

Southern Towing Company

Newsletter

August 2011

USCG Licensing Medical Evaluations

Delays continue in the Merchant Mariner Credential (licenses and MMD's) renewal process. The Coast Guard however, has taken steps to improve the process by addressing some of the causes for delay, particularly medical evaluations. Go to our web site for a link to the Coast Guard's licensing program for details. Those of you who hold a Merchant Mariner's Credential need to renew it early. You can start the renewal process 12 months before your old MMC expires. This includes wheelhouse personnel and ammonia tankermen. The Coast Guard has changed personnel at the National Maritime Center. There are delays. If you have any medical issues you can expect significant delays. So, a word to the wise: **Start The Renewal Process Early.** You cannot work without a valid Merchant Mariner Credential.

National Terrorism Alert System

The Homeland Security Advisory System (the 5 color alert system) has been discontinued. The new National Terrorism Alert System (NTAS) has two levels; elevated and imminent. The NTAS presently has no impact on the existing MARSEC system. Therefore, we will continue under the Maritime Security (3 level) system.

TWIC Renewal

Don't forget that your TWIC card has an expiration date. Check it to be sure you renew on time. If you don't renew, you cannot work. You can renew your TWIC card at any time, at any TWIC location. The renewal process consists of the same steps as the original enrollment process (optional pre-enrollment, in-person enrollment, and card activation.) These steps are

required since a security threat assessment is required on all applicants, confirming they still meet eligibility requirements. You can find a link to the TWIC web site on our web site. (www.southerntowing.net)

TOAR

If you need a Towing Officer Assessment Record (TOAR) we now have a link on our web site where you can download the forms. There is a separate link for both the Western Rivers and the Great Lakes (Inland) TOAR.

Sleep Better

Quit smoking. Nicotine is a stimulant, so it prevents you from falling asleep. Plus, many smokers experience withdrawal pangs at night. Studies show smokers are 4 times more likely not to feel as well rested after a night's sleep as nonsmokers. Smoking exacerbates sleep apnea and other breathing disorders, which can also stop you from getting a good night's rest.

Designated Examiner

Congratulations to Joe Aucoin, Vincent Bradford, Walt Ditto and to Kenny Williams for recently being named Designated Examiners by the Coast Guard. Designated Examiners help train personnel to become licensed Towing Vessel Operators.

Drug Testing

Recent random drug tests resulted in four positive tests. As required by regulation we reported the individuals with a license or merchant mariner's document to the Coast Guard. All four were terminated from Southern Towing Company's employment.

USCG Medical Form

The Coast Guard has revised its Medical Evaluation Form. The new form is available by going to the Links page on our web site (www.southerntowing.net)

Service Awards

Congratulations to Reubin Thompson, Greg McCoy, Brandon Baskin, Dan Dixon, Ryan Richards, Jim Lowder and Seth Yeargain for 5 years of service, Chuck Spradling for 10 years of service and Mike Newsom and Mike Emison for 25 years of service with Southern Towing Company.

Congratulations

Congratulations to the crew of the M/V Capt. Sam Yount. The Chamber of Shipping of America recently awarded the boat a Safety Achievement Award Citation of Merit. The award reads; *"We commend your crew of the M/V Capt. Sam Yount for their actions in preventing a runaway vessel from striking a chemical facility, a barge loaded with hazardous chemical at the facility and*



the nearby highway. They took immediate action in stopping their transfer operation, detached from the tow enabling them to perform the rescue. Their actions exemplify the courage and skills inherent in the professional mariner.”

Smoking Policy

No smoking is permitted in any interior boat space. No smoking is permitted while working with or handling any flammable or combustible material such as gasoline, diesel fuel, solvents, paint thinner, hydraulic oil, lubricating oil, mineral spirits, etc. **No smoking is permitted on any docks. Smoking is prohibited on all barges at all times.** All tobacco products are prohibited on all the new boats. It is the responsibility of the wheelhouse personnel to enforce the no smoking policy.

Hands-Only CPR

Hands-only CPR is a potentially lifesaving technique involving no mouth to mouth contact. It is best used in

emergencies where someone has seen another person collapse. The hands-only technique increases the likelihood of surviving cardiac emergencies that occur outside medical settings. For more information and a training video go to www.redcross.org/hands-only.

Chamber of Shipping Devlin Awards

The Chamber of Shipping of America annually presents the 'Jones F. Devlin' award to vessels that have had no loss time personnel injuries for a minimum of two years. This year the M/V FRANK HOLLOMON received an award for 4 accident free years, the M/V JO ANNE STEGBAUER received one for 3 accident free years and the M/V CHARLES SOUTHERN, M/V DAVID STEGBAUER and the CAPT. RICHARD SIDES for 2 accident free years. Congratulations to the crews of those boats. Keep up the good work. This is a goal that we all should strive for. Every boat can achieve this if you'll pay attention and follow our Safety Rules.

KUDO's from the Army

We recently received a letter from Major General Grisoli of the US Army Corps of Engineers thanking Larry Tilley, Capt. Richard Sides the crew of the M/V Scott Stegbauer, for helping them understand the advantages of Z-Drive boats. Southern Towing Company has become the Z-Drive expert.

Pollution Prevention

Our goal is always *zero pollution*. It is up to all of us, especially the boat and barge crews to prevent pollution. 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, from a fuel flat to the boat, or within the boat pay attention to what you are doing. When handling oil that is your only duty. Do not try to do other things at the same time. Statistically, the main cause of all pollution is human error. Human error is caused by inattention to what you are doing.