

**WAC 296-115-025 Vessel inspection and certification.** (1) The department must inspect all vessels subject to this chapter to ensure they are safe and seaworthy at least once each year.

(2) The department may also inspect a vessel:

(a) If requested to do so by the owner, operator, or master of the vessel;

(b) After an explosion, fire, or any other accident involving the vessel;

(c) Upon receipt of a complaint from any person;

(d) At the discretion of the department.

(3) The department will charge the owner of a vessel a fee for each certification or recertification inspection. See WAC 296-115-120 for fee schedule.

(4) No person will operate a passenger or cargo vessel if the vessel does not have a valid certificate of inspection issued by the department.

(5) After inspecting a vessel and determining it is safe and seaworthy and complies with the provisions of this chapter and with the applicable state and federal laws and regulations, the department will issue a certificate of inspection for that vessel. The certificate will be valid for one year from the date of issuance.

(a) The certificate must set forth the date of the inspection;

(b) The names of the vessel and the owner;

(c) The number of lifeboats, if required;

(d) The number of life preservers required;

(e) The number of passengers allowed; and

(f) Any other information the department requires by rule.

(6) Any time a vessel is found to be not safe or seaworthy, or not in compliance with the provisions of this chapter or with the applicable state and federal laws and regulations:

(a) The department shall refuse to issue a certificate of inspection until the deficiencies have been corrected and shall cancel any certificate of inspection currently issued.

(b) The department must give the owner a written statement why the vessel was found to be unsafe, unseaworthy, or not in compliance with the provisions of this chapter or the applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including a specific reference to the statute or rule. The notification will be made on the notice of deficiencies form and signed by the attending maritime inspector.

(7) Department inspectors may, upon presenting their credentials to the owner, master, operator, or agent in charge of a vessel, board the vessel without delay to make an inspection.

(a) Inspectors must inform the owner, master, operator, or agent in charge that their intent is to inspect the vessel.

(b) During the inspection, inspectors must have access to all areas of the vessel. Inspectors may question privately the owner, master, operator, or agent in charge of the vessel, or any crew member of or passenger on the vessel.

(c) If any person refuses to allow inspectors to board a vessel for an inspection, or refuses to allow access to any areas of the vessel, the department may request a warrant from the superior court for the county in which the vessel is located. The court will grant the warrant if:

(i) There is evidence that the vessel has sustained a fire, explosion, unintentional grounding, or has been involved in any other accident;

(ii) There is evidence that the vessel is not safe or seaworthy;  
or

(iii) The department shows that the inspection furthers a general administrative plan for enforcing the safety requirements of chapter 88.04 RCW, the Charter Boat Safety Act.

(8) The owner or master of a vessel must post the certificate of inspection behind glass or other suitable transparent material in a conspicuous area of the vessel.

(9) Please see WAC 296-115-005(4) for instructions on how to submit documents to the department to request an inspection, submit a complaint, or notify the department of repairs or alterations.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060, 88.04.005(3), and 88.04.330. WSR 23-09-054, § 296-115-025, filed 4/18/23, effective 5/22/23. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, and 49.17.060. WSR 18-04-096, § 296-115-025, filed 2/6/18, effective 3/9/18; WSR 17-16-132, § 296-115-025, filed 8/1/17, effective 9/1/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060, 49.17.210, and 88.04.005. WSR 08-20-123, § 296-115-025, filed 10/1/08, effective 11/1/08. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, [49.17].040, [49.17].050 and 1999 c 111. WSR 00-23-100, § 296-115-025, filed 11/21/00, effective 1/1/01. Statutory Authority: Chapter 49.17 RCW. WSR 91-03-044 (Order 90-18), § 296-115-025, filed 1/10/91, effective 2/12/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.240, chapters 42.30 and 43.22 RCW. WSR 80-17-014 (Order 80-20), § 296-115-025, filed 11/13/80.]