UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

MARINE SAFETY ALERT

Assistant Commandant for Marine Safety, Security and Stewardship

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Washington, DC

Compact Fluorescent Lights

This Safety Alert serves to inform the maritime industry that energy saving Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFL) or lighting, sometimes known as radio frequency (RF) lighting devices may interfere with certain communications equipment. CFLs employ a RF lighting device to excite a gas inside a bulb in order to produce light.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) recognized the need for and adopted rules to control the harmful interference to radio communications services from these devices. During the rulemaking process the Coast Guard provided comments and recommended an advisory label for CFLs / RF lighting devices warning users about potential interference to communication services and particularly with respect to devices capable of producing emissions in the 0.45-30 MHz band. As a result, the FCC required manufacturers of CFLs to provide an advisory statement, either on the product packaging or with other user documentation, similar to the following: "This product may cause interference to radio communications and should not be installed near maritime safety communications equipment or other critical navigation or communication equipment operating between 0.45-30 MHz."

The Coast Guard has learned that CFLs have been installed on the navigation bridges of vessels and in other places capable of causing radio communications interference. Marine inspectors, vessel owners and operators **should be aware** of this potential safety hazard and take proper action as needed.

Below are examples of some compact fluorescent lights with different shapes and sizes.

This safety alert is provided for informational purposes only and does not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational or material requirement. Developed by the Office of Domestic Vessel Activities (CG-5431), United States Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, DC.

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