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HELLA APPLAUDS USCG REPORT ON SAILBOAT NAV LIGHTING

The US Coast Guard recently issued the Marine Safety Alert "Not all navigation lights are created equal" (bit.ly/USCG-0219). It explains that some LED navigation lights are intended for use only on powerboats and not sailboats that tend to have a greater angle of heel. The problem is that some manufacturers may not supply the intended vessel use, either on the lamp itself or in technical data. Hella marine, on the other hand, ensures the consumer has sufficient information to select the correct lighting solution for the application.

Although the 112.5° horizontal arc of visibility that defines the sidelights' function is the same for both vessel types, the vertical spread can vary +/-7.5° for powerboats and the required +/-25° for sailboats. The lesser understood vertical arc significantly diminishes or even disappears with lights that were developed only for use on relatively level powerboats. Because of this, the USCG is concerned many yachts fitted with LED navigation lighting may not have appropriate lamps installed.

COLREGS (International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea) prescribe that sailing vessels underway display at least 50% of the required minimum intensity of their navigation lighting from 25° above to 25° below the horizontal. The Coast Guard report notes that the powerboat lighting

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equivalent has a vertical spread of only 7.5°. This 17.5° difference with proper lighting provides adequate illumination when heeled, and is most certainly the difference between being seen or not.

Sailors looking to conform to USCG standards and maintain a safe vessel may have to do some investigating, especially with an older boat. Yet, it does provide the opportunity to upgrade to high-performance LED lamps if the fixtures need to be replaced.

All Hella marine 2NM NaviLED navigation lights are certified for use on sailboats to cover the higher +/-25° requirement and are labeled as such. When fitted to powerboats, the additional visibility is an extra safety measure to be seen even in rough seas. The other advantages of choosing Hella marine are they use very little power and are built tough for long-lived reliability and supported by a leading warranty. For more information on the extensive range of ultra-reliable LED navigation lamps visit www.hellamarine.com. Prices start at \$160.

Contact Hella marine Inc., 201 Kelly Dr., Peachtree City, GA 30269. 770-631-7500. SOE.sales@hella.com; www.hellamarine.com.