

VOLUME 70, No. 7 • APRIL 3, 2013

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EPA Finalizes 2013 Vessel General Permit

Inland and Seagoing Vessels Less Than 1600 GRT Exempt from Ballast Water Treatment Requirements

On March 28, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced that it has finalized the 2013 Vessel General Permit, which will become effective on December 19, 2013, immediately following the expiration of the current permit. The permit will regulate 28 incidental discharges from non-recreational vessels greater than 79 feet in length. To read the final 2013 VGP which has been posted to EPA's website, please click [here](#).

Most notably, EPA exempted inland and seagoing vessels less than 1,600 gross register tons from its numeric ballast water discharge limits in the final 2013 VGP. This stands in contrast to the draft 2013 VGP in which EPA proposed to apply the limits (equivalent to the International Maritime Organization's and U.S. Coast Guard's standards) to almost all vessels with ballast water capacity. However, EPA was persuaded to review its proposal in response to comments it received arguing that ballast water treatment technologies are not commercially available or economically achievable for vessels in this size class.

Based on that review, the agency writes in the fact sheet accompanying the permit that it "concluded, though technologies are promising for future development, the record at proposal did not support the conclusion that numeric ballast water treatment limits for small inland and seagoing vessels represents [best available technology] at this time or over the life of the permit. For example, most ballast water treatment systems have been

designed for larger vessels [...] and the record at proposal contained no evidence that any vessels smaller than 1,600 GRT had successfully installed a treatment system on their vessel."



Consequently, inland and seagoing vessels less than 1,600 GRT will not be required by EPA to comply with the limits by installing ballast water treatment systems, discharging ballast water to an onshore treatment facility, or using potable water as ballast water. Instead, EPA will require such vessels to implement mandatory best management practices for ballast water similar to those found in the current permit, and will continue to subject them to the same ballast water exchange requirements mandated by the current VGP. As in the draft 2013 VGP, unmanned, unpowered barges and vessels engaged on short-distance voyages are also exempt. (It is important to note, however, that the Coast Guard's ballast water discharge standards require some seagoing vessels less than 1,600 GRT to install ballast water treatment systems. For more information, see the March 30, 2012 *AWO Letter*.)

In addition to ballast water management requirements, the 2013 VGP will introduce bilgewater monitoring requirements for newly constructed vessels greater than 400 GRT; graywater monitoring requirements for newly constructed vessels with overnight accommodations for 15 or more crew

Save the Date!

AWO 2013 Barge-In & Spring Convention
April 17-19
Mandarin Oriental
Washington, DC



For more information, please contact Sarah Young at (703) 841-9300, extension 291, or syoung@vesselalliance.com.

EPA Finalizes 2013 Vessel General Permit

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members; and a requirement for all vessels to use environmentally acceptable lubricants in all oil-to-sea interfaces, unless technically infeasible.

The finalized permit also confirms that many of the inspection, recordkeeping and reporting changes proposed in the draft 2013 VGP will come into effect in December, with some modifications. These include:

- Revisions to visual inspection requirements to allow vessel owners and operators undertaking multiple voyages within a one-week period to conduct limited visual inspections during each voyage addressing only those areas that may have been affected by docking and cargo operations, so long as they conduct a full visual inspection at least once per week;
- Extended Unmanned Period inspections for vessels that are

unattended for 13 days or more (including fleeted barges), which consist of a pre-lay-up inspection, a biweekly external observation of the vessel and surrounding waters, and a post-lay-up routine visual inspection;

- Explicit authorization for vessel owners and operators to keep electronic records at a shoreside location if they are in a readable format, legally dependable, accessible to inspectors to the same extent as a paper record would be, and able to be transmitted to EPA upon request; and
- Consolidation of the one-time report and the annual noncompliance report into a single annual report for all vessels, even those without instances of noncompliance –



although operators of unmanned, unpowered barges and vessels less than 300 gross tons will be permitted to submit a Combined Annual Report for multiple vessels, provided no instances of noncompliance have occurred.

