

# Southern Towing Company

Newsletter

February 2008

## TWIC

You should have received information from the office about obtaining your TWIC card. Everyone must have a TWIC card. If you did not receive information or have questions contact Mike Slack. Plan on spending some time at the TSA site to get your TWIC. It is easier and faster if you pre-enroll on line. Make an appointment early in the day. Go to our web site for a link to pre-enroll. You can also find the form you will fill out at the enrollment center on our web site under links. Once you receive your TWIC card remember to provide the office a copy of it.

## New Skiffs

As you may have heard we are providing all the boats with a new skiff. These are Zodiac boats. They are much safer than the old boats. Training in their use and maintenance will be provided.



## 401K Plan

We are often asked if you can take money out of the 401K Plan. There are only 2 ways to get money; if you retire or if you leave Southern Towing Company.

## REC Information

A "Remote Customer Service Office" is now open in Branson, MO. It is located in the Missouri Career Center, 2720 Shepherd of the Hills Expressway. They will be open on the first and third Wednesday each month. For more information contact the REC St. Louis office at 314-269-2504.

## Personal Hygiene & Health

Washing your hands frequently with warm water and soap will help prevent the spread of germs and infection. Wash your hands after using the bathroom, coughing or sneezing, changing bandages over injuries, whenever you come in contact with chemicals, and always before preparing food and eating. Wash dishes and cookware thoroughly in hot soapy water. Use a mixture of water and bleach to clean the galley.

## Memphis TWIC Office

The address for the TWIC office in Memphis is 3865 Viscount Suite 2. The address originally sent out was incorrect. Several locations are now open and others will soon be opening. Check <http://www.twicinformation.com/twicinfo/schedule.jsp> to search for a location near you.

## Newsletter by E-mail

If you would like to receive our newsletter via e-mail let Mike Slack know.

## Drug & Alcohol Tests

Before a crewmember is sent ashore for medical treatment of an injury an alcohol test must be performed. Test kits are kept on the boats. Know where they are located. A drug kit is to be sent with the injured crewmember for a drug test at the medical facility.

## Nautical Terminology

**Tar or Jack Tar:** Tar, a slang term for a Sailor, has been in use since at least 1676. The term "Jack tar" was used by the 1780s. Early Sailors wore overalls and broad-brimmed hats made of tar-impregnated fabric called tarpaulin cloth. The hats, and the Sailors who wore them, were called tarpaulins, which may have been shortened to tars.

## Winter Safety

This time of the year you can expect to encounter ice and snow conditions on your tow. Walk carefully. You might want to take smaller steps and be sure to hold on to something. Wear proper work boots. Remove the ice and snow as soon as possible. Be careful, it will be slippery.

## Crossing the Bar

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family of Bill Thrasher who passed away on 1/26/2008 of lung cancer. Bill served as the relief captain on the M/V Robert Ingle.

## Address & Phone Changes

If your address or phone number or both change you need to notify Paula. We need to be able to contact you. Let her know as soon as the change occurs.

## License Verification

The Captain or the Relief Captain should be verifying that the oncoming licensed personnel (pilots and ammonia tankermen) have their license or MMD with them.

## USCG Physicals

Physicals taken for a license are good for up to 3 years. So, if you are upgrading your license and you had a physical within the past 3 years you will not need another one. The exception is if you were granted a physical waiver on the previous license. In that case you will need a new physical. No matter what, the application for a license or MMD must be made in person. You need to bring 2 forms of identification with you whenever you apply.

## Burning Trash

Do not burn trash while you are passing through a lock. There are ample opportunities to burn trash at other times.

## **Designated Examiners**

If you are interested in training new steersmen and becoming a designated examiner contact Bobby Jones or Mike Slack. There is incentive pay for being a Designated Examiner.

## **401K Plan and Tax Savings**

Our 401K plan is a great way to save for your retirement. Not only can you put money aside and have Southern Towing Company match what you save, if you qualify you can receive a "saver's tax credit." The tax credit can be as much as \$1,000 depending on your income and how much you save for retirement. Southern Towing Company will match your savings up to 5% of the pay you contribute. On top of that you will pay less income tax. It's a good thing. Contact Paula for more information.

## **Good Housekeeping is a Matter of Safety**

It's an important safety issue and it's everyone's responsibility! Considering the type of work done on a tow,

changing weather conditions, working with wires, lines, ratchets, and hazards of falling overboard, it should be obvious that good housekeeping is a safety issue. Good housekeeping has other virtues. When your work area is neat it is easier to find what you need to do your job. Also it makes the tow look good to our customers and to anyone boarding the tow, like the Coast Guard. Look for and eliminate hazards and be safe.

## **Pollution Prevention**

One of the most important considerations when preparing for a transfer (whether fueling the boat or transferring UAN or ammonia) is to be absolutely certain that all valves in the system are lined up properly. That means those that should be open are open and those that should be closed are closed. Check and recheck to be sure. If you are using a crossover hose make sure you are not loading a barge instead of sending the product to the terminal. A common cause of pollution incidents are is the improper alignment of valves. Read and follow the transfer procedures; don't make a stupid mistake.

## **Frostbite**

Prevention of frostbite is actually very simple and for the most part is based on common sense. Understand the prevailing weather conditions. Temperature and wind speed effect how quickly frostbite can occur. Wear layers of clothing and protect exposed skin from the elements. Wool is the best natural insulator. Cotton should be avoided if you are in conditions where you might get wet. Wool socks, with good boots that are waterproofed help keep your feet warm. Wear a hat that will cover your ears. Don't smoke when out in the extreme cold. It encourages hypothermia and frostbite.

## **It's Tax Season**

The IRS has a web site with all sorts of useful information about filing, frequently asked questions, and regulations: [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

## **TWIC Fee**

You will be reimbursed for the TWIC fee after you send a copy of your TWIC card to Paula.