

Boat Safety Scheme
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Proposed BSS Requirements for carbon monoxide alarms approved

Following the public consultation in Autumn 2018 on proposed changes to the Boat Safety Scheme (BSS) the BSS Management Committee has decided that new BSS Requirements for carbon monoxide (CO) alarms on boats will be introduced from next April.

Strong support for the changes was demonstrated in the responses to the consultation with 84% in favour of introducing a requirement for suitable working carbon monoxide (CO) alarms.

All boats with accommodation spaces subject to the BSS will see mandatory checks introduced for suitable CO alarms in good condition and in appropriate locations. The requirements are designed to keep people on and around boats safe.

As well as protection from neighbouring boats, the CO alarms are also expected to prevent death or injury to boat owners from their own boat engines or appliances.

The alarms will warn people in the area about immediately dangerous levels of CO. They can also alert craft occupants to moderate levels of CO, which can be a long-term threat to health if left undetected.

BSS Manager, Graham Watts said:

‘We want to thank all the contributors to the consultation. Your comments and views have been exceptionally valuable and have caused us to reflect a little longer before publishing the checks in order to ensure that the wording is entirely clear.

The BSS will be publishing the new checks in detail in January/February 2019 on its website.

It’s encouraging that so many contributors already enjoy the protection of CO alarms, however if you are yet to be protected, please take a look at a list of CO alarms recommended as suitable for boats by the manufacturers’ body on the BSS Stay Safe CO advice webpages [[LINK](#)].

Follow fitting instructions supplied with the alarm, but if these are difficult to meet fully on a boat, then best practice placement guidance can be found in the CO Safety on Boats leaflet. The online version is available on the same site [[LINK](#)].

The BSS has produced a summary of the views expressed in the consultation and the BSS responses. The summary can be viewed on the BSS website www.boatsafetyscheme.org/alarmconsultation2018/.

The mandatory new BSS Requirements will come into effect from 1 April 2019.

More information about staying safe from CO on boats is available at www.boatsafetyscheme.org/co

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The **Boat Safety Scheme**, or BSS, is a public safety initiative owned by the Canal & River Trust and the Environment Agency. Its purpose is to help minimise the risk of boat fires, explosions, or pollution from boats harming visitors to the inland waterways, the waterways' workforce and any other people on or near the waterway. Journalists seeking further information about the BSS should contact communications manager, Rob McLean at robert.m@boatsafetyscheme.org or Rob Lyons Playfair Marketing at rob@playfairmarketing.com

Carbon Monoxide (CO) information: CO is a highly toxic poison that cannot be heard, seen, felt, tasted or smelt – it's sometimes called the silent killer for good reason. It is the result of an incomplete or inefficient burn of any carbon-based fuel including wood, charcoal, coal, petrol, diesel, propane and butane. It can happen on a boat with one or a mix of these factors: • Faulty, badly maintained or misused appliances; • Exhaust fumes from a boat's engine or generator; • Escaped flue gases from solid fuel stoves; • Blocked ventilation or short supply of air (fuel needs oxygen to burn safely). In recent years, solid fuel stoves and engine or generator exhaust gases have been responsible for most CO poisoning deaths of boaters.