



# The Marine Assistance Industry Journal

A Quarterly Newsletter - Volume 43- April 2021



## *Chairman's Address*

I was recently with a friend who owns a local restaurant, discussing the last twelve months and what it's done to her business. As the conversation progressed, she asked how our industry has fared. I almost didn't have the heart to tell her.

Exactly a year ago, I made a prediction that we would soon be back to work, with the current challenges in our wake. I was correct on one account, and a little optimistic on my timeline for the other.

Shortly after that prediction, the boating season began, and what a season it was. For a little while, it felt like we were back in the late 1990's and early 2000's. Record numbers of boats were being sold, new boaters were flocking to the water, and as a result, our own boats and crews got a heck of a workout.

With that said, we haven't put last spring in our wake, but we're almost there. I missed seeing everyone at our annual conference, and if you don't go down to New Orleans for the Workboat Show, did December even happen?

Fortunately, those events, and many others, are already scheduled and ready to rock this year and next. I'm looking forward to muffalettas and oysters in the Big Easy, and getting back together with all of you in Savannah.

Until then, if the reports I've been hearing from down south are any indication, it seems like we may be in for another busy year, so buckle up.

Fair winds and following seas,

Phil LeBlanc  
C-PORT Chairman

## **SAVE THE DATE!**

**35th C-PORT Conference and Membership Meeting**  
**January 17 - January 19, 2022 at the Hyatt Regency Savannah, GA**

As news continues to improve on the pandemic, and safety measures are standard in host venues, we are hopeful the 2022 conference will be held as scheduled.

C-PORT begins with a Welcome reception on Monday, January 17. Conference sessions start Tuesday morning, January 18, and continue through January 19, Wednesday afternoon. The TowBoatU.S. Conference starts on January 19 and ends on Thursday, January 20, 2022. The agenda and registration information will be posted soon!

**Be sure to Save the Date!**

**US Coast Guard issued a notice of decision** regarding the consolidation of a number of redundant small boat stations. They decided to consolidate four small boat stations in the interest of increasing staffing and capacity levels at nearby stations.

Coast Guard received no public comment regarding consolidation of Stations Roosevelt Island or Salem. A couple of comments were received regarding Station Shark River voicing concerns that a fast response is needed in the area. The response analysis from that area reflect Station Manasquan Inlet, less than 10 miles away, is sufficient to meet the needs of the area.

Consolidating Station (small) Fisher Island also received public comment. Some voiced concerns that the area near Race Rock Lighthouse requires a fast Coast Guard response. The studies and analysis determined that the response in the area is sufficient, noting Station New London is less than 10 miles away.

One small station that was listed for closure was removed from the list. Station Oxford will remain open with further analysis required. Public commenters noted that the area near Station Oxford is well traveled and heavily worked, local resources are limited, and a response from Station Annapolis would take too long. Other comments included the importance of the station for local triathlons, regattas, and other races that take place in the area.

The US Coast Guard uses public, including industry, comments when making regulatory and other such changes. C-PORT uses these opportunities to be heard, and reminds its members to offer comments especially when a local area may be affected.

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# UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

## **MARINE SAFETY ALERT**

### **Inspections and Compliance Directorate**

March 18, 2021  
Washington, DC

Safety Alert 01-21

## **SEE-ME PFD LIGHT FAILURES DUE TO BATTERY ISSUES**

In October 2020, Sector Los Angeles/Long Beach found eleven non-compliant SEE-ME 1.0 LED PFD lights (161.012/92/0). The bottoms of the lights were missing, cracked, or bulging. (Figure 1). The lights are manufactured by AOB Outdoor Products & Accessories, Inc. and may be labeled as Model 51150 or strobe Model 51152. These models use two customer-supplied AAA alkaline or lithium batteries; the affected lights all used alkaline batteries.