In addition, the final 2013 VGP includes state-specific conditions added to the permit by 25 individual states as part of the Clean Water Act's section 401 certification process. Unlike when the current VGP was issued in 2008, no state has imposed ballast water discharge requirements more broadly applicable or more stringent than those EPA has established.

The 2013 VGP will have a five-year term, as opposed to the four-year term that had been previously proposed. Operators of vessels that are authorized to discharge under the current VGP and that are required to submit Notices of Intent (vessels greater than or equal to 300 gross tons or with eight cubic meters or more of ballast water capacity) will be required to submit new NOIs no later than December 12, 2013, to maintain permit coverage. Operators of vessels that are not required to submit NOIs will be required to complete and retain onboard their vessel a Permit Authorization and Record of Inspection form that demonstrates an agreement to and understanding of the permit's terms and conditions.

For more information, please contact Jennifer Carpenter or Caitlyn Stewart at (703) 841-9300, extensions 260 and 262, respectively, or by email at jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com or cstewart@vesselalliance.com.

CEMS Training Opportunities Available

The Crew Endurance Management System is a system for managing risk factors in maritime work environments that can lead to human error and performance slumps. The U.S. Coast Guard and AWO have been working together to help companies implement the principles of CEMS. The courses listed on the right are CEMS Coaches Classes, which are conducted by Salyers Solutions, LLC. For questions on these particular courses, please contact the course instructor, Jo Ann Salyers at (504) 236-4962 or via email at joann@salyerssolutions.com.

April 24 & 25 Salyers Solutions, LLC Norfolk, VA	June 18 & 19 Salyers Solutions, LLC Houston, TX
May 8 & 9 Salyers Solutions, LLC Pensacola, FL	July 9 & 10 Salyers Solutions, LLC Las Vegas, NV

For further information on CEMS training opportunities, please contact Pik Kwan Ng, U.S. Coast Guard, at (202) 372-1354.

Coast Guard Publishes TWIC Reader NPRM

Vessels with 14 Crewmembers or Less Would Be Exempt from Reader Requirements

On March 22, the U.S. Coast Guard published its notice of proposed rulemaking on TWIC reader requirements. The proposed rule would exempt vessels with 14 crewmembers or less from carrying card readers and establish specific reader requirements for affected vessels and facilities based on risk. The Coast Guard will be hosting a public meeting to discuss the proposed rule on April 18 in Arlington, VA. Comments on the NPRM are due May 21.

Under the proposed rule, any towing vessel with 14 crewmembers or less, regardless of the type of cargo it is carrying, would not be required to install a card reader onboard. Instead, operators would be required to conduct a visual inspection of each crewmember's TWIC to match the photograph with the cardholder, check for physical damage to the TWIC, and ensure the credential has not expired.

Reader requirements for vessels with more than 14 crewmembers, and for facilities of all sizes, are based on the same risk groups that had been initially proposed in the 2009 advance notice of proposed rulemaking, but the NPRM significantly revises the card reader requirements tied to each group. Under the proposed rule, only vessels

and facilities handling certain dangerous cargoes in bulk (Risk Group A) would be required to carry card readers. Vessels and facilities handling hazardous materials other than CDCs

and flammable or combustible liquid cargoes (Risk Group B) and vessels and facilities handling non-hazardous cargoes (Risk Group C) would be exempt from carrying card readers and only required to conduct visual TWIC inspections as described above.

These changes mark a significant evolution from the ANPRM. In the ANPRM, the Coast Guard acknowledged that readers offer little to no security value for vessels with small crew sizes, but still

proposed to require owners of smaller vessels to use card readers to conduct periodic TWIC validity checks. The ANPRM would also have subjected towing vessels to specific reader requirements based on risk groupings, without taking into consideration that towing vessels could fluctuate between risk groups depending on the cargo of the barge in tow. The Coast Guard notes that the revised approach in the NPRM "is designed to target the use of TWIC readers at the highest risk entities while minimizing the overall burden of the rule."

