

MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Volume XIX Issue: 027b

Time: 1015

Date: 29 Mar 2019

**Additional Towing Vessel Safety
Precautions During High Water**

After further consultation and clarification with industry, this Marine Safety Information Bulletin supersedes Volume XIX Issue 027, dated 27 Mar 2019.

Together with leaders from the towing industry, the Captain of the Port (COTP) New Orleans puts forth the following additional, towing vessel specific safety precautions to mitigate hazards associated with high water and strong river currents:

1. Towing vessels shall not transit between two anchored ships.
2. Towing vessels less than 79 feet in length should maintain a one-foot minimum freeboard at the lowest point. Towing vessels should only operate with less than one-foot of freeboard if the vessel's Safety Management System (SMS) specifically addresses the hazardous conditions associated with high river currents and low freeboard.
3. Towing vessels operating in the COTP New Orleans Zone (Mile Marker 0 – 303 Above Head of Passes) shall maintain a minimum barge-to-horsepower (HP) ratio of **320 HP per standard loaded barge and 750 HP per superjumbo loaded barge for downbound transits. Empty barges may be calculated at ½ the HP requirements to that of a loaded barge when computing the overall HP requirement. Upbound vessels must be able to make 3 miles per hour (MPH).**
4. Vessels shall maintain a minimum safe distance upriver of stationary objects (such as anchor blocks, midstream berths, etc.) of twice the tow length. If the minimum distance allowed is impracticable, then a second assist vessel would be required.
5. Liteboat vessel(s) engaging in a downstream maneuver that is greater than 150 feet from a bank should be limited to daylight hours as much as possible. Additionally, a rescue vessel should be available during these operations.
6. Liteboat vessel(s) engaging in a downstream maneuver that is greater than 150 feet from the bank should be 65 feet or greater in length overall (LOA), and at least 1200 HP.

These safety precautions are applicable when the Carrollton Gauge reaches 16' on the rise and will remain in place until the Carrollton Gauge reaches 16' on the fall.

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For further information, contact the following:

Vessel Traffic Center Lower Mississippi River (24 hours): (504) 365-2230, VHF-FM Ch 05A, 11, or 12

Coast Guard Sector New Orleans Command Center (24 hours): (504) 365-2543

Coast Guard Waterways Management: (504) 365-2280



CAPTAIN K. M. LUTTRELL
Captain of the Port New Orleans

For a current list of MSIBs in the COTP New Orleans Zone visit: <https://homeport.uscg.mil/port-directory/new-orleans> under "Safety Notifications"