Causal analysis determined the following: The insulating seals at the end of the battery breached, allowing potassium hydroxide to escape and react with air in the device causing potassium carbonate to form. The leaks occurred due to either self-discharge, in which the stored charge was reduced due to an internal chemical reaction within the affected batteries, or the affected batteries surpassed the manufacturer's recommended storage life and/or storage conditions. No other failures of these models have been reported.

AOB recommends the use of Energizer Ultimate Lithium™ batteries, which are considerably more leak proof than alkaline batteries, outperform alkaline in extreme temperature conditions (-40°F to 140°F) and have a longer shelf life than alkaline batteries. Prior to storing the See-Me 1.0 PFD Light, users should remove depleted batteries and replace with new batteries to avoid degradation in storage due to a variety of chemical mechanisms.

The USCG recommends that users of any PFD lights store lights where they will not be exposed to extreme temperatures or salt water and that manufacturer-recommended batteries are used for optimal life of the equipment.



Figure 1: SEE-ME 1.0 LED PFD Light (161.012/92/0)

This safety alert was developed by the Coast Guard Office of Design and Engineering Standards and the Office of Investigations and Casualty Analysis. Any questions or comments regarding this equipment should be sent to: [HQS-pf-flidr-CG-INV@uscg.mil](mailto:HQS-pf-flidr-CG-INV@uscg.mil).

## *Lithium/ Lithium-Ion Batteries*



*Captain Chris Day, Georgia Boat Safety and Training*

Lithium batteries have been a concern in the commercial maritime industry for a few years now. In the past couple of years we have seen a big increase in recreational vessels installing lithium batteries.

How this affects us: Lithium, when wet, will burn and has a high probability of exploding. We need to take special precautions when dealing with a salvage that could possibly have lithium batteries aboard. Lithium reacts violently with water or moisture to produce heat and explosive Hydrogen Gas and toxic Lithium Hydroxide (which can be deadly). Not only is a lithium battery fire dangerous from the fire point of view, but toxic chemicals are also released when the battery catches fire.

“In a report made by the European Union, scientists conclude that “a lithium-ion battery fire on board of a ship can be more deadly than a sinking ship.” This is because a lithium-ion battery fire is one of the most dangerous and difficult fires to control and extinguish. The authors of the European Union point out that traditional fire suppressor systems are not effective in case of a battery fire. In fact, a suppression system would even worsen the situation. The safety approach for batteries on sea is different than on land. The hull of a vessel gets slammed with waves, sometimes at extremely high frequency when the weather is rough. The shock and vibration effects can eventually lead to structural damage of the battery encasing, potentially triggering short-circuit. And above all, it takes much more time for the emergency services to reach a burning ship.

For smaller vessels (2 to 24 meters), Li-ion technology has already replaced a lot of combustion engines and lead acid batteries for electrically powered boats. Also, for recreational boats the batteries become more popular. Niche markets such as yachts, watercraft, drones, and underwater vehicles will eventually also switch to lithium batteries. Despite the still relatively limited use in the marine today, several battery fire incidents on sea have been reported. And a lot of fire incidents go unreported since the fire destroys the evidence.” See <http://www.lithiumsafe.com/battery-fire-safety-marine/>

Please refer to the below information on working with Lithium and Lithium-Ion Batteries.

Emergency Response Guide Code: 3480

NIOSH CAS Number: 7580-67-8

## *From the Desk of C-PORT Executive Director- NMC Credential Renewals*

US Coast Guard National Maritime Center is working hard to process mariner credentials in a timely manner. Covid-19 restrictions and facility closings has taken its toll. There are some things we can do to help with the renewal process.

- Send a complete renewal packet! When something is missing and CG sends an AI (additional information) letter, it takes additional time for your additional information to meet up with your file.
- All sea time letters must have a signature. It seems like a simple thing but your letter and all of the information included will be returned and not processed.
- Those renewing RADAR endorsements, but sure to state in the sea time letter that the vessels are equipped with radar. CG does not assume they are especially since our vessels are not required to carry radar. State that the mariner serves in a position that routinely uses the radar for navigation and collision avoidance. Noting that the vessel has radar is not sufficient. The mariner must be routinely using it to be able to use the sea time to renew the radar endorsement.
- Coast Guard does not have the authority to extend credentials beyond 1 year from the expiration date on the credential. Send renewal packets as soon as you are eligible.

