

Southern Towing Company

Newsletter

Aug. 2007

Crossing the Bar

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family of Sheldon Naumann, who passed away on June 9th after a battle with cancer. He was the engineer on the M/V Larry Tilley.

Surprise Visit

A surprise visit to one of our boats resulted in the dismissal of an engineer, a deckhand and a tankerman when they were found to have been using drugs. We will periodically be conducting surprise visits to our boats and random drug tests.

High Blood Pressure

Studies show that increasing potassium intake lowers blood pressure, reduces risk of stroke and kidney disease, and prevents the thickening of heart muscle due to high blood pressure. Additionally, in those with high blood pressure, increasing the potassium reduces the need for blood pressure medication and in some cases allows for patients to completely stop their blood pressure pills. Foods high in potassium include apricots, bran wheat, raisins, figs, potatoes, prunes, bananas, cantaloupe, beets and tomatoes. Read more at www.healthcentral.com.

Coast Pilots

2007 edition of the Coast Pilots have been distributed to the boats. If your boat did not receive a copy contact Mike Slack.

TWIC

The latest word is *delays*. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) will miss their July 1st starting date by 2 to 3 months, for the TWIC enrollment process. It will be several

months before the application process is started on the inland river ports. We will keep you informed. A new Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular has been published detailing the implementation of the TWIC program. NVIC 03-07 is available at the USCG web site <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/index.htm>.

Designated Examiners

The Coast Guard recently evaluated the credentials of Tommy Parrish, Michael Overturf and Alan Wunsch and renewed their Designated Examiner authority. Congratulations!

Well Done Jo Anne Stegbauer

We received a special note of "great thanks" from TVT for the actions of the M/V Jo Anne Stegbauer in assisting the M/V Audrey Fouts on June 25th. The Audrey Fouts reported losing steering at mile 62 while down-bound on the Tennessee River with 14 empties. The Jo Anne Stegbauer assisted preventing a major casualty.

License and MMD Delays

Once again: submit your application to the Coast Guard early. One of our applicants has been waiting over 9 weeks for his file to even be looked at by an evaluator. In another case an applicant for upgrade has waited for 3 months for an evaluator to review his application. The evaluator's review will identify any potential deficiencies or errors. They are busy, shorthanded and they are reorganizing, so delays are inevitable.

Nautical Trivia

The expression **Above board** means legal, out in the open, activities not concealed. Early trading ships would hide illegal cargo below the ship's deck. Legal cargo could be placed in plain

view on deck, or above the boards of the deck.

Vessel Security

One of our boats recently reported a suspicious activity. While transiting the Arkansas River the crew saw two SUV's, in different locations. Each SUV had two persons, one taking pictures of the anhydrous ammonia tow with telephoto lenses, the other using binoculars. Per our Vessel Security Plan and Homeland Security regulations this incident was reported to the Coast Guard.

Dress Right for Safety

The STOP Manual and the Transfer Procedures both contain rules for proper clothing while working. Personnel engaged in hookups, transfer, disconnect or cargo monitoring on ammonia or UAN barges must always wear the appropriate protective equipment. As a minimum this includes work boots, long pants, long sleeve shirts and safety goggles. Additional protective clothing requirements will be found in the cargo transfer procedures. A work vest must be worn whenever on a barge.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are required by regulation to be held monthly on each boat. Without proper training we cannot be prepared to fight a fire. The Coast Guard expects wheelhouse personnel to conduct these drills and evidence of having participated in drills is a requirement for renewal of license.

Pollution Prevention

Pollution prevention is the responsibility of the boat and barge crews. If you see oil on deck or around an engine clean it up. If you have a bucket of used oil

dispose of it properly, don't leave it on deck. If you are transferring oil from the boat to a barge, a fuel flat or within the boat pay attention. When handling oil that is your only duty. Do not try to do other things at the same time.

Service Awards

Congratulations to Michael Hill, Hershel Moss, Jr., Robert Dillon, Matthew Neher, Matthew Schamel and Don Timmons for 5 years of service, to David Dovenbarger for 15 years of service and to Kevin Conway and Paula Fortier for completing 20 years of service with Southern Towing Company.

Direct Deposit

For your convenience your pay can be deposited to both your checking and savings account. It doesn't have to go to a single account. Contact Paula for more information.

Oil Samples

When you send in oil samples to the shop be sure to complete the paperwork properly. If you have questions about the paperwork, contact Larry Tilley.

USCG Information

The Coast Guard is beginning to request the names, birth dates, and sex of crewmembers before they do a boarding or escort. They will be running National Crime Information Center (NCIC) background checks on crewmembers for any outstanding wants or warrants. Have this information in the wheelhouse prior to the Coast Guard boarding so you will not have to awaken the off watch crewmembers. If you have any questions about requests from the Coast Guard contact Mike Slack.

Safety Orientation

The fire protection regulations require that the person in charge of a tow ensure that any new crewmember, who has not participated in fire drills and instruction, must receive a safety orientation within 24 hours of reporting for duty. A safety orientation includes the location and operation of fire fighting equipment, operation of emergency fuel shut-offs for the engine room, and activating the general alarm.

Mariner Feedback

Here's your chance to have some input regarding the licensing process. As you know the Coast Guard began restructuring the licensing and documentation program in 2005. The project will include the relocation of the National Maritime Center (NMC), a change in the mission of the REC's, technological improvements such as electronic administration and grading of exams, and on-line payment of fees. Once completed the NMC will manage the processing of all applications. The REC's will fingerprint mariners, administer exams, establish mariner identities, and provide application assistance. Those wishing to provide feedback should e-mail the Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee at MERPACfeedback@gmail.com. MER-PAC is a committee of 19 representatives from the marine industry whose purpose is to advise the Coast Guard, on matters relating to the training, qualification, licensing, certification and fitness of seamen in the U.S. merchant marine.