



Life Rings and Life Buoys

Frequently Asked Question

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I am told that my facility needs a life ring (life buoy). What are the requirements?

The Coast Guard does not test materials or systems for approval, but rather specifies the required test methods and minimum performance criteria for approval. See 46 CFR 160.048

46 CFR 160.150-3 Materials. General. All exposed materials shall be rot-proof and be resistant to deterioration from: sunlight exposure, oil or oil products, salt water, and anticipated weather conditions encountered. Lifebuoys shall be constructed of inherently buoyant material and shall not depend upon rushes, cork shavings or granulated cork, any other loose granulated material or any air compartment which depends on inflation for buoyancy. All components shall not sustain burning or continue melting after being totally enveloped in a fire for a period of 2 seconds

Grab line. The grab line shall be not less than 3/8-inch in diameter. It shall be polyethylene, polypropylene, or other suitable buoyant type synthetic material. It shall have a minimum breaking strength of 1,350 pounds. The grab line shall withstand one year of natural southern weathering without significant loss of strength. After the one year of weathering, it shall pass the body-to-grab line strength test 160.150-5(g) (2).

Retro-reflective material. The lifebuoys shall be fitted with Type II retro-reflective material (tape) with a minimum of 2 inches width around the lifebuoy at four locations spaced equally around the circumference of the lifebuoy.

SOLAS RING LIFEBOUY (TYPE IV PFD) - Slightly larger than other ring lifebuoys for fixed water's edge exposures

- For use to aid persons who have fallen overboard. May be used with a lanyard, "man-overboard" pole, or locator light.
- Intended to be thrown or dropped to someone who falls into the water.
- Designed to be grasped and held by the user until rescued.
- Provides enough buoyancy for users to hold their heads out of the water.

Advantages

- Can be thrown to someone within 40 feet
- Can be placed in a bracket mounted, where they are immediately available.

These are products you may want in any area which has potential for a drowning incident. Life ring cabinets protect life rings from damaging UV rays and adverse weather.

Keep life rings in good condition in the event of any emergency.

Source: Guideline 160.150--Specification for Lifebuoys

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