Safety Lines

Summer 2020

AUX-06 C-School in Little Rock, Arkansas

By Christine Howe, Branch Chief-Cartography and Ed Martin, Division Chief-Navigation Systems

Ed Martin, Division Chief-Navigation Systems, kicks off the first session of AUX-06 C-School at District 8 Western River's D-Train April 11, 2019, Little Rock, Arkansas. AUX-06 C-School provides training in all four Auxiliary Navigation Systems (NS) programs: Federal Aids, Private Aids, Bridge Administration and Chart Updating. Photo by Christine Howe, Branch Chief-Cartography.

Question: What do you get when you take 1) 14 Auxiliarists, 2) two instructors, 3) numerous small wooden buoys, beacons and bridges and 4) lots of PowerPoint presentations, and put them all together for three days in Little Rock, Arkansas? Answer: the first AUX-06

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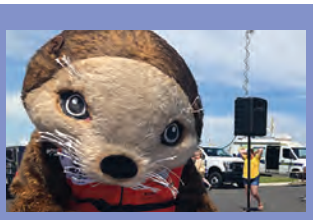
Newsletter of the Prevention Directorate USCG Auxiliary



Coast Guard Day with Sammy the Sea Otter
By John A. McLeod, Director of Prevention - (Dir-P)

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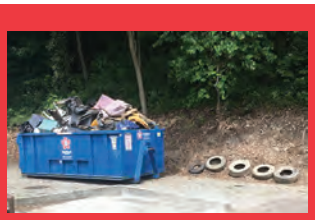

Marina Cleanup Day 2019 at Peach Bottom Marina.
By Gregg R. Bollinger, DSO-MS, D5 NR

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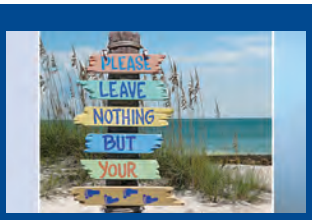

Beach Cleanup Guidelines
Prevention Directorate Issues New Guidelines to Keep Members Safe.

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Newsletter of the Prevention Directorate USCG Auxiliary

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In this issue

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Students and staff of the AUX-06 C-School, April 2019, Little Rock, Arkansas. (Cover story in this issue.)
Coast Guard Auxiliary photo provided by Ed Martin

Remember: Clicking on the red square at the bottom of each pagewill bring you back to the 'Contents' page!

AUX-06 C-School in Little Rock, Arkansas

(Continued from cover)

C-School (Auxiliary Aids to Navigation, Bridge and Chart Update Training) presented in a new twice-a-year format – and a very successful class!

AUX-06 C-School provides training in all four Auxiliary Navigation Systems (NS) programs: Federal Aids, Private Aids, Bridge Administration and Chart Updating. Students who attend are expected to become leaders in the NS program, promote the NS program in their own districts, and develop programs and relationships with the USCG in support of the Auxiliary NS program. For these reasons, students are strongly encouraged to be qualified as an Aid Verifier before attending AUX-06.

Ed Martin, Division Chief-Navigation Systems, and the model aids to navigation crafted by Ron West, Branch Chief-Private and Federal Aids for use in AUX-06 C-Schools. Closeup images of the various aids flank the photo. Photos by Christine Howe, Branch Chief - Cartography

AUX-06 was traditionally held once a year at the U. S. Coast Guard Training Center (TRACEN) in Yorktown, Virginia. Maximum enrollment was 30 students, who, along with three Instructors, would spend most of three days covering 25 hours of course material. A change to tradition was introduced this year by scheduling two smaller classes with a maximum of 15 students each, with one class held at a location other than the East Coast.

The idea behind these changes was to make travel easier for Auxiliarists from the Midwest and West, and also to afford a choice of two different dates. Members with an unavoidable conflict for one date had an option to enroll in the other class. The traditional 25-hour curriculum is presented in each of the two classes.

The first of two AUX-06 C-Schools for 2019 was held April 11-13 during the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary District 8 Western Rivers (D8WR) spring District Training (D-Train). The Holiday Inn Conference Center Airport in Little Rock, Arkansas, was home base for D8WR D-Train. Ed Martin, Division Chief-Navigation Systems (DVC-PN), spent innumerable hours coordinating all aspects of the class at this new location.