...any towing vessel with 14 crewmembers or less, regardless of the type of cargo it is carrying, would not be required to install a card reader onboard. Instead, operators would only be required to conduct a visual inspection of each crewmember's TWIC...



In addition to the April 18 public meeting, the Coast Guard will be holding at least one additional meeting in advance of the NPRM's comment submission deadline. More information on the dates, times, and locations of additional public meetings will be announced in a forthcoming *Federal Register* announcement.

To read the NPRM, click [here](#). To read AWO's comments on the 2009 ANPRM, click [here](#). To read the public meeting notice, click [here](#). For more information, please contact Jennifer Carpenter or Brian Vahey at (703) 841-9300, extension 260 and 251, respectively, or via email at jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com or bvahey@vesselalliance.com.

GOT LINKS?

If you receive a hard copy of the *AWO Letter* and need to know the exact Web addresses of the hyperlinks in any articles, please contact Frank Leach at (703) 841-9300, extension 254, or via email at fleach@vesselalliance.com.



TSAC Holds Spring Meeting

The Towing Safety Advisory Committee, the federal advisory committee that provides advice to the Secretary of Homeland Security via the U.S. Coast Guard on matters of towing vessel safety, held its semiannual meeting in New York City on March 20-22. At the meeting, TSAC reviewed and discussed recommendations from its subcommittees on open task statements and considered recommendations for new taskings.

In its recommendations on Task Statement 12-01, pertaining to crewmember falls overboard, TSAC used the Coast Guard-AWO Safety Partnership April 2012 Quality Action Team report on falls overboard as its starting point, identifying best practices to reduce falls overboard and stressing the importance of developing and fostering a strong company-wide safety culture. In TSAC's final recommendation on Task Statement 12-03 regarding the enhancement of towing vessel stability, the Committee determined that there were no inherent stability problems with towing vessels and recommended that the Coast Guard improve its communication to industry on operational best practices to prevent capsizings. In its recommendations on Task Statement 12-02, Voluntary Training Standards for Entry-Level Personnel, the Committee proposed minor changes to NVIC 1-95, including training on Vessel General Permit requirements, and incorporated the TSAC subcommittee's report on falls overboard for reference. Lastly, TSAC approved recommendations on Task Statement 12-04, Recommendations for Safety Standards of Portable Facility Vapor Control Systems, in which the subcommittee conducted a gap analysis between safety requirements for fixed and portable vapor control systems. As part of its recommendation, TSAC asked the Coast Guard to share the gap analysis with the Chemical Transportation Advisory Committee. All recommendations were unanimously approved.

TSAC members also discussed open task statements pertaining to fire prevention and containment, Automatic Identification System (AIS) encoding, and manning of inspected towing vessels. The TSAC subgroup charged with making recommendations to enhance fire prevention and containment submitted a preliminary report to the Coast Guard which will be placed on the Homeport Web site and made available for public comment before the subgroup's final recommendation is submitted for approval later this year. Work on the 2013 task statements on AIS and vessel manning is on-going and interested members of the public are encouraged to participate on both subgroups. A meeting to discuss manning of inspected towing vessels will be held April 30-May 1 in Washington, DC.

Lastly, the Committee approved two new Task Statements. Task Statement 13-03, Recommendations to Create Standardized Terminology for the Towing Industry, asks TSAC to develop a terminology index to capture the diverse regional nomenclature used by vessel operators. Task Statement 13-04, Recommendations for Facility Permitting and Construction so as to not Impede Commercial Vessel Navigation, asks TSAC to make recommendations to the Coast Guard and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on ways to mitigate safety risks to marinas from the surge and wake of commercial vessel traffic.

