



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

MARINE SAFETY ALERT

Assistant Commandant for Marine Safety, Security and Stewardship

July 21, 2009
Washington, DC

Alert 05-09

INADVERTENT DISCHARGES OF MARINE FIRE EXTINGUISHING SYSTEMS

This Safety Alert addresses a critical problem involving ANSUL - High Pressure Carbon Dioxide fire extinguishing systems (Coast Guard Approval number 162.038/7). The Coast Guard has become aware of several instances where this particular fire extinguishing system has discharged without human intentional or accidental involvement.

The system manufacturer, ANSUL has identified the suspect CO2 cylinder valves as those having a date code between 10-07 and 06-08. This date code is located on a flat surface immediately above the threaded section which enters the cylinder and opposite the discharge outlet. See the attached ANSUL bulletin for important details.

The Coast Guard **strongly recommends** that owners and operators who have ANSUL High Pressure Carbon Dioxide Systems onboard their vessels and others who may own, sell or service these systems carefully follow the instructions on the attached ANSUL Bulletin.

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 Investigations and Analysis and the Office of Design and Engineering Standards, United States Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, DC.

Office of Investigations and Analysis: <http://marineinvestigations.us>
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Bulletin No. 5559

DATE: July 16, 2009
TO: Authorized ANSUL® Marine High Pressure Carbon Dioxide System Distributors
FROM: Quality Assurance
SUBJECT: Inadvertent Discharges of Marine High Pressure Carbon Dioxide Systems

SPECIAL SAFETY ALERT



If you own, sell or service ANSUL® Marine High Pressure CO₂ Systems, please read and follow the instructions in this bulletin.



WARNING

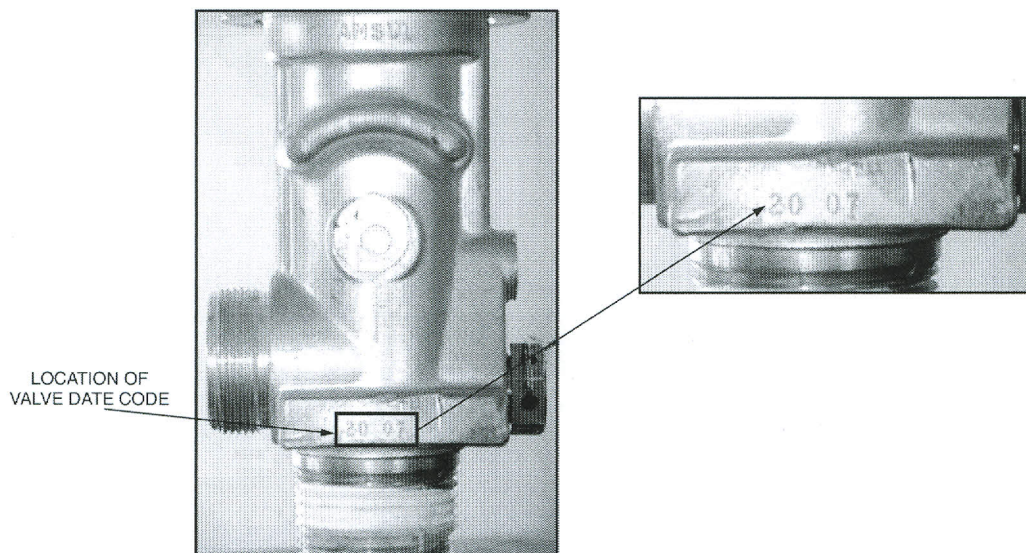
**FAILURE TO READ AND FOLLOW THE INFORMATION IN THIS BULLETIN
INCREASES THE RISK THAT A HIGH PRESSURE CO₂ SYSTEM MAY
INADVERTENTLY DISCHARGE ON BOARD A SHIP.**

We have received isolated reports of Marine High Pressure Carbon Dioxide Systems inadvertently discharging. In our review of the reported discharges, we have discovered that in some cases, an internal pressure vent on the cylinder valve may not be adequately venting pressure. Under certain conditions this may cause a cylinder in the system to actuate, which would then cause all cylinders on this specific system to actuate.

We have determined through internal testing that valves with the following date codes, if installed in marine applications, should be replaced:

Marine High Pressure CO₂ valves with a date code range of 10-07 to 06-08.

This date code range is conservative and may be further narrowed through additional testing. The date code is located on the flat opposite of the valve outlet. The date code represents the week and year the valve was manufactured.



Carbon dioxide cylinders which are installed, or could be installed on a ship with a valve date code between 10-07 and 06-08 **MUST** be identified. If you identify cylinders with valves in this date code range, please contact ANSUL Quality Assurance **IMMEDIATELY** for further information and authorization for replacement of these cylinders.

Your immediate attention is requested in order to avoid property damage or personal injury caused by an inadvertent discharge or an inoperative system.

If you have any questions regarding this bulletin, please contact ANSUL Quality Assurance at 1-800-862-6785 and press 4 for Quality Services or call 715-735-7411 ext. 73383