Anyone having concerns or issues with their renewals, please reach out to my office. C-PORT is happy to help our members navigate the process. Email [tcardone@cport.us](mailto:tcardone@cport.us) or call 954-261-2012.




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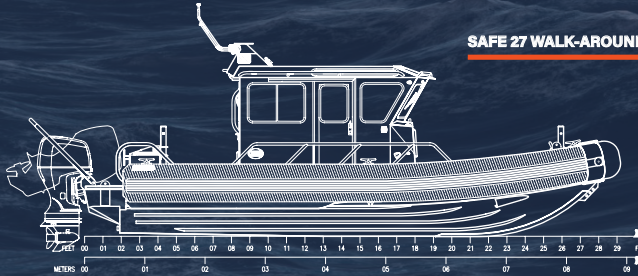
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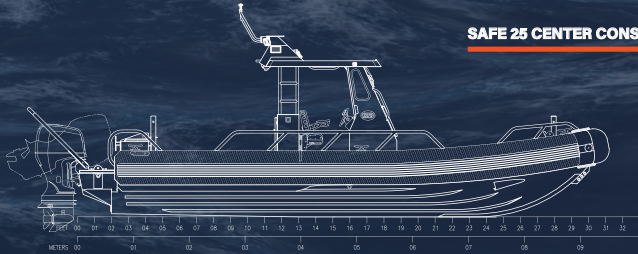
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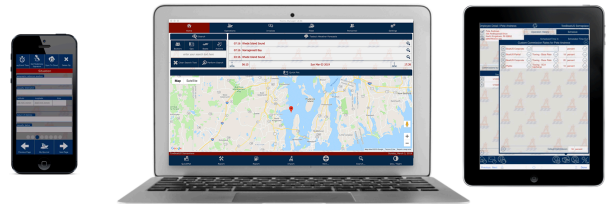
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## Marine Insurance & The State of the Insurance Marketplace

Where does Marine Insurance fall in context of the broader “Insurance Marketplace?” Too often, one begins listening to insurance jargon and immediately becomes bored or looks the other way. It is my goal to give you the best understanding, remaining concise, and providing you with the most important information as it pertains to your business.

Prior to the craziness of 2020, the Insurance Marketplace had entered the beginning stages of a “Hard Market.” Like most industries, the Insurance Industry is cyclical, and with a few short-term exceptions, has been operating in a “Soft Market” for 30+ years. During Soft Markets customers are able to negotiate lower insurance prices, as insurers compete for market share, sometimes at below-cost to the Insurance Company. When the market inevitably hardens, prices rise as insurers make adjustments to inadequate rates to be able to pay off losses.

There are many factors for the current Hard Market but I wanted to focus on a few:

1. Natural Disasters and Extreme Weather – In Houston we have seen 2 separate “500-year storms” within the past 3 years. Wildfires have decimated the west coast in 2019 & 2020. Hurricanes have caused multi-billions of dollars in property damage just in the last couple of weeks. Extreme temperatures have caused more frequent pipe bursting and water damage losses. These events have led to large payouts from the insurance Companies.
2. Social Inflation – Societal trends are influencing the ever-rising cost of insurance claims. Increased Litigation being the biggest impact area for the source of this trend. The volume of cases litigated, the costs to litigate, and (most importantly) the settlement awards have all increased greatly in the recent years.
3. COVID-19 – While the pandemic has created an economic disaster with lives lost, businesses shut down, the rise of unemployment, and general uncertainty; the insurance industry has not been greatly impacted in paying out Business Interruption Claims due to policies requiring “physical damage to covered property.” With that said, the insurance industry has been impacted by having to defend hundreds of claims nationwide, with still more arising. There has been a drastic premium increase in Directors & Officers Liability, Employment Practices Liability and Cyber Liability Claims due to the effects of the pandemic.