For questions about the meeting, please contact Brian Vahey at (703) 841-9300, extension 251, or via email at bvahey@vesselalliance.com.

TSAC Subcommittee to Discuss Manning of Inspected Towing Vessels

The Towing Safety Advisory Committee subcommittee tasked with making



recommendations regarding manning of inspected towing vessels will meet at U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, DC, April 30-May 1. The subcommittee expects to conduct a full-day session on April 30 followed by a half-day session on May 1. Interested members of the public are welcome to attend.

Task Statement 13-02, unanimously accepted by TSAC on January 21, asks the committee to provide recommendations to the Coast Guard on the content of a new section of Chapter 21 of Marine Safety Manual Volume III regarding manning of inspected towing vessels in domestic and international service. TSAC members Cathy Hammond, Inland Marine Service, and Mike Vitt, E.N. Bisso and Son, will co-chair the subcommittee conducting this work.

Coast Guard Headquarters is located at 2100 2nd Street, SW, Washington, DC. More information on the meeting will be distributed in the coming weeks. If you are interested in attending the meeting and would like to get on the mailing list to receive additional information, please contact Brian Vahey at (703) 841-9300, extension 251, or via email at bvahey@vesselalliance.com.

AWO Urges Coast Guard to Ratify Maritime Labor Convention

In recent comments on the Coast Guard’s proposed Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular on the implementation of the Maritime Labor Convention, AWO urged the Coast Guard “to work within the Administration to ensure support for U.S. ratification of the [Maritime Labor Convention] and prompt consideration by the U.S. Senate.” The Convention was adopted by the International Labor Organization in 2006 in order to provide comprehensive rights and protections for seafarers. It received 30 instruments of ratification in August 2012 and is scheduled to take effect in countries that have ratified the convention on August 20, 2013.

The Coast Guard’s proposed NVIC is intended to help U.S.-flag vessel operators demonstrate MLC compliance through a voluntary Coast Guard inspection and certification process. Upon successful completion of this inspection, the Coast Guard proposes to issue vessels a “Statement of Voluntary Compliance, Maritime Labor Convention” certificate that can be used to demonstrate to Foreign Port State Authorities that the vessel is in practical compliance with the MLC. The Coast Guard has deemed this action necessary because even though the United States has not yet ratified the MLC, U.S.-flag vessels will still be required to comply with the Convention when traveling in the waters of ratifying countries. The Coast Guard notes, however, that countries are under no obligation to accept this certificate.

AWO took these issues into consideration when urging the Coast Guard to encourage the Administration and Senate to work towards ratification. While a helpful first step, the

proposed voluntary compliance model is inadequate because “until the U.S. ratifies the Convention, the Coast Guard has no enforcement authority to certify vessels as compliant with the MLC,” AWO wrote. AWO also noted that unless the U.S. ratifies the MLC, it cannot substantially engage in future International Labor Organization discussions regarding modifications to the Convention. In sum, AWO argued that “failure to ratify the MLC leaves U.S. vessels exposed to possible detentions and other foreign Port State Control actions.”

AWO’s comments also addressed the substance of the proposed NVIC. The association urged the Coast Guard to remove the term “voluntary” from the SOVC-MLC certificate, as such a description could unfairly bias foreign Port State Authorities against a U.S.-flag vessel; provide guidance on what operators should do in the event that their vessel is detained for failure to demonstrate adequate compliance with the MLC; and, engage industry stakeholders throughout the development of the Memorandum of Understanding with Transport Canada that would allow for the recognition of each country’s national laws and regulations as providing substantial compliance with the MLC.

To read AWO’s comments, click [here](#). For a list of countries that have ratified the MLC, including Canada and Panama, click [here](#). For more information, please contact Jennifer Carpenter or Brian Vahey at (703) 841-9300, extensions 260 and 251, respectively, or via email at jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com or bvahey@vesselalliance.com.