COMO Tracy DeLaughter and his entire D8WR staff were instrumental in the successful implementation of the class and were always available when help was needed. Frank Wilson, District Staff Officer-Navigation Systems (DSO-NS), provided much support and had planned a tour of the local Arkansas River “pool” (river area between navigation dams and locks) for

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AUX-06 C-School in Little Rock, Arkansas

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the AUX-06 staff before unforeseen events forced cancellation of the tour.

Fittingly for AUX-06, the theme of D-Train was "Honoring Cutters of the Eighth Western Rivers." Decorations for each classroom included a photo and information about a local USCG Cutter – primarily river buoy tenders – which added a proper nautical theme to the hotel. After the awards luncheon Saturday, BMCM Derek Spivey, Officer in Charge of the USCGC Patoka (WLR-75408), graciously visited with AUX-06 students and gave an informative description of his background and duties in the USCG aboard river buoy tenders.

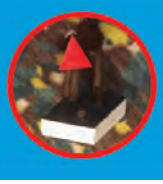
Apparent advantages of the new format include increased interactions among and between students and staff stemming from the smaller class size. Moreover, because a large number of students at this central location were members of D8WR, their local knowledge of, and expertise in, Western Rivers and the associated charts – produced by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, not the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration – was invaluable, especially to those with little or no prior experience with Western Rivers.

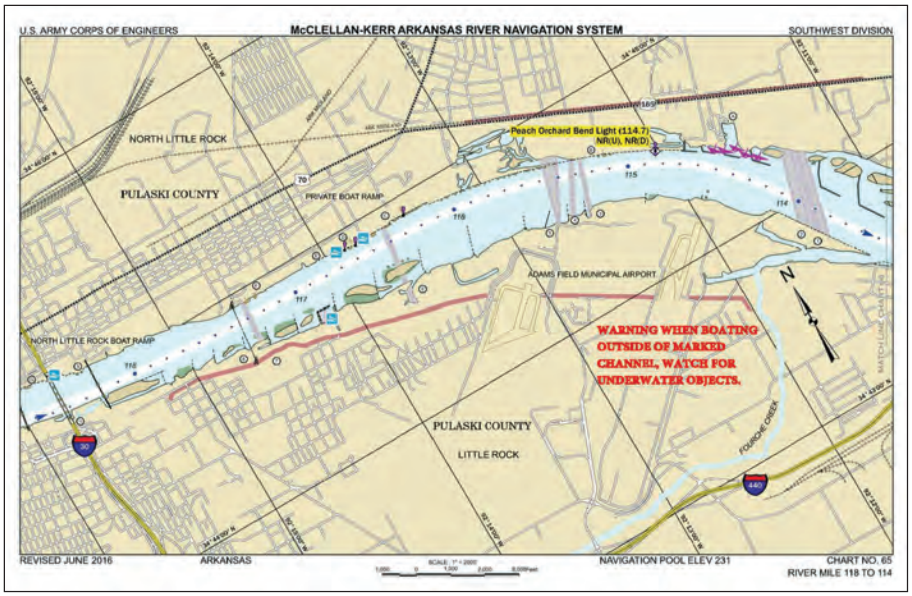
However, there are a few differences associated with offering AUX-06 at locations other than TRACEN Yorktown. The USCG's National Aids to Navigation (NATON) School is located on-site at TRACEN Yorktown, and staff at the ATON School give a special presentation and tour of the NATON lab and the large outdoor "aids garden" to AUX-06 students. That unique resource is available only at Yorktown. Also, because the York River and its buoys and bridge are a two-minute walk from the TRACEN Yorktown classroom, students can see real-life examples of the subject matter they are studying. In other venues, logistics required for visiting aids in the field would be prohibitive. However, model aids to navigation expertly built by Ron West, Branch Chief-Private and Federal Aids (BC-PNP), continue to be a great training aid and are a viable alternative for real-world examples.

Based on student evaluations, the overall opinion of the AUX-06 training in Little Rock was excellent, however, future Auxiliary ATON C-Schools will revert to the original one-week format. Ω

Above: BMCM Derek Spivey, Officer in Charge USCGC Patoka (WLR-75408), shares his firsthand knowledge of the Coast Guard's work in maintaining aids to navigation on Western Rivers using a model of river buoys constructed by Ron West, BC-PNP. Photo by Christine Howe, Branch Chief - Cartography

Right: U. S. Army Corps of Engineers chart of the Little Rock, Arkansas area.





Coast Guard Day with Sammy the Sea Otter

By John A. McLeod, Director of Prevention - (DIR-P)

The annual Sector Long Island Sound Open House is scheduled on Armed Forces Day every year. All the local and state emergency response partners participate in the event. The Coast Guard Auxiliary has a very large presence at the event with a lot of displays to interest children and to educate the adults. We, from the Research and Development Center, usually have a table at the event to show the public some of the equipment and issues in which we are involved to make the boating community safer.

