



PARACHUTE COMPANY

Established 1920

Sub: Safety Alert

Ref: Service Information Bulletin No. SIB-0416

Dear Switlik Life Raft Owner,

OUR RECORDS SHOW THAT YOU ARE THE OWNER OF A LIFE RAFT MANUFACTURED BY SWITLIK PARACHUTE COMPANY THAT MAY HAVE A POTENTIAL PROBLEM WITH THE INFLATION SYSTEM.

It has come to our attention that during this past winter season, a very small number of our life rafts have either self-inflated or experienced a loss of inflation gas. The units involved were stored outside at temperatures below those experienced in over twenty years and approaching 0°F. During the previous summer, these same units experienced hotter than normal temperatures of above 95°F.

These temperatures, however, were well within the operational high and low extremes to which the rafts have been tested to and approved or certified. Subsequent testing to these operational high and low extremes showed no leakage. The leakage occurred when the rafts were exposed to a sequence of high followed by low temperatures and very specific temperature ranges inside the extremes of published standards.

This phenomenon occurred with life rafts primarily in the Mid-Atlantic, New England, and Great Lakes regions where the cycle of these temperature extremes occurred.

Gas is retained in the cylinder by two sets of double "O-Rings" located in the inflation valve. In the rafts affected, these temperature extremes caused the elastomer in the inflation valve's O-rings to overly expand and take a compression set at the high temperatures experienced during the summer of 2003. When the seal was then subjected to the extreme low temperatures in January 2004, there was insufficient elastic memory to overcome the relatively high coefficient of shrinkage of the O-Ring at low temperature and create a positive seal.

If the gas flows from the cylinder past the two "Front" O-Rings on the valve's internal Piston Assembly, it will cause the raft to inflate. The partial or complete inflation of the life raft is obvious and a clear indication that the raft must be serviced prior to reliance upon it as a survival craft.

If the gas flows from the cylinder past the two "Back" O-Rings to ambient atmosphere it will either partially or completely empty the cylinder. **THIS IS NOT OBVIOUS AND COULD CAUSE FALSE RELIANCE ON A LIFE RAFT THAT, IF NEEDED, WILL NOT INFLATE AND FUNCTION AS A LIFE SAVING DEVICE.**

To prevent a reoccurrence, a new piston assembly with O-Rings which will function properly after being subjected to any sequence of temperatures and cycles within the approved temperature range must be installed. Wherever your life raft is located and whatever temperatures it has experienced, Switlik will provide to you through our service stations, at no charge, the Piston and O-Ring replacement kit. We have issued our Service Bulletin #SIB-04106 which describes the corrective action to be taken by our authorized service stations. Your life raft should always be serviced once a year.

If your life raft was serviced after June 15th of this year, no action is necessary because the O-rings have been replaced in response to our service bulletin.

IF YOUR LIFE RAFT WAS SERVICED BEFORE JUNE 15TH OF THIS YEAR AND IF YOUR LIFE RAFT HAS EXPERIENCED TEMPERATURE CONDITIONING OF BOTH GREATER THAN 90°F AND FOLLOWED BY BELOW 20°F, IT SHOULD BE SERVICED IMMEDIATELY BY AN AUTHORIZED SERVICE STATION LISTED ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS LETTER.

(If your life raft was serviced in May or before June 15th of this year, the service bulletin may have been performed. Please check with your service station referencing *Service Information Bulletin No. SIB-0416*).

If your raft has not experienced these temperatures, it must be serviced within 12 months of its most recent service.

Please contact one of our authorized service stations to arrange the servicing of your life raft and replacement of the O-Rings. We regret this occurrence and any inconvenience it causes you. Although the probability that your life raft has been affected is small, we are addressing this issue by erring on the side of safety and due caution.

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SWITLIK AUTHORIZED SERVICE STATIONS

Revised: August 2004

ALASKA

ANCHORAGE STATION USCG #240
EAGLE ENTERPRISES
700 W. International Airport Road
Building B
Anchorage, AK 99518-1122
(907) 562-2331

DUTCH HARBOR STATION USCG #475
OCEAN SAFETY SERVICES
2663 Airport Beach Road
Dutch Harbor, AK 99682
(907) 581-2677

HOMER STATION USCG #153
EAGLE ENTERPRISES
2355 Kachemak Drive
Suite 102
Homer, AK 99603
(907) 235-7908

KETCHIKAN STATION USCG #645
SOUTHEAST OCEAN SURVIVAL
1900 Tongass Avenue
Ketchikan, AK 99901
(907) 225-8985

KODIAK STATION USCG #345
**JOYCRRAFT MARINE SAFETY
EQUIPMENT**
445 Shahafka Circle
Kodiak, AK 99615
(907) 486-6293

CALIFORNIA

ALAMEDA STATION USCG #569
(San Francisco Bay Area)
SAL'S INFLATABLE SERVICES
1914 Stanford Street
Alameda, CA 94501
(510) 522-1824

SAN DIEGO STATION USCG #480
**OCEANS WEST MARINE &
INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY, INC.**
2886 Main Street
San Diego, CA 92113
(619) 544-1900

SAN FRANCISCO STATION USCG #200
**COAST MARINE & INDUSTRIAL
SUPPLY**
398 Jefferson Street
San Francisco, CA 94133
(415) 673-1923
Alice & Bob Salvarrezza

LOS ANGELES STATION #145
**AVALON RAFTS, SALES &
SERVICE**
218 North Marine Avenue
Wilmington, CA 90744
(310) 549-9665

FLORIDA

FT. LAUDERDALE STATION USCG #335
INFLATABLE SERVICES, INC.
990 W. State Road
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33315
(954) 779-7000