TRB Requests Proposals to Study Sleep Efficiency on Towing Vessels



On March 22, the Transportation Research Board’s National Cooperative Freight Research Program requested proposals for a \$300,000 grant to study the sleep efficiency of crewmembers on towboats. The research seeks to develop a compendium of best practices for enhancing sleep

efficiency on towboats in the U.S. inland waterways industry. The proposals will be evaluated by NCFRP staff and a project panel of knowledgeable individuals. This research will support AWO’s goal of closing the sleep efficiency gap to help prevent and manage fatigue in the 24/7 transportation industry.

The NCFRP research will also support the multi-year sleep study conducted for AWO and AWO members by the Northwestern University Center for Sleep and Circadian Biology.

The RFP stems from a proposal originally submitted by Northwestern

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TRB Requests Proposals to Study Sleep Efficiency on Towing Vessels



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with AWO encouragement. Dave Brown, Ingram Barge Company, is chairing the TRB panel. Proposals are due to TRB May 10. To read the RFP, click [here](#). For more

information about the Northwestern research or AWO's work to manage fatigue risk and promote crew alertness, please contact Jennifer Carpenter or Brian Bennett at 703-

841-9300, extensions 260 and 279, respectively, or via email at jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com or bbennett@vesselalliance.com.

ASCE Infrastructure Report Card Gives Waterways a D-

America's aging inland waterways infrastructure received a D- in the 2013 edition of the American Society of Civil Engineers quadrennial Report Card for America's Infrastructure. Making no improvement from the D- received four years ago, the report cites the system's need for intensive update and repair. Many of the locks in the system are over 50 years old, with some even dating back to the 19th century. The report estimates that 75 percent of the funds necessary for the improvement of the inland waterways system will be spent on the maintenance and repair of existing facilities, rather than on construction of new infrastructure.

The report hails the nation's inland waterways and rivers as "the hidden backbone of our freight network," carrying the equivalent of about 51 million truck trips each year. The report also states, however, that the poor state of repair of the inland waterways system imposes a significant burden on the companies that utilize it. Delays incurred along the aging system are a major cost to shippers and carriers. The ASCE report cites 150,000 hours of shipping delays per year.

Additionally, the ASCE report cites the work of the Inland Waterways Users Board as a success story. The IWUB's call for an increase in the diesel fuel tax to better fund the Inland Waterways Trust Fund is identical to an ASCE recommendation in this year's report card. This fuel tax increase was strongly endorsed by companies within the sector and industry groups including AWO. The report also calls for an overall prioritization of capital projects in

regards to lifecycle, economic value and risk.

Recommendations for improvement similar to those outlined in the report card are also included in pieces of currently active legislation supported by AWO. Chief among these are the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), which is being shepherded through the Senate by Sens. Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and David Vitter (R-LA) and in the House, is being developed under the leadership of Rep. Bill Shuster (R-PA). Also of interest are H.R. 1149, the Waterways are Vital for the Economy, Energy, Efficiency, and Environmental Act (WAVE-4) and S. 407, the Reinvesting in Vital Economic Rivers and Waterways (RIVER) Act, which AWO also supports.



The poor grade given to the inland waterways system was one of the worst in the 2013 ASCE report card. Our nation's levees also received the grade of D-. The nation's overall infrastructure GPA was D+. America's bridges, dams, ports and railways received grades of C+, D, C and C+, respectively. The update and repair of the inland waterways infrastructure is critical for the nation's long-term economic growth and competitiveness. AWO will continue to work closely with our partners to advocate for a waterway system that promotes commerce and supports American jobs.

For more information on the ASCE Infrastructure Report Card visit www.infrastructurereportcard.org, or contact Kevin Dowling at (703) 841-9300, extension 264 or kdowling@vesselalliance.com.

AWO's 2013 Spring Convention – Just a Hop Away!