This year, Sammy the Sea Otter visited us. Sammy was there for a book signing. I do not know who Sammy was, but pictured are Tim Hughes, Branch Chief, Science and Technology Innovation Center, United States Coast Guard Research and Development Center (white sleeves) and John McLeod at the Auxiliary table. Photos by Sekaran Jambukesan, USCG Research and Development Center.

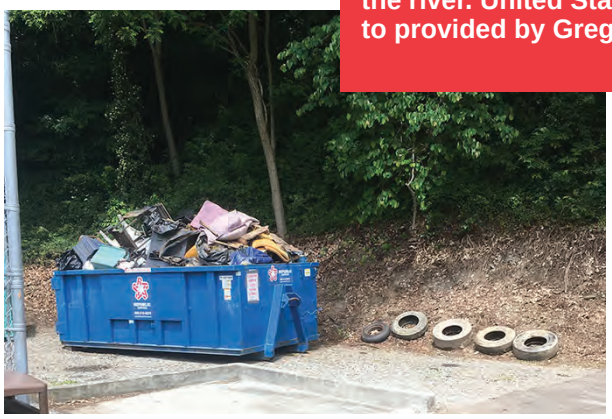
Marina Cleanup Day 2019 at Peach Bottom Marina

By Gregg R. Bollinger, District Staff Officer-Marine Safety, D5 NR

For quite some time now, the second Saturday in June has been set aside as the nationwide "Marina Cleanup Day." Flotilla 19-4 Lancaster, Fifth Northern District participated in the cleanup effort sponsored by Exelon Power Corporation at their Peach Bottom Marina facility located at Peach Bottom, Pennsylvania along the Susquehanna River. Before starting work and after establishing controls, the lone representative from the Lancaster flotilla, Gregg Bollinger, Flotilla Staff Officer-Marine Safety, conducted an 'Incident Action Plan Safety Analysis' arriving at a "G" GAR rating. *

Local volunteers worked very hard on a hot, humid morning collecting not only trash and debris such as tree limbs that had fallen into the water of the marina but also picking up trash along the road leading to and from the marina. Perhaps most challenging of all was the collection of some extremely bulky as well as heavy items from the riverfront cabin properties owned by Exelon and rented to customers for the summer. Volunteers lugged items from these locations to a central collection point where a large dumpster awaited.

Gregg Bollinger, District Staff Officer-Marine Safety District 5 NR, a member of Flotilla 19-4 Lancaster, picks up trash at Peach Bottom Marina on Marina Cleanup Day, June 8, 2019. The marina is located along the Susquehanna River in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. United States Coast Guard Auxiliary photo provided by Gregg Bollinger.



Debris and trash collected at Peach Bottom Marina's cleanup day, June 8, 2019. Much of this debris could pose hazards to navigation if washed into the river. United States Coast Guard Auxiliary photo provided by Gregg Bollinger.

The trash and debris from the marina itself as well as from the road were fairly "standard" if you've ever participated in a cleanup, and consisted of aluminum cans, plastic bottles and the like. Debris collected from the riverfront cabin properties posed a potential environmental hazard as well as in some cases, a navigational threat to recreational boats. A sampling of the items is as follows: a set of wooden steps, tires, foam, carpets, a large outdoor grill, a plastic traffic barrel, lawn furniture, a water heater and much more. All of this could have ended up in the water.

The morning ended with tired people but a much cleaner marina for boaters to enjoy. The sponsors rewarded the volunteers with hot dogs, snacks, drinks, a complimentary dry bag, and the knowledge that they had helped clean up the environment. Ω

**Note: The purpose of the Incident Action Plan Safety Analysis (ICS 215A) is to aid the Safety Officer in completing an operational risk assessment to prioritize hazards, safety, and health issues, and to develop appropriate controls. The Prevention Directorate recently published "Beach Cleanup Guidelines" located at http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=P-DEPT&category=whats-new that covers safety measures.*

Trout Stocking 2019

Gregg Bollinger, District Staff Officer-Marine Safety, D5 NR

The Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary are very interested in doing what they can to promote and protect fishing, whether it be along our country's coasts or our lakes and rivers. The commercial fishing industry is an integral part of our economy and one that the Auxiliary supports through the Marine Safety Department's Commercial Fishing Vessel Examination (CFVE) program keeping fishing vessels safe and operating well.

