

Summary Points: Emergency Equipment

- The Station Bill (now called a Muster List) lists your emergency station and also which lifeboat or life raft you are assigned to. You are required to read the Muster List as soon as you report aboard the ship.
- The signal for "boat stations" (i.e., preparing to launch lifeboats and inflatable life rafts to abandon ship) is more than six short blasts and one long blast on the whistle followed by the same signal on the general alarm bells. When you hear this signal, go to your assigned station.
- A continuous blast of the whistle for at least 10 seconds and the same signal on the General Alarm bells is the fire and emergency signal. When you hear this signal, go to your fire station. If you are on watch in the engine room, start the fire pump and supply water under pressure to the fire main.
- During drills, one short blast of the whistle signals the crew to lower the boats. Two short blasts mean to stop lowering the boats. Three short blasts are the signal to dismiss the crew from the drill. Additional emergency signals are assigned by the Master.
- Coast Guard regulations require that a life jacket be provided for each person on board. In addition, a life jacket must be provided for each person on watch at his duty station. A life jacket must be readily accessible to each person in the engine room.
- A work vest may never be substituted for a life jacket during drills or in an actual emergency. Work vests must be stowed where they will not be confused with life jackets.
- All required lifesaving and firefighting equipment for your vessel is listed on the vessel's Certificate of Inspection (COI).
- You can turn an inflatable life raft right side up while you are in the water by pulling on its righting strap.
- You must secure a life raft's sea painter to a permanent object on deck using a "weak link." The force exerted by a life raft's buoyancy, break the weak link and free the life raft if the ship sinks.
- To manually launch and inflate an inflatable life raft, push on the hydrostatic release and pull on the sea painter.
- If you see a man fall overboard shout "man overboard" in a loud voice: quickly pass the word to the bridge. Throw the man overboard a ring lifebuoy as a data marker.
- If you have to abandon the ship, jump feet first from the windward side. Remain in the area where the vessel sank.
- An EPIRB is an emergency locating radio beacon that transmits a radio signal. You must stow an EPIRB so that it will float free if the vessel sinks. Keep it easily accessible for testing and use.
- Vessels with several lifeboats have them numbered. All lifeboats on the starboard side have odd numbers, while those on the port side have even numbers. Numbering starts at the forwarding end at the bow and increases going aft. /Refer to 46 CFR §199.178(c).]