



Taking Your Boat To Canada 04/15/25

by Bill Towner

Passport

You'll need one for each person on board. If you are using Nexus then each person on board needs to have it also.

Boat Documents

You'll need documents for both your main vessel and the dinghy. Make sure you have the original of US Coast Guard documentation and/or state registration.

Insurance

If you plan to stay in a marina or boatyard, you may have to provide proof of at least liability insurance and usually starts at \$1million at Canadian Marinas.

Pet Import Permit

If you have a pet onboard, you DO NOT need a permit. But Must have Vet Papers.

US Customs Decal

Boats 30 feet or longer in length must pay an annual fee of \$35.98 for a border crossing decal. Also called a "user fee decal" or DTOPS decal by the government. Cruisers just call it the "customs decal." You need the number from this on your return to the US. You must renew it every year.

Quarantine Flag and Canadian Courtesy Flag

Make sure to have a Canadian flag in serviceable condition to fly from the mast.

Entering Canada

CBSA Telephone Reporting Centre call: **1-888-226-7277**

- **You will call in (cell phone) immediately at docking or anchoring in Canadian Waters *Before Leaving Your Boat*.**
- **All Members of Crew or Guests must be present when you make the call to answer any questions they might have.**
- **They will ask you a number of questions then you will be asked how long you plan to stay in Canada. Usually a good idea to add a weather day or two to your planned reported stay time.**
- **They will also want your registration number or name for documented vessels that is posted on hull of your boat.**

Things NOT to bring to Canada;

Firearms, ammunition or any explosives (flare guns do not count).

Pepper spray is considered a firearm in Canada, do not bring it!

Cannabis products of ANY KIND. No edibles or medical allowed either.

Alcohol for personal use only quantity, plus no alcohol may be consumed on docks, public areas or on the boat while under way.

Portable toilets are illegal on Ontario waters. The owner of a pleasure craft shall ensure that each toilet has a working holding tank(s).

Make sure to have your medicine bottles of each prescription you take.

Re-Entering the US

CPB ROAM App

- **CPB ROAM app.** Make sure to download this and populate the information needed BEFORE leaving the US
- **You will call in immediately after docking or anchoring back in the US *Before Leaving Your Boat*.**
- **All Members of Crew or Guests must be present when you make the call as they will usually require facetime with each person and also their identification papers.**

Fishing Licenses

- **IF you want to fish, get an Ontario License.**

Fire Extinguishers

Vessel Length	No Fixed System	With approved Fixed Systems
Less than 26'	One 5-B or One 10-B	0
26' to less than 40'	Two 5-B or Two 10-B or One 20-B	One 5-B or One 10-B
40' to 65'	Three 5-B or Three 10-B or One 20-B and One 5-B or One 10-B	Two 5-B or Two 10-B or One 20-B

If you own a boat that is model year 2018 or newer, you may need to replace your fire extinguishers.

- In addition to meeting the carriage requirements for the correct number of extinguishers for the size of your boat, they must be labeled as 5-B, 10-B or 20-B, extinguishers labeled with B-I or B-II only are no longer acceptable.
- Extinguishers must not be more than 12 years old according to the date of manufacture stamped on the bottle, No Stamp then no worries.

Key Aspects of VHF Radios for Boat Safety:

- **Emergency Communication:**

VHF radios allow boaters to quickly contact rescue services (like the Coast Guard) in an emergency.

MMSI Registration – Boat US

- **DSC (Digital Selective Calling):**

- **Weather Information:**

- **Monitoring Channel 16:**

- **Handheld vs. Fixed Mount:**

Keep a floating spare

AIS (Automatic Identification System):

Some VHF radios incorporate AIS, which can provide vessel traffic information and help avoid collisions.

Receivers' vs Transceivers

EPIRBs and PLBs are crucial lifelines in a boating emergency – if they're working properly.

When activated, these emergency beacons transmit a coded message on the 406 MHz distress frequency, which is relayed via the Cospas-Sarsat global satellite system and earth stations to the nearest Rescue Coordination Center (RCC). Modern units, which have an internal GPS, can provide a location accuracy of approximately 100 yards. Here's how to keep your beacons at the ready.

Testing and maintenance

EPIRBs and PLBs should be inspected monthly or prior to any extended cruise. When inspecting and conducting any test, exercise extreme caution to avoid inadvertent activation and generation of a false distress signal.

- **Exterior inspection.** Start by thoroughly inspecting the exterior of your PLB or EPIRB for any physical damage such as corrosion, cracking, or water ingress. Cracks or damage to the case can admit water and cause the unit to malfunction or fail.

Mounting brackets. For EPIRBs, you'll want to inspect the mounting bracket or housing. Cat I EPIRBs should be stowed in an unobstructed location so they can float free when released. that.

- **NOAA registration sticker.** Verify the presence of a current National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) registration sticker.
-
- **Self-tests.** Once the physical inspection is completed, conduct a self-test as per the manufacturer's instructions.