The effort engaged in by Auxiliarists Ed Seda and Gregg Bollinger of Flotilla 19-4 Lancaster, District 5 NR, March 27, 2019, involved assisting with trout stocking of Muddy Run Lake, a large recreational-use lake maintained by Exelon Power Corp. A Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission truck with 3,500 trout held in seven tanks was used to introduce the trout into two locations at the large lake.

Approximately 18 people showed up for the event that began at 11:30 a.m. including three students from the Penn Manor School District, Millersville, Pennsylvania. Most of the 18 were only spectators of the event with Auxiliarists Seda and Bollinger along with the three of the high school students assisting the two Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission personnel in the stocking.

Long tubes were attached to ports on the side of the tanks atop the truck which then released trout into the water. There were, however, some "stragglers" which had to be removed by net to clear the tanks of fish. Auxiliarists Seda and Bollinger along with the students, took the trout-laden long-handled nets from the Fish and Boat Commission technician and emptied the wriggling trout into the water's edge off a dock at the initial location. They repeated this task at another location along the lake.

A short hike was required to reach the second location where participants stocked the trout from the nets right at the water's edge.
Two related tasks were accomplished by 1) supplying the dock office with Marine Safety and Auxiliary recruitment brochures and 2) conducting a shoreline cleanup of a small section of the lake. Ω

Marine Safety Training Program

Like the 3-pronged Marine Safety Insignia shown above, the Marine Safety Training Program, formerly known as the Trident Training Program, is a 3-pronged training, consisting of education, qualifications and service. Courses required include Introduction to Marine Safety and Environmental Protection (a 2-point AUXOP course), Good Mate, ICS 100, 200, 210 or 300, 700 and 800. Members must earn four qualifications from a list of 24 found on the Prevention Directorate website and then provide a minimum of 96 hours of service each year for five years as recorded in AUXDATA. This Marine Safety Insignia indicates a high degree of knowledge, proficiency and dedication as well as professionalism on the part of the wearer. Ω

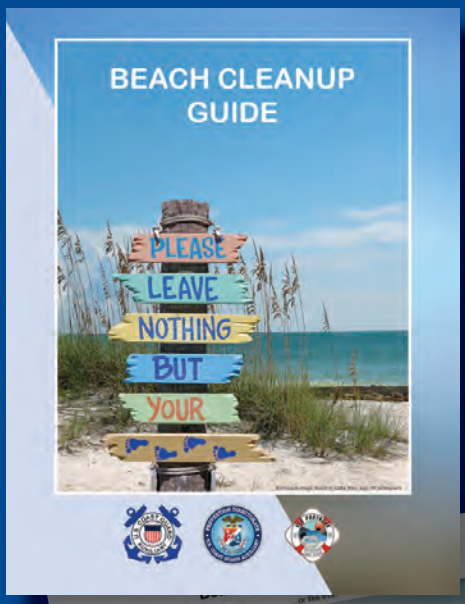
Beach Cleanup Guidelines

Prevention Directorate Issues New Guidelines to Keep Members Safe.

Beach and marina cleanup initiatives have gained in popularity and align well with the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary's marine safety and environmental protection missions. Nationwide, Auxiliary members both participate in and sponsor these local events encouraged by the North American Marine Environmental Protection Association (NAMEPA) and its partners which include the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, the United States Coast Guard, and the Ocean Conservancy.

Due to this rise in both popularity and local participation, the Coast Guard Auxiliary's Prevention Directorate in consultation with the National Executive Committee published the 'Beach Cleanup Guidelines.' This guideline is not a Coast Guard guidance document but was developed for use by members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary when participating in Auxiliary or non-Auxiliary sponsored beach cleanup projects.
You can download and print a copy at http://wow.uscgaux.info/Uploads_wowII/P-DEPT/Cleanup_4page_v9.pdf. (You may need to sign in and copy and paste this address into your browser.)

While beach cleanups may be scheduled on any day, the next date for International Coastal Cleanup is Sept. 19, 2020. Help clean up our waterways. Follow the guidelines and above all, stay safe! Ω



Partnering for Marine Safety – An Opportunity for Auxiliarists

By Richard Evans, District Staff Officer-Marine Safety D9 ER

Why do I persist in putting Marine Safety out there as a priority for our district? Water is a precious resource in many ways. Livelihoods, safety, clean water, and preserving the environment are significant Marine Safety responsibilities. Water supports and sustains life. Water can be a barrier, yet remains vital as an inexpensive, direct means of transportation and recreation. As Auxiliarists and as informed citizens, all of us can play a role in keeping the environment clean, keeping recreation safe and fun, and keeping commerce moving.

