

U.S. Department
of Transportation

United States
Coast Guard



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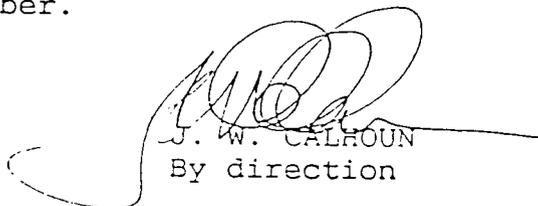
From: Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District
To: Distribution

Subj: SIDELIGHT PLACEMENT ON MULTIPLE VESSEL CONFIGURATIONS
BEING TOWED ALONGSIDE OR PUSHED AHEAD

Ref: (a) Rule 24 (f) of the Inland Navigational Rules

1. The enclosed self-explanatory document developed by Commandant (G-NSR-3) is being distributed to clarify potential confusion that could lead to inconsistent enforcement. Please ensure that this information is distributed to all officers and petty officers involved in inspection of the subject tows.

2. Questions regarding this matter should be directed to LCDR Tetreau at the above number.


J. W. CALHOUN
By direction

Encl: (1) Rules of the Road Advisory Counsel Interpretation as published in the April/May 1983 Proceedings

Dist: All Eighth District MSOs

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Sidelights:

Where should you put them
in a barge configuration with uneven sides?

Proper placement of sidelights on groups of vessels being pushed ahead or towed alongside was one of the subjects discussed by the Rules of the Road Advisory Council (RORAC) at its December 7 - 8, 1982, meeting.

Rule 24(f) of the Inland Rules states that any number of vessels being towed alongside or pushed in a group shall be lighted as one vessel. This Rule further requires that sidelights be exhibited at the forward end of the vessel.

Many questions have been raised concerning sidelight placement on various barge configurations encountered on the Western Rivers. Frequently, groups of barges are unevenly configured; placement of sidelights on the forward end of the lead barge(s) of a tow may thus give a false indication of the maximum width of the tow. Operators on the Western Rivers unanimously agree that sidelights are most useful when they mark the maximum projection of a tow to both port and starboard. On vessels being pushed ahead, the special flashing light

required by Rule 21(g) adequately marks the forward end of the tow.

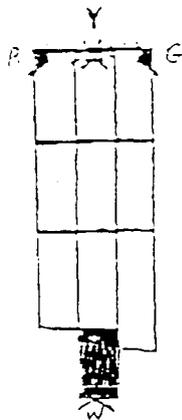
RORAC has interpreted Rule 24(f) as requiring

- a green sidelight on the starboard side of the tow, so placed as to mark the maximum projection of the tow to starboard, and
- a red light on the port side of the tow, so placed as to mark the maximum projection of the tow to port.

The Coast Guard agrees with this interpretation. The illustrations show proper lighting on some representative Western Rivers barge configurations. It should be noted from the figures that where there is a combination of pushing ahead and towing alongside, a sternlight should be placed on the vessel towed if its stern nears or falls aft of the stern of the towing vessel.

Examples of Sidelight Placement

on Representative Western Rivers Barge Configurations



R - red sidelight

G - green sidelight

Y - special flashing light (yellow)

W - sternlight

 - towing vessel

