



# United States Coast Guard

## Marine Safety Alert

### Assistant Commandant for Prevention

Department of Homeland Security

May 5, 2004  
Washington, DC

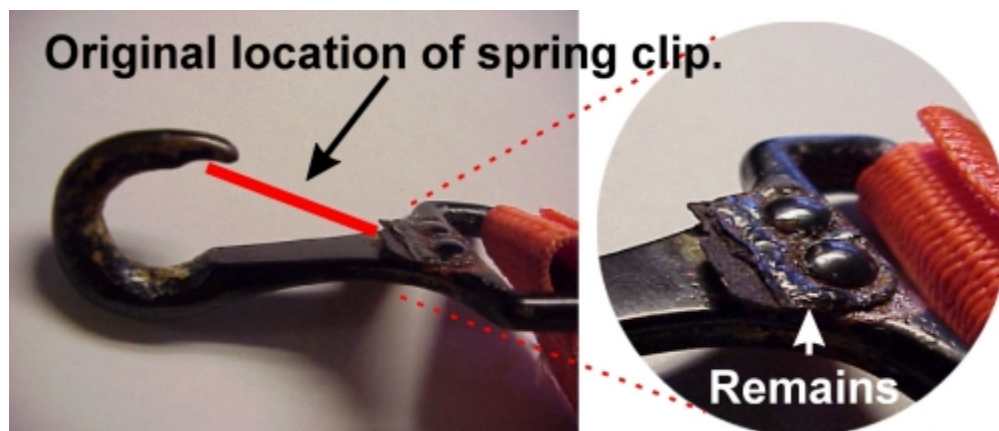
Alert 5-04

#### Life Jacket Snap Hooks

The U.S. Coast Guard Sector Central Pacific has recently discovered defective snap hooks with corroded spring clips installed on four models of U.S. Coast Guard Approved Lifejackets, Type I personal flotation devices manufactured by Cal-June Inc., a.k.a. Jim Buoy. The snap hook assembly is the key component used to ensure primary closure for these lifejackets. The spring clip is a component of the snap hook assembly and the mechanism that keeps the hook from disengaging once connected to the D-ring of the lifejacket's chest strap.

Improper materials were used during the manufacturing process. Consequently, due to the corrosive nature of marine environments it is only a matter of time until these defective snap hooks deteriorate and fail to operate as designed.

The image below illustrates a defective hook and the remains of a corroded spring clip. This snap hook is reported to have been in service for less than one year.



Cal-June Inc. has acknowledged that the snap hook springs are defective and is committed to replacing all defective snap hooks with new snap hook assemblies at no cost to lifejacket owners. They have determined that the defective snap hooks were only used on lifejackets having lot numbers identified in the table below. A total of 5,371 lifejackets were manufactured with the defective snap hooks and sold between October 1, 2002 and March 15, 2004.



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Should you discover this problem or if you have identified your lifejackets by the lot numbers listed, contact Cal-June Inc. at 818.761.3516 or e-mail at [email@jim-buoy.com](mailto:email@jim-buoy.com) to receive replacement snap hooks. Include in your communication the model number, lot number, quantity of life jackets requiring replacements and a shipping address to send replacements. There is no need to return the lifejacket to the factory. Replacement instructions for the snap hook are available at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/moa/docs/replacement.pdf>.

#### Lot Numbers having Defective Snap Hooks

1556	1563	1570
1558	1564	1573
1560	1565	1574
1561	1566	1575
1562	1567	1576



Model Nos.	US Coast Guard Approval Nos.
601 Adult	160.055/115/0
603 Child	160.055/116/0



Model Nos.	US Coast Guard Approval Nos.
SO-1 Adult SOLAS	160.155/1/0
SO-2 Child SOLAS	160.155/2/0



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The Coast Guard **strongly recommends** that owners and operators of vessels having Type I PFDs with metallic snap hooks inspect the snap hook assemblies carefully.

- The entire snap hook including the clip should be made of non-magnetic materials such as bronze or stainless steel. Defective hooks will have spring clips that may be identified by signs of corrosion. A magnet may also be used to identify improper material. Simply touch the magnet to the surface of the spring clip. If the magnet is attracted to or attaches to the clip, then the snap hook assembly must be replaced.
- Contact Cal-June immediately to obtain replacements for spring clips that are corroded or determined to be magnetic.

If similar problems are identified with other life jackets not manufactured by Cal-June, or if you have questions regarding this safety alert, contact Mr. Daniel McCormick of the Lifesaving and Fire Safety Standards Division at [dmccormick@comdt.uscg.mil](mailto:dmccormick@comdt.uscg.mil) or 202.267.2713.

General questions regarding this safety alert or its delivery may be addressed to Mr. Ken Olsen of the Office of Investigations and Analysis at [kolsen@comdt.uscg.mil](mailto:kolsen@comdt.uscg.mil) or 202.267.1417.

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