

Illegal Navigation Light Notice from United States Coast Guard

United States Coast Guard

Inspections and Compliance Directorate

Marine Safety Alert 04-13

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Washington, DC

The Coast Guard has recently become aware of the uninspected towing vessel industry using inappropriate navigation lights that fail to meet the criteria for use onboard any vessel; SEACHOICE Products LED Navigation Light, SCP #03201 shown below. Online research shows many outlets for the sale of this product. It is possible that this product may be in widespread use in the recreational boating industry as well.

The SEACHOICE Products and other catalogs advertise it as a "LED classic navigation light." Packaged individually, the item looks as shown on the left. The package indicates incorrect usage as a "masthead light." When web-searched the retrieved information presents it as a "masthead" or "navigation" light. Neither of these applications are correct and the fixture should not be used on any vessel in an effort to meet the navigation rules.

Masthead lighting requires an arc of 225 degrees visibility and stern lighting requires an arc 135 degrees visibility, for a total range of 360 degrees visibility. Depending on the type of vessel there are also light, color and range of visibility requirements.

The SEACHOICE product SCP 03201 has an arc of 180 degrees visibility and is not applicable to any requirement.

The Coast Guard strongly recommends that owners / operators of any vessel who installed this particular SEACHOICE product (#03201 only) as a masthead, stern or other type of navigation light to remove it and replace it with a proper light that meets the requirements for the vessel and application.

Recreational boaters who have questions should contact the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Commercial vessel owner / operators who have questions should contact the Coast Guard Sector or Marine Safety Unit.

Standards for color, intensity and arc of visibility can be found in Annex I of COLREGs or:

* 33CFR84.13 - Color specification of lights * 33CFR84.15 - Intensity of lights * 33CFR84.17 - Horizontal sectors * 33CFR84.19 - Vertical sectors*

Special thanks to Coast Guard Sector Detroit for identifying this issue.

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