The 2013 Spring Convention in Washington, DC, is only two weeks away, taking place April 16–19 at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, and AWO is abuzz with preparations. It is always an exciting time as members gather in the nation's capital to discuss, learn, network and lobby. Have you made plans to participate in this important AWO event? If not, do so now by registering through the link at the right.

The annual Barge-In sets the week on the right foot as members meet with Senators and Representatives on important industry issues such as the need for national vessel discharge legislation, increased investment in water transportation infrastructure, and continued support for the domestic maritime industry and the Jones Act. Barge-In teams will be prepped on the afternoon of Tuesday, April 16, before heading out for a full day of Congressional meetings April 17. Whether this is your first time at the Barge-In or whether you are a veteran, we encourage you to join us. If you are interested in participating but have not yet registered, please contact Frank Leach today to ensure you are placed on a team. Contact Frank at fleach@vesselalliance.com or (703) 841-9300, ext. 254, or use the link at the right.

Following the Barge-In, the Spring Convention will officially begin on Thursday, April 18, with a full day of meetings followed by a networking reception. The Common Issues Council will open the meeting at 9:00 a.m. with a full agenda, including discussions on Subchapter M, vessel discharges, Jones Act, split-sleep research, and TWIC. All AWO members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Breakout sessions for the Sectors will begin at 11:15 a.m. with the Harbor

Services Sector Committee, featuring a member-led discussion on sector-specific problems to which member companies have found creative solutions. The Coastal Sector Committee will convene after lunch at 1:30 p.m. to guide AWO's advocacy efforts on the Coastal Sector issues of manning and no discharge zones. U.S. Coast Guard representatives will also be on hand to brief members on the requirements of the Maritime Labor Convention. Last but not least, the Joint Meeting of Inland Dry and Inland Liquid Sector Committees will meet at 2:45 p.m. to elect a new chairman and receive updates on the inland waterways infrastructure and funding, shale gas wastewater transportation, and non-tank vessel response plan requirements.

Additionally, the Public Affairs Committee will hold a panel discussion from 4:10 – 5:10 p.m. Ann McCulloch, Director – Public Affairs and Communications, has many projects underway this year including improvements that increase visibility of the industry and its economic impact and enhancements to the AWO member experience. The Public Affairs Committee meeting will also feature panel discussions with industry members, media experts and Congressional staff discussing how AWO members can “cut through the noise” in talking about industry issues and use the lessons learned from Mississippi River coverage to elevate the dialogue on Jones Act and infrastructure needs.

Thursday will conclude with a networking reception for member companies and government partners. Doors for the reception will open at 5:30 p.m. If you plan to bring a guest with you to the reception, please contact Sarah Young to reduce wait time at the registration desk. Contact

Quick Links

- [Register for the Convention](#)
- [Participate in the Barge-In](#)
- [Become a meeting sponsor](#)

Sarah at syoung@vesselalliance.com or (703) 841-9300, ext. 291.

Friday morning, April 19, will begin with the 7:30 a.m. Annual Membership Meeting immediately followed by the Board of Directors Meeting at 8:00 a.m. AWO is honored to have Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Robert J. Papp, as the keynote speaker for this year's Board of Directors Meeting. All AWO members are encouraged to attend these important events.

Sponsorships help make all of these meetings possible, and there are still a few spots available for you to visibly support AWO's mission while promoting your company among your peers. Would you consider sponsoring? Opportunities are available online using the link above or by phone and range from \$1,500 - \$6,000. Please contact Ms. Young for more information.

Please note that the deadline for the guaranteed rate at the Mandarin has passed and the overflow rooms are currently full. If you would like to add your name to the waiting list or need suggestions for alternative lodging arrangements, please let us know.

We hope to see you in just two short weeks for an action-packed week of AWO meetings! 🍀

Midcontinent Office

Coast Guard, EPA Find Low Risk of Asian Carp Transfer by Ballast Tanks

On February 28, the U.S. Coast Guard Research and Development Center released a study finding that barge ballast tanks present a minimal risk for the incidental transport and introduction of Asian carp into the Great Lakes.

