U.S. Department of Homeland Security

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MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN 04-14

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Vessel Safety Requirements for Offshore Dredge Operations for the Captain of the Port, Western Alaska Zone

Ref: (a) Title 33 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Subchapter S
(b) State of Alaska Statute AS 05.25
(c) Title 46 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Subchapter I
(d) Title 46 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Subchapter C

OVERVIEW: The Coast Guard will continue to promote maritime safety and environmental protection in Nome during the 2014 gold dredging season. This informational bulletin discusses minimum safety requirements for recreational gold dredge vessel operators in coastal waters under the concurrent jurisdiction the Coast Guard and the State of Alaska Department of Public Safety. Please contact Sector Anchorage to discuss the specifics of your dredging vessel(s) if your operation is other than recreational.

DEFINITIONS:

- Vessel: *A floating dredge (including jack-up dredges that float into position, excluding crawlers)*
- Seagoing vessel: *A vessel that operates outside of Nome Harbor.*
- Motor vessel: *A vessel that has an engine of any type for propulsion.*
- Non-self propelled vessel: *A vessel that does not have an engine for propulsion*
- Towing vessel: *A self-propelled vessel used to push or pull a non-self propelled vessel.*

SAFETY EQUIPMENT AND OPERATIONS: As in years past, all seagoing motor vessel dredges less than 300 gross tons must meet the recreational boating safety standards set forth in references (a) and (b). All seagoing motor vessel dredges 300 gross tons and above must meet the safety requirements of reference (c). Operators of non-self propelled vessels requiring towing vessels for positioning must ensure the towing vessels meet the safety requirements of reference (d). Note that towing vessels 26ft or longer must be operated by a master with an appropriate Coast Guard credential.

DOCKSIDE SAFETY CHECKS: The Coast Guard will offer voluntary dockside safety checks during limited time periods. Interested operators will be able to sign up through the Harbormaster's Office. While the dockside safety checks are not mandatory, they are strongly encouraged. Passing a dockside safety check may reduce an operator's chances of being involuntarily boarded by the Coast Guard during mining operations.

AT SEA ENFORCEMENT: The Coast Guard will conduct underway boardings on dredge vessels off the coast of Nome to ensure compliance with applicable federal regulations. If violations are identified, fines or voyage termination may result.

MANDATORY POLLUTION REPORTING: Operators must notify the Coast Guard National Response Center if oil or certain other hazardous pollutants enter the ocean or waters leading to the ocean. This includes pollution spilled on or through the ice during winter dredging. To report a spill, call 1-800-424-8802.

EMERGENCIES: The Coast Guard Sector Anchorage Command Center operates 24/7 and can be reached via marine radio or by calling 907-428-4100.

WEBSITE: The Voluntary Dredge Safety Check Safety Equipment Examination checklist, a pamphlet detailing Federal Boating Safety Requirements, and State of Alaska Boaters Handbook can be found on Sector Anchorage's website: <http://www.uscg.mil/d17/SectorAnchorage/>.

CONTACT: Coast Guard Sector Anchorage will continue to refine its approach to vessel safety with sensitivity to the unique operating conditions of Nome's expanding gold dredge fleet. Please contact Mr. Kevin Williams at 907- 428-4162 or Lieutenant Brierley Ostrander at 907-428-4164 with questions or concerns.

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