



Marine Safety Information Bulletin

Commandant
U.S. Coast Guard
Inspections and Compliance Directorate
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Unapproved Use of Mass Loaded Vinyl (MLV) Sound Dampening Products

The Coast Guard has recently discovered that certain MLV sound dampening products, such as “Vinaflex™”, have been installed on some U.S. inspected vessels without the required type approvals.

When sailing on international voyages, U.S. inspected vessels must have approved bulkhead, deck and overhead materials that meet the fire protection requirements found in SOLAS and, by extension, the fire testing requirements outlined in the International Code for Application of Fire Test Procedures (FTP Code). On domestic voyages, U.S inspected vessels are required to have approved materials in accordance with the appropriate regulations in Title 46 CFR, applicable Coast Guard policy, and all corresponding testing requirements found in 46 CFR Subchapter Q.

Effective immediately, designers, shipyards, classification societies, owners and operators associated with the construction of U.S. inspected vessels shall discontinue the use of MLV sound dampening products, unless the materials have been approved for the specific location in which they are being installed. This includes a MLV product being used in isolation or as a part of any structural fire protection boundary.

If a shipyard, owner or operator identifies a MLV sound dampening product which is already installed on a vessel under construction, or a vessel already in service, in a manner that is not in compliance with the applicable fire protection requirements, they shall notify the cognizant Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection (OCMI). OCMI's will work closely with the Marine Safety Center to discuss the specifics of these cases and determine an appropriate course of action. The Coast Guard does not intend to impose operational controls on a vessel during this evaluation.

The Coast Guard stands ready to assist vessel owners and operators in determining whether MLV sound dampening products or other related materials comply with the appropriate fire protection requirements. Please contact the Lifesaving and Fire Safety Division (CG-ENG-4) at TypeApproval@uscg.mil with any questions concerning material suitability.

Questions concerning this notice may be directed to the Office of Commercial Vessel Compliance, Commandant (CG-CVC) at 202-372-1251, or the Marine Safety Center at 703-872-6772.