JACKSONVILLE STATION USCG #215
DATREX, INC.
618 Tallyrand Avenue
Jacksonville, FL 32202
(904) 355-1401

MIAMI STATION USCG #220
DATREX, INC.
3525 N.W. 33RD Street
Miami, FL 33142
(305) 638-8220

STUART STATION USCG #568
A SAILOR'S PLACE
3700 South East Dixie Highway
Stuart, FL 34997
(772) 283-9990

FLORIDA

TAMPA STATION USCG #170
SOLUTION ONE MARITIME, LLC
2719 East Adamo Drive
Tampa, FL 33605
(813) 241-6654

GEORGIA

SAVANNAH STATION USCG #540
RIVER SERVICES, INC.
2827 River Drive
Thunderbolt, GA 31404
(912) 354-7777

HAWAII

HONOLULU STATION USCG #377
**LIFERAFT & MARINE SAFETY
EQUIPMENT**
134 Nakolo Place
Honolulu, HI 96819
(808) 839-50638

INDIANA

CHICAGO STATION USCG #165
BLACK INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY
3600 Calumet Avenue
Hammond, IN 46325
(219) 932-8665

LOUISIANA

NEW ORLEANS STATION USCG #490
OFFSHORE SUPPLIERS, INC.
413 N. Causeway Blvd.
Metairie, LA 70001
(504) 833-8251

MAINE

ELLSWORTH STATION USCG #191
CHASE, LEAVITT & COMPANY
218 Bucksport Road
Ellsworth, ME 04605
(207) 667-9390

PORTLAND STATION #190
CHASE, LEAVITT & COMPANY
72 Commercial Street
Portland, ME 04101
(207) 772-6383

MARYLAND

ANNAPOLIS STATION USCG #695
USA SERVICES, INC.
1818 Margaret Avenue
Annapolis, MD 21401
(800) 606-6977 (410) 626-1122

BALTIMORE STATION USCG #698
**VANE BROTHERS MARINE
SAFETY**
2100 Frankurst Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21226
(410) 631-5167 (888) 441-5167

MASSACHUSETTS

EAST BOSTON STATION USCG #715
WESTERBEKE FISHING GEAR
400 Border Street
E. Boston, MA 02128
(617) 561-9967

NEW JERSEY

FARMINGDALE STATION USCG #580
(Jersey Shore)
MARINE SAFETY CORPORATION
5050 Industrial Road
Farmingdale, NJ 07727
(732) 938-5668

SECAUCUS STATION USCG #605
(North Jersey / New York)
SEA SAFETY INTERNATIONAL
10 Wood Avenue
Secaucus, NJ 07094
(201) 330-3225

NORTH CAROLINA

WILMINGTON STATION USCG #522
USA SERVICES, INC.
301-B Green Meadows Drive
Wilmington, NC 28405
(800) 727-2628

OHIO

CLEVELAND STATION USCG #570
SAMSEL SUPPLY COMPANY
1285 Old River Road
Cleveland, OH 44113
(800) 892-8012 (216) 241-0333

OREGON

ASTORIA STATION USCG #258
ENGLUND MARINE SUPPLY
Foot of 15TH Street
Astoria, OR 97103
(503) 861-3783

PORTLAND STATION USCG #505
PACIFIC MARINE DISTRIBUTORS
1239 S.E. Gideon Street
Portland, OR 97202
(503) 243-2258

RHODE ISLAND

PORTSMOUTH STATION USCG #380
**LIFE RAFT AND SURVIVAL
EQUIPMENT**
3 Maritime Drive
Portsmouth, RI 02871
(401) 683-0307

TEXAS

CORPUS CHRISTI STATION USCG #263
FIRE PROTECTION SERVICE
2209 N. Padre Island Drive
Corpus Christi, TX 78408
(361) 289-9102

HOUSTON STATION USCG #265
FIRE PROTECTION SERVICE
8050 Harrisburg Boulevard
Houston, TX 77012
(713) 924-9600

HOUSTON STATION USCG #625
SHORELINE MARINE & AVIATION
8305 Monroe Street
Houston, TX 77061
(713) 947-1115

KEMAH STATION USCG #687
**TRIAD MARINE & INDUSTRIAL
SUPPLY**
1155 FM 518
Kemah, TX 77565
(800) 895-5060 (281) 334-0815

VIRGINIA

NORFOLK STATION USCG #520
USA SERVICES
1111 Ingleside Road
Norfolk, VA 23502-0103
(800) 727-2628 (757) 855-2233

NORFOLK STATION USCG #699
**VANE BROTHERS MARINE
SAFETY**
Suite 2B
4565 Progress Road
Norfolk, VA 23502
(757) 858-2501 (888) 441-5167

WASHINGTON

TACOMA STATION USCG #725
WESTPAC MARINE SERVICES
2316 South Jefferson Avenue
Tacoma, WA 98402
(800) 343-5826 (253) 627-6000

WISCONSIN

SUPERIOR STATION USCG # 130
AMERICAN MARINE COMPANY
4031 East 1ST Street
Superior, WI 54880-4256
(715) 398-7500

- CARIBBEAN -

PUERTO RICO

SAN JUAN STATION USCG # 375
**CMC FIRE & SAFETY EQUIPMENT
SERVICE CORPORATION /
LIFERAFTS, INC.**
159 Fernandez Juncos Avenue
Puerta de Tierra
San Juan, PR 00901
(787) 723-3237

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

ST. THOMAS USCG # 180
**CARRIBEAN INFLATABLE
SERVICES**
Suite 2
6200 Estate Frydenhoj 56
St. Thomas, USVI
(340) 775-6159