

Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel Rescue System
U.S. Coast Guard



Press Release

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MARINERS MUST NOT OPERATE 121.5/243 MHz EPIRBs AFTER 31 DECEMBER 2006

NEW YORK – Mariners are reminded that beginning January 1, 2007, both 121.5 and 243 MHz Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs) are prohibited from use in both commercial and recreational watercraft. Boaters wishing to have an emergency rescue beacon aboard their vessel must have a digital 406 MHz model.

This does not affect 121.5/243 MHz man overboard devices which are designed to work directly with a base alerting unit only and not with satellite systems.

In the United States, users are required to register their 406 MHz beacons in the U.S. 406 MHz Beacon Registration Database at: <http://www.beaconregistration.noaa.gov/>. Other users can register their beacon in their country's national beacon registration database, or if no database is available, in the International Registration Database at: <http://www.406registration.com/>.

The Amver system is a voluntary, worldwide ship reporting system. Prior to sailing, participating ships send a sail plan to the Amver computer center. Vessels then report every 48 hours until arriving at their port of call. This data is able to project the position of each ship at any point during its voyage. In an emergency, any rescue coordination center can request this data to determine the relative position of Amver ships near the distress location. On any given day there are over 3,000 ships available to carry out search and rescue services. Visit <http://www.amver.com> to learn more about this unique worldwide search and rescue system.

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