The shipping and boating season has re-opened for many of our waterways. I recently had a good look at the opportunities Marine Safety can provide for Auxiliarists. Marine Safety Detachment (MSD) Massena, the United States Coast Guard detachment in Massena, New York, recently held an “Industry Day” to optimize potential for partnerships. The morning session concluded with an informative open forum for questions and concerns. The USCG MSD Massena shares an enormous Marine Safety Inspections program with Canada for shipping entering the St. Lawrence Seaway and Great Lakes. The USCG provided an overview of the areas they deal with, which include:

- Pollution Prevention, Enforcement and Reporting
- UPV Safety and Inspections
- Marine Inspections Program
- Marine Casualty Reporting Procedures and Requirements
- Plan Review/ Vessel Repairs/Alterations
- Drug and Alcohol Program Requirements
- Vessel Inspection Readiness/Inspection Day
- Vessel Compliance

Resources

Auxiliarists are a powerful source of knowledge and energy for the USCG to tap. The number of Auxiliarists remains limited, which requires us to form some partnerships to optimize potential. When appropriate, Auxiliarists are invited to qualify to support USCG personnel. Select areas of Marine Safety support the USCG in conveying messages of safety and compliance.

Be sure to check out the possibilities and course listings in the Prevention Directorate on the USCG Auxiliary website or speak with your regional Marine Safety USCG liaison. Working on the ‘Goodmate’ and Introduction to Marine Safety and Environmental Protection (IMSEP) courses leading to Auxiliary Administrative and Management Specialist (MSAM) or Auxiliary-Prevention Outreach Specialist (AUX-MEES) Leading to the Marine Safety Ribbon is a great way to start! Ω

The freighter Federal Kivalina, a 656-foot Hong Kong-flagged vessel, sits at anchor and aground in the St. Lawrence Seaway, May 28, 2014. The Federal Kivalina lost power and ran aground near the Thousand Island Bridge May 27, which had suspended vessel traffic in the St. Lawrence Seaway for several days. U.S. Coast Guard photo courtesy of Robert Fratangelo, Coast Guard Auxiliary

A Word from the Editor

By Dorothy Joan Riley, Editor, *Safety Lines*

When submitting photographs to ***Safety Lines***, please follow these easy instructions to send high-resolution photos. High-resolution photos are required even when we print smaller images as the data captured within the image file is required to edit and crop. Speaking of cropping images- please don't! We cannot determine the size and shape that we need until we lay out the page, and cropped photos severely limit where we can place an image. Thank you!

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Scroll down to the option "Send To."

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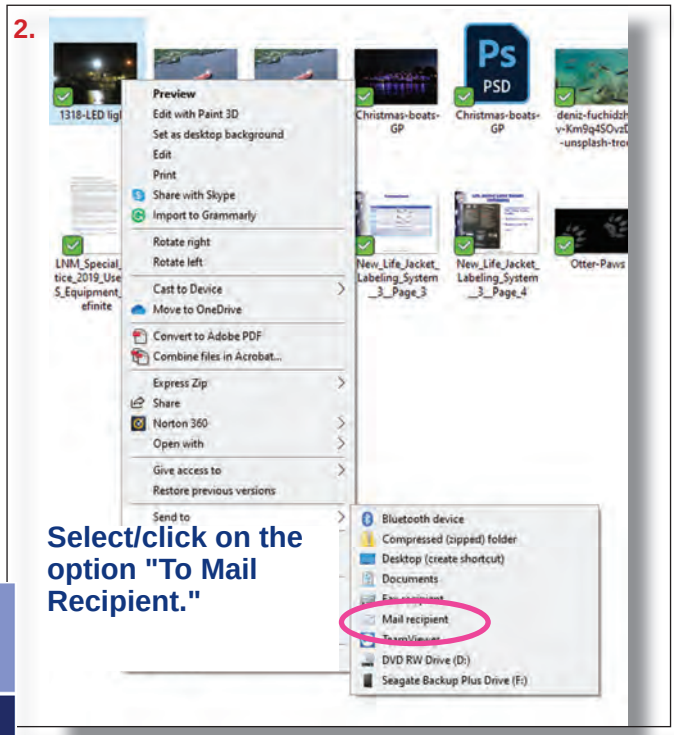

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