



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

MARINE SAFETY ALERT

Inspections and Compliance Directorate

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Safety Alert 12-15

PICKED UP PICKUP

Dockside safety issues.

The maritime industry and specifically waterfront facilities can present some unusual hazards to those who perform the wide array and variety of work associated with the business of shipping. To illustrate that point, a pick-up truck was recently dragged into the harbor by a mooring line that was being hauled in by a ship's mooring winch. The shore-side line handler that was using the truck to assist with the evolution narrowly escaped injury and possible death by quickly jumping out of the truck before it was dragged off the terminal. In this case, the ship was preparing to depart the port and the mooring line messenger was secured to the truck's tow hitch. It is a common shore gang line handling practice used in order to assist working with heavy mooring lines. When the line was thrown off the bollard, the ship began to haul it in with the messenger still attached to the truck.

Line handlers use the assistance of powered machinery (e.g., trucks, forklifts, golf carts) to help handle mooring lines. The extreme weights of the mooring lines involved and the lack of adequate personnel to safely accomplish this task lead to the unconventional line handling practices.



The Coast Guard is unaware how often this type of incident has occurred worldwide, but we have confirmed a similar event took place years ago resulting in a fatality. Consequently, the Coast Guard reminds port authorities, marine terminal operators, line handlers, longshoreman and others associated with such activities to consider:

- Developing policies and procedures that address this potential hazard and minimize associated risks;
- Evaluating the need for utilizing quick release devices or other weak link arrangements; and
- Ensuring line handlers have the ability to communicate with vessels during berthing or un-berthing procedures;

It is also recommended that vessel operators and deck officers' use caution and remain vigilant of all components when hauling in, ensuring that lines and cables are clear and free of attachments. Special attention should be given to the mooring lines as they are coming off the dock and being hauled aboard.

This Safety Alert is provided for informational purposes only and does not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational or material requirement. Special thanks to LCDR Matt Meskun. Developed and distributed by the Office of Investigations and Casualty Analysis, Washington DC. Questions may be sent to HQS-PF-flidr-CG-INV@uscg.mil