What does all of this mean for the State of the Marine Insurance Marketplace? Well that depends a bit on your operations. Most Marine Operations have a great coastal exposure whether it’s Buildings, Equipment, Boats, Docks, etc. We are seeing high Wind or Named Storm Deductibles being added, pricing increasing, Insurance Carriers either not willing to insure certain exposures or not insure any Marine Business altogether. All the more reason to make sure you are working with a Broker or Agent who specialized in the Marine Industry who can leverage their knowledge and clout in the industry.

There is some good news for those who participate in the C-PORT Marine Insurance Program Underwritten by Travelers and serviced by Starkweather & Shepley’s Marine Risk Solutions Group. Travelers is rated A+ by A.M. Best (the Insurance Industry’s Financial Rating Agency) and built on strength and integrity. They have a seasoned Marine Underwriting Team with a stable Underwriting Philosophy. Starkweather & Shepley has been providing Marine Operations Insurance Solutions for over 140 years.



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# UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

## **MARINE SAFETY ALERT**

### **Inspections and Compliance Directorate**

March 19, 2021  
Washington, DC

Safety Alert 02-21

### **READINESS AND TESTING OF EMERGENCY DEWATERING EQUIPMENT**

Emergency dewatering equipment, whether fixed or portable, is essential vessel equipment placed on vessels to maintain the safe operation, survivability, and safety of personnel during emergencies that may require its use. When there is a situation requiring the use of emergency dewatering equipment, it is imperative that this equipment is readily available and fully operational. This includes preparing the equipment for use in the shortest amount of time in order to prevent a catastrophic event.

The Coast Guard has recently noticed an increasing failure rate amongst the inspected towing vessel fleet with regards to fixed and portable emergency dewatering equipment failing to operate as designed. Most notably, we have found the fixed emergency dewatering system failing to operate due to loss of prime. Proper testing of the dewatering equipment should include ensuring the pump has the ability to physically take suction and that it can produce a sufficient discharge stream. This test can be conducted without discharging over the side into the water.



*A typical dewatering pump arrangement for a towing vessel.*

Mariners, vessel operators, and third-party organizations (TPOs) are reminded that emergency dewatering equipment is defined as an essential system in Subchapter “M”. In accordance with 46 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 143.25(a), essential systems must be regularly tested and examined. These tests and examinations must verify that the systems function as designed and that the procedures used for such testing are in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions or the Towing Safety Management System (TSMS) applicable to the vessel. In the case of emergency dewatering equipment, it must be tested at least every three months as shown in 46 CFR Table 143.245(b).





# UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

## **MARINE SAFETY ALERT**

### **Inspections and Compliance Directorate**

March 19, 2021  
Washington, DC

Safety Alert 03-21

### **BLOCKED FREEING PORTS CAN TRAP SEAWATER ON DECK REDUCING YOUR VESSEL'S STABILITY**

A recent marine casualty resulting in the capsizing of a commercial fishing vessel brought to light a potentially dangerous situation involving the closure of freeing ports. As the vessel dragged for sea scallops, a wave unexpectedly crashed over the port railing, causing the vessel's deck to fill with seawater. The seawater, now trapped on deck, was unable to drain overboard as closure devices blocked all freeing ports. The investigation identified the closure of the freeing ports as a causal factor in why the vessel capsized.

It has come to the attention of Commercial Fishing Vessel Examiners and Marine Casualty Investigators that some commercial fishing vessel operators, at times, close or block their freeing ports to prevent their catch from washing off deck after hauling gear. Freeing ports occasionally remain closed following haul back, and sometimes throughout the entirety of the vessel's voyage.