The study, carried out in coordination with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, investigated the possibility of early life stages of Asian carp (eggs, larvae and fry) entering barge ballast tanks through either cracks or holes in the hull and surviving there, which could allow them to circumvent the electric fish barriers in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal and be released into the Great Lakes.

The study consisted of the modification of a hopper barge's ballast tank to simulate a barge with a ruptured hull, and the placement of caged Asian carp larvae into the tank. After the larvae's survival rates were evaluated, the barge was deballasted to determine if larvae could survive the trauma of passing through a mechanical pump. According to the Coast Guard, the results indicated that "while it may be possible for early life stages [of Asian carp] to be transported in a barge ballast tank for long periods, the probability that those life stages will survive passage through the pump when the tanks are deballasted is very low. The risk is further lowered because early life stages are only present in the affected waterways for a limited time each year."

A previous study found that only five percent of the ballast tanks of vessels operating on the Illinois River carried more than a couple of inches of water, and that barges transiting the Chicago

area are regularly inspected and seldom ballasted except to clear low bridges. The Coast Guard's press release credited the electric fish barriers with "help[ing] prevent breeding populations of the carp from establishing in the Great Lakes to date."

To read the Coast Guard's press release, click [here](#). For more information, please contact Caitlyn Stewart at (703) 841-9300, extension 262, or by email at cstewart@vesselalliance.com.



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For American Jobs.

America's tugboat, towboat and barge industry:

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- Offers excellent career opportunities for hard-working Americans
- Fosters hundreds of thousands of American jobs that depend on waterways transportation, and directly employs over 30,000 Americans on our vessels
- Contributes to America's economic, national and homeland security because our vessels are American-owned, American-built and American-crewed


THE AMERICAN WATERWAYS OPERATORS
America's Tugboat, Towboat & Barge Industry

"Our Compass Always Points to Safety"
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Pacific Region

Tidewater Barge Lines Hosts Congressional Staff Visit

Tidewater Barge Lines, Inc. of Vancouver, WA welcomed representatives from the offices of Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Rep. Kurt Schrader (D-OR) aboard Tidewater's flagship towboat, *Chief*, for a tour of marine operations on the Columbia River. Tidewater Operations Manager Craig Nelson and

Communications Manager Carol Bua led the tour and discussed the importance of maintaining navigation on the Columbia-Snake River System. The Columbia-Snake is the most important U.S. export gateway for wheat and barley, the lead West Coast exporter of wood products and mineral bulks, and third largest grain export gateway in the world. The

Congressional staffers also heard first hand about the importance of the Jones Act to ensuring the vitality of the American maritime industry and the need for legislation creating a uniform federal standard for vessel discharges.

For more information, please contact Charlie Costanzo at (206) 257-4723 or via email at ccostanzo@vesselalliance.com.

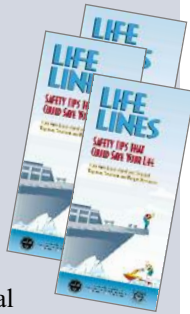
Recreational Boating Season is Near:

Order Your Lifelines Brochures Now!

Boating season starts in earnest next month, and boaters are making preparations to hit the water. AWO urges recreational boaters to use special caution when operating around commercial vessels and to educate themselves on the constraints under which those vessels operate. AWO's popular brochure, entitled "Lifelines: Safety Tips That Could Save Your Life," delivers important safety tips to recreational boaters in an easy-to-read, user friendly format.

To request copies of the brochure, please email your request to Frank Leach at fleach@vesselalliance.com.

This brochure is free; however, there is a cost for shipping. Order your brochures today!



Operations Manager Craig Nelson explains Tidewater's river barging operations to congressional staffers aboard Tidewater's flagship towboat, *Chief*, on a recent tour of its marine operations on the Columbia River.