



Washington State Required Equipment for Vessels

State regulations are the same as USCG regulations except where ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS are noted.

EQUIPMENT	LESS THAN 16 FEET	16 FT. TO LESS THAN 26 FT.	26 FT. TO LESS THAN 40 FT.	40 FT. TO LESS THAN 65 FT.
 <p>Personal Flotation Devices</p>	<p>One Type I, II, III, or V per person. Each PFD must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - USCG approved; - In good, useable condition; - The correct size for user; and - Readily accessible. 	<p>One Type I, II, III, or V per person, PLUS one Type IV throwable device. Each PFD must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - USCG approved; - In good, useable condition; - The correct size for user; and - Readily accessible. 		<p>EXCEPTION: Manually powered canoes and kayaks of any length are required to meet the requirements for vessels less than 16 feet – No Type IV is required.</p>


ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS: Any person towed behind a vessel & all persons on personal watercraft must wear PFD. Child 12 years of age and less must wear PFD on vessels under 19' when underway except when child is in enclosed cabin, on a USCG inspected passenger vessel, or in conditions where no person would reasonably expect a danger of drowning. All passengers on commercial white water trips carrying passengers for hire must wear a securely fastened Type V; and guides must wear a Type III or V. (Reference: RCW 79A.60.430. Applies to rivers in RCW 79A.60.470 and WAC 352-60-140.)

Reference: RCW 79A.60.160, .170, and .190; WAC 352-60-030.


 <p>Fire Extinguisher</p> <p>Without a fixed extinguishing system</p>	<p>One B-I, portable extinguisher, any type. Fire extinguishers required on any boat with enclosed fuel or engine spaces, enclosed living spaces, or permanent fuel tanks. All extinguishers must be USCG approved.</p>	<p>One B-II or two B-I.</p>	<p>One B-II and one B-I, or three B-I.</p>
	<p>No portables required.</p>	<p>One B-I.</p>	<p>Two B-I or one B-II.</p>

FOR VESSELS 50 GROSS TONS OR MORE: One to eight B-II extinguishers are required depending on gross tonnage as stated in 46 CFR 25.30-20.


Reference: WAC 352-60-080.

 <p>Visual Distress Signals</p>	<p>Night signals required when operating on coastal waters between sunset and sunrise.</p>	<p>Pyrotechnic devices: A minimum of three, day-use devices, and three, night-use devices, or three day/night combination pyrotechnic devices. Pyrotechnic devices are acceptable through the date on device.</p> <p>Non-pyrotechnic devices: 1 orange flag will meet day requirement and 1 electric distress light will meet night requirement.</p> <p>All visual distress signals must be USCG approved.</p>
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Reference: WAC 352-60-040.

 <p>Sound Producing Device</p>	<p>A horn or whistle is required to signal intentions or position. Under state code and federal regulations, all boats less than 40' (12m) must have on board a means of making an efficient sound (other than the human voice).</p>	<p>A horn or whistle is required to signal intention or position, AND for vessels 40' (12m) to 65' a bell not less than eight inches (200mm) in diameter; AND for vessels over 65' a bell 12" (300mm) in diameter.</p>
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Reference: WAC 352-60-065.

 <p>Backfire Flame Arrester</p>	<p>One approved arrester on each carburetor for all gasoline-powered engines built after April 1940, except outboards. Arrester should be kept clean to prevent the spread of backfire flames and must be tightly connected to the carburetor to prevent backfire flames from blowing past the connection. Approval may be USCG or as provided for in WAC 352-60-090.</p>
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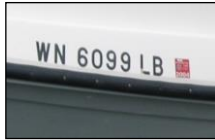
Reference: WAC 352-60-090.

 <p>Ventilation</p>	<p>Powered ventilation system required on gasoline powered vessels built after August 1, 1980 with enclosed engine spaces. Vessels built earlier must have a natural or a powered ventilation system in the fuel tank compartment.</p>
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Reference: WAC 352-60-050.