While the practice of blocking freeing ports may appear harmless, it can have disastrous consequences if seawater accumulates on deck. To put things in perspective, a vessel's deck that measures 37-feet by 14-feet having only one inch of water covering it, equates to 2,763 pounds of surplus liquid weight. The addition of weight on deck, above the vessel's center of gravity (COG), will have a negative impact on the vessel's stability. When an external force (such as waves and wind) rolls the vessel from side-to-side, the trapped water on deck will also slosh from side-to-side, causing a free surface effect. In the above example, that means 2,763 pounds of seawater would be moving back and forth on the main deck. As the water moves, the COG of the vessel also shifts. Seawater added on deck above a vessel's COG and offset from the centerline by sloshing, creates a significantly greater negative impact on the vessel's stability. Open freeing ports allow water on deck to freely escape overboard, preventing the weight shift of seawater from having a dangerous impact on the vessel's stability. A video depiction explaining this in detail can be viewed at <http://www.fishsafewest.info/Training.asp>.

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**Risk Management Training Courses** are available on the C-PORT website, [www.cport.us](http://www.cport.us). The program centers on these concepts:

- Risk: “possibility of loss or injury”
- Risk Management: “The identification, analysis, assessment, control, and avoidance, minimization, or elimination of unacceptable risks.

C-PORT is committed to encouraging its member’s growth and development through education and is dedicated to providing good business practices throughout its membership. With the increase in accidents and economic pressures facing our industry, many companies have lost sight of the importance of training and proper risk management skills. Our mission is to provide our members with programs that will enable their growth and development into the future, while minimizing the impact of looming USCG regulation in response to Congressional directive and safety records.

Contact Tina Cardone at [tcardone@cport.us](mailto:tcardone@cport.us) or 954-261-2012 with any questions regarding this program. Captain and crew special pricing is listed on the website.

**Marine Assistance Company Operations Guideline**, exclusively for C-PORT company members. These guidelines promote safe operations and provide regulatory guidance. C-PORT company members may obtain access to this document at the C-PORT website [www.cport.us](http://www.cport.us), or contact Tina Cardone at [tcardone@cport.us](mailto:tcardone@cport.us) or 954-261-2012.

**Insurance Program for Marine Assistance Companies** - Administered by Starkweather & Shepley Insurance Brokerage, Inc. - Designed for organizations dedicated to marine assistance and towing. This Program offers an extensive portfolio of quality insurance products and services to address a wide range of marine exposures. -800-788-8225; [lwagner@starshep.com](http://lwagner@starshep.com).

**ACAPT- Accredited for Commercial Assistance and Professional Towing**- The ACAPT program provides best practices guidance for the marine assistance towing and salvage industry. Participants are highlighted as having taken the initiative to meet or exceed their own company qualifications against industry best practice criteria and government regulations. Visit the C-PORT website at [www.cport.us](http://www.cport.us) and complete the application, or contact Tina Cardone at [tcardone@cport.us](mailto:tcardone@cport.us) or 954-261-2012 with any questions regarding this program.

**BOSAR for Commercial Assistance**- Created through the support of NASBLA’s BOAT program and the USCG Office of Boat Forces, is designed for the marine assistance operator, providing reinforcement of knowledge gained by virtue of their captain’s license and experience. It also enhances their ability to work as a true partner with local agencies and the US Coast Guard. This course is open to any marine assistance company who wants to host the training. Instructors and course materials are provided by C-PORT. Contact Tina Cardone at [tcardone@cport.us](mailto:tcardone@cport.us) or 954-261-2012 if you have an interest in hosting a class.




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C-PORT was founded in 1986 to act as a liaison between the marine assistance industry and public agencies and organizations involved with boating safety, marine assistance, marine salvage and other marine-related operations. Its mission is to represent, promote, protect, and defend its member companies through communication, relationship development, and education. Our members are dedicated to providing prompt, professional and timely assistance to all boaters and to actively partner and cooperate with local law enforcement and U.S. Coast Guard. They are professionals, dedicated to the growth and development of their respective businesses, and committed to furthering the advancement of our waterways and the boating community. For more information, contact C-PORT at (954) 261-2012 or visit [www.cport.us](http://www.cport.us).

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