to open boats propelled solely by outboard motors and not fitted with any of the above appliances or systems.

A boat owner needs to arrange for independent examination of the boat in order to get a BSS certificate; evidence of a valid certificate must be produced to the Broads Authority when applying to pay a toll. Visiting boats without certificates may be subject to hazardous-boat checks.

BSS examinations include other safety checks, such as fire escape provision, gas lockers, flues for toxic fume spillage and power connections (inc. AC electrical shore-supply leads for potential for electrocution and fire). If a boat fails any of these checks, the owner will be formally notified and advice offered.

Lithium batteries. In response to the growing numbers of fires and "near miss" reports to the BSS, it has now issued specific advice on the use, care and maintenance of lithium batteries on boats. These batteries range from those in smart phones and other personal devices, to larger fixed installations such as domestic or starter batteries. Insurance companies are now making various stipulations in relation to Lithium batteries on board.

Carbon Monoxide (CO). At least one Carbon Monoxide alarm is now required on nearly all boats requiring a BSS certificate. This must comply with "BS EN 50291-2". The "hyphen 2" means that it is certified to cope with the movements and vibration experienced in recreational craft. New BSS Requirements for CO alarms apply to boats with accommodation spaces i.e. areas within a boat

surrounded by permanent boat structure and where CO gas may accumulate. Boaters need to pay attention to exhaust gases, particularly petrol engine exhaust fumes, if they can smell them in the boat's cabins because they can contain dangerous levels of CO. Although the need for CO alarms has been introduced to help protect boat owners from sources of the toxic gas from neighbouring boats, the alarms are also expected to prevent death or injury to crew members from their own boat engines or appliances. CO is a silent killer. Its symptoms can be similar to colds, flu or hangovers; headaches, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, tiredness, confusion, stomach pain and shortness of breath are warning signs of its presence. If CO poisoning is suspected, stop the source, get to the open air and seek medical attention.

- Avoid problems by staying alert to engine fumes – keep them out of the cabin.
- Run portable generators ashore away from the boat, never aboard.
- Don't run a propulsion engine when moored if the exhaust fumes are blowing back inside, even if your batteries are desperate for a charge. Wait until the wind changes for the better or move to a different mooring.
- Be a good neighbour and don't run petrol engines where exhaust fumes could enter a nearby boat cabin.
- If you're smelling and breathing in exhaust fumes, stop the engine and get off the boat.

For more details, see **Ventilation** on page 138.

For further clarification, contact the **Broads Authority**, or **Boat Safety Scheme, c/o Canal & River Trust**, registered office: **National Waterways Museum, South Pier Road, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire CH65 4FW**, tel: **0333 2021000** www.boatsafetyscheme.org

