



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

MARINE SAFETY ALERT

Inspections and Compliance Directorate

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Safety Alert 05-98

DECKPLATE AND MANHOLE COVER SAFETY

1. If you remove a deck plate or manhole cover anywhere on board ship, warn other personnel that it is off.
2. If you must leave the "opening" try to place a guard over it; perhaps a saw-horse or a step-stool, etc. If possible, rope off the area.
3. Never leave such covers off longer than necessary.
4. When lifting these covers take a good stance, a firm grip, and lift with your leg muscles, rather than with your back. Once it is off, be careful where you set it aside; don't make it a tripping hazard for another person.
5. If a deck plate or manhole cover is out of position at time of changing watch, be sure to warn the new watch.
6. If a deck plate or manhole cover is removed, it is often for some job being done under the deck, in a hold or tank. In this situation a standby man must be positioned at the opening at all times; he will warn others of the danger and keep in contact with the man under deck for his safety.

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