

Coast Guard warns of counterfeit extinguishers

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The Coast Guard has become aware of counterfeit Coast Guard-approved portable fire extinguishers manufactured by Amerex Corp. and Buckeye Fire Equipment.

Both companies produce genuine, approved fire extinguishing equipment, but the counterfeit units present a significant safety hazard, the Coast Guard announced.

Their capability to extinguish fires is unproven. They may be charged with a substance that is not a fire-extinguishing agent, the pressure cylinder is not DOT approved, and the pressure gauge may not function or may give false readings.

The dry-chemical B-II extinguishers can be identified by several features, including:

- Counterfeit units may have duplicate serial numbers. For counterfeit Amerex extinguishers, V-654690 has been reported. For counterfeit Buckeye extinguishers, K-094927 (red handle) and YMU76222 (black handle) have been reported. There may be other serial numbers used on the counterfeits.
- The labels on the extinguishers may be simply printed. Labels on genuine, approved extinguishers will include a security imprint/texture behind the "UL LISTED" logo, classification, testing and approval data. Genuine Amerex extinguishers will have a pattern of scored "circles," and genuine Buckeye extinguishers will have the letter "S" scored into the label.

The Coast Guard strongly recommends that vessel owner/operators inspect their equipment. Anyone suspecting they have counterfeit extinguishers should contact the Coast Guard Office of Design and Engineering Standards at ypeapproval@uscg.mil with a copy to anticounterfeiting@us.ul.com. Include a description of the suspected units and photographs showing front, rear and bottom views, and close-ups of labels.