



Coast Guard Sector Houston-Galveston Marine Safety Information Bulletin 01-15

Requirements for Lightering Oil and Hazardous Materials In-Port

Definitions for the purpose of this policy:

Barge: U.S. flagged non self-propelled vessel of any size.

In-Port: Waters inward of the territorial sea baseline as defined in 33 CFR 2.20.

Lightering: Any oil or hazardous material transferred as a liquid cargo (not used for that vessel's propulsion) between vessels.

Ship: Self-propelled vessel of any size.

Lightering operations by way of installed piping manifold to manifold connections are used daily throughout the Captain of the Port (COTP) Zone Houston-Galveston for a variety of reasons.

Comprehensive regulatory requirements found in Title 33 and 46, of the Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) ensure all vessels operate with approved transfer procedures and cargo piping systems.

In an effort to reduce administrative burden and prevent undue delay, the COTP Houston-Galveston will not require advanced notice of transfer for lightering operations to take place between vessels under the following conditions:

1) The transfer is conducted at any of the following locations:

- Facility approved to operate in accordance with 33 CFR 105.
- Designated waterfront facility as defined in 33 CFR 126.
- Facilities handling liquefied hazardous gases (LHG) as defined in 33 CFR 127.
- Marine transfer facility as defined in 33 CFR 154.

Note: Facilities mooring foreign flagged vessels must have an approved facility security plan as defined in 33 CFR 105.

2) Operations are limited to MARPOL 73/78 Annex I/II cargoes and LHGs listed in:

46 CFR 30 – see Table 30.25-1

46 CFR 153 – see Table I

46 CFR 154 – see Table 4

46 CFR 151 – see Table 151.05

IBC Code Ch. 17 & 18

IGC Code Ch. 19

Any MARPOL 73/78 Annex I/II or LHG cargo listed in a vessel's cargo authority attachment or certificate of fitness.

Note: Any ship after discharging requiring a prewash and not moored at a facility with an approved Annex II Certificate of Adequacy must submit a proposal to the COTP outlining disposal prior to leaving port.

3) For lightering operations involving LHGs:

- Transfers are conducted while moored at a 33 CFR 127 facility.
- Barge to barge operations are at a 33 CFR 154 facility dedicated to the cleaning and gas freeing of tank barges that:
 - Equipment to de-pressurize LHG tanks via vapor control.

- Has installed firefighting equipment that meets the intent of 33 CFR 127.1501(b) & (c), 127.1503, 127.1507, & 127.1509.
- Has gas detection for use by persons-in-charge that meets the intent of 33 CFR 127.1203.
- Uses an installed warning alarm system that meets the intent of 33 CFR 127.1207.
- Follows the layout and spacing requirements in 33 CFR 127.1105(c) & (d).

Written approval from the COTP is required for all operations that:

- Deviate from a vessel's approved transfer procedures.
- Intend to mitigate further damage after a marine casualty as defined in 46 CFR 4.03-1.
- Involve pumping and piping systems not approved on the vessel's Certificate of Inspection or Cargo Ship Safety Construction Certificate.
- Does not take place at a facility outlined above.

At this time, the COTP has not designated any geographic areas of the COTP zone to require advanced notice of transfer.

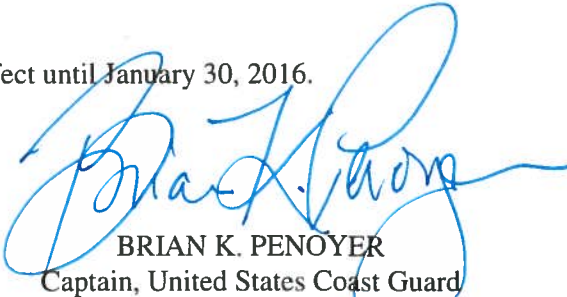
Lightering operations at any facility's dock listed above is contingent upon the following conditions:

- No part of any lightering evolution or mooring arrangement may impede the navigation channel.
- Moorings shall be consistent with VTS Houston-Galveston's Restricted Dock Policy (User's Manual).
- No more than two ships or three barges may be alongside each other during a lightering operation.
- No more than two barges may be alongside a ship at one time during a lightering operation.
- An attending towboat shall be present at all times to render assistance to any barge(s) participating in the transfer.

As a reminder, ships may be required to submit certain information to the attending pilots association to ensure mooring arrangements in advance of any ship to ship docking. All, vessels involved in lightering operations must have onboard a valid Certificate of Inspection or Certificate of Compliance approved for the type of cargo to be lightered. Additionally, pollution prevention equipment required by the vessel's response plan shall be readily available within the required time limits as specified in 33 CFR 155.

If you require any further information on this issue please contact the Sector Command Center at (281) 464-4856.

This bulletin shall remain in effect until January 30, 2016.



BRIAN K. PENOYER
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 Sector Commander and Captain of the Port