EQUIPMENT		LESS THAN 16 FEET	16 FT. TO LESS THAN 26 FT.	26 FT. TO LESS THAN 40 FT.	40 FT. TO LESS THAN 65 FT.
	Navigation Lights	When underway, sidelights masthead and stern light. Vessels less than 39.4' (12 meters) may exhibit an all-round white light in lieu of separate masthead and stern lights. INTERNATIONAL WATERS ONLY - Vessels less than 23' (7 meters) whose maximum speed doesn't exceed 7 knots (about 8 miles per hour) may instead show an all-round light and, if practicable, sidelights. Includes sailboats when under mechanical power.			
	Power-driven vessel				
	Sailing vessel	When underway, sidelights and stern light. If less than 65.6' (20 meters) these lights can be combined into one lantern to be carried at or near the top of the mast. A sailing vessel under 23' may substitute a white lantern or flashlight which shall be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent a collision. Does not include sailing vessels under mechanical power.			
	Rowing vessel	A vessel under oars may exhibit the lights for a sailing vessel or have at ready a white lantern or flashlight which shall be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent a collision.			
	Vessel at anchor	All around white light visible for 2 nautical miles (nm) at night unless in a chart-designated anchorage.			
Visibility range	1 nautical mile (nm) for sidelights, 2 nm for all others.			3 nm for masthead, 2 nm for all others.	


Reference: WAC 352-60-060; one nautical mile equal to 6,076 feet.

	Vessel Registration Numbers and Valid Decals	<p>All motorized boats and sailboats 16' and longer must be registered and display numbers and valid decals when on or moored on waters of the state. Numbers must be permanently displayed on the vessel's forward half on the port and starboard side, in a block font style (no script fonts), and at least 3" high in a contrasting color to the hull or superstructure color. They must read left to right: "WN 1234 AA", with a space between the prefix and number, and the number and suffix. WA decals expire halfway thru the calendar year on the last day of June; new decals will be for the following calendar year. The registration papers or "certificate of numbers" must be carried on board the vessel when it is on the water.</p> <p>A documented vessel is part of the federal "registration" system run by the USCG. Vessels generally must be over 26-27' in length to meet the required min. capacity of 5 net tons. A documented vessel must still pay state excise tax annually and is issued a decal and numbers, the same as for other vessels required under the state system. The decal must be displayed the same as above, but numbers are not displayed.</p> <p>See RCW 88.02.570 and WAC 308-93 for exemptions to vessel registration. NOTE: All motorized vessels must be registered when operated on Puget Sound, Lakes Union, Washington, and Sammamish; the Columbia & Snake Rivers; the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and coastal waters regardless of the type of motor, HP, or length. Boats 16' and less powered by 10 HP or less ARE EXEMPT if operated on SOLE STATE WATERS (no federal regulation), and lose the exemption when put on waters where there is federal jurisdiction, as noted.</p>
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Reference: RCW 88.02 and WAC 308.93

	Mandatory Boater Education Card	<p>Implementation of phase-in schedule began in 2008. A Boater Education card is required for operators twelve years of age and older operating vessels powered by 15HP or greater. In 2014, operators 59 years and younger must carry the card on board. Exemptions: Persons born before January 1, 1955; Possess a valid USCG marine operator license; Purchased the boat or vessel within the last 60 days – and has a bill of sale in possession to document the date of purchase; Accompanied by and is under the direct supervision of a person 16 years of age or older who is in possession of a boater education card; Not a resident of Washington state and does not operate a motor driven vessel with an engine power of 15 horsepower or greater in waters of the state for more than 60 consecutive days.</p> <p>The WA State Patrol ACCESS system can confirm issued cards.</p>
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Reference: RCW 79A.60.630, .640 and WAC 352-78

	Carbon Monoxide Warning Sticker	Any motor driven vessel, except a PWC, must display a carbon monoxide warning sticker, visible to passengers, on the interior of the vessel.
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Reference: RCW 88.02.390 and WAC 308-93-146

	Marine Sanitation Devices (MSD)	<p>Vessels with an installed toilet must have an operable USCG certified Type I, II, or III Marine Sanitation Device (MSD). Any "Y" valve for discharge overboard must be located or affixed in such a manner to prevent accidental discharge of untreated waste into water.</p> <p>Reference: 33 C.F.R. 159 (USCG regulations only; no state requirement in effect).</p>
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FOR VESSELS 65 FEET OR LONGER: Type II or III MSD only.

Muffler	RCW 79A.60.130 - Muffler must be effective, in good working order, and in constant use.
Water Skiing	RCW 79A.60.170, WAC 352-60-120 - Any skier must wear a USCG approved PFD. Observer who is physically capable and mentally competent must be on board tow vessel. Local regs can be more restrictive. A 12" x 12" red or orange flag on a 24" pole must be displayed while skier is in water.
Overloaded/Over Powered	RCW 79A.60.180 - Vessels shall not be loaded with passengers or cargo beyond safe carrying ability, or carry passengers or cargo in an unsafe manner considering weather and operating conditions. Vessel shall not be operated with a motor beyond vessel's capacity to operate safely. Officers have the authority to direct vessels back to shore until the violation is corrected.