



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

U.S Department of Homeland Security

TOWING VESSEL SAFETY NOTICE

Towing Vessel National Center of Expertise

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Paducah, KY

Notice 01-12

Moving Hazards Aboard Uninspected Towing Vessels

“Yellow is a Caution and Physical Hazard Zone” Be Aware!

This Safety Notice addresses safety issues relating to spaces aboard Uninspected Towing Vessels (UTV) where persons may be exposed to moving, rotating and/or articulating machinery.

Towing vessel companies are urged to revisit their vessel operating procedures and safety plans to ensure they adequately address safety training, oversight, and controls for persons while working in machinery spaces.

This year, the Coast Guard has responded to multiple casualties that illustrate the dangers of working in machinery spaces.

Recently, an experienced engineer got “caught in between” a steering ram and bulkhead and was severely injured while conducting maintenance when the vessel was underway.

Another incident involved a crewmember that was severely injured when entangled in the vessel’s rotating main propulsion shaft.



This Towing Vessel Safety Notice is for informational purposes only and does not relieve the reader of any domestic or international safety, operational or material requirement. Developed and distributed by USCG Towing Vessel National Center of Expertise, questions may be addressed to tyncoe@uscg.mil or you may contact the Towing Vessel National Center of Expertise at (270) 444-7715.

Currently the Coast Guard has no regulations in place to address the proper markings of physical hazards on uninspected vessels but the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has such regulations.

OSHA's safety color code for designating all caution and marking physical hazards are located in [29 CFR 1910.144\(a\)\(3\)](#).

For moving hazards, OSHA requirements state, "Yellow shall be the basic color for designating caution and for marking physical hazards such as: striking against, stumbling, falling, tripping, and "caught in between."

As a result of these incidents, the U. S. Coast Guard strongly recommends vessel owners, operators and crewmembers ensure the following:

1. Ensure marking of physical hazards as per OSHA requirements.
2. Develop or amend vessel operating procedures to include provisions for entering typically unmanned machinery spaces while the vessel is underway.
3. Develop or amend vessel operating procedures to require notification to the officer of the watch for personnel that will be working around moving, rotating and/or articulating machinery.
4. Place a conspicuous barrier to mark and impede the entrance into areas that have moving, rotating and/or articulating machinery.
5. Ensure crewmembers are aware of the dangers of wearing loose fitting clothing and gear around moving, rotating and/or articulating machinery.
6. Ensure crewmembers are properly trained and practice company safety procedures when working around moving, rotating and/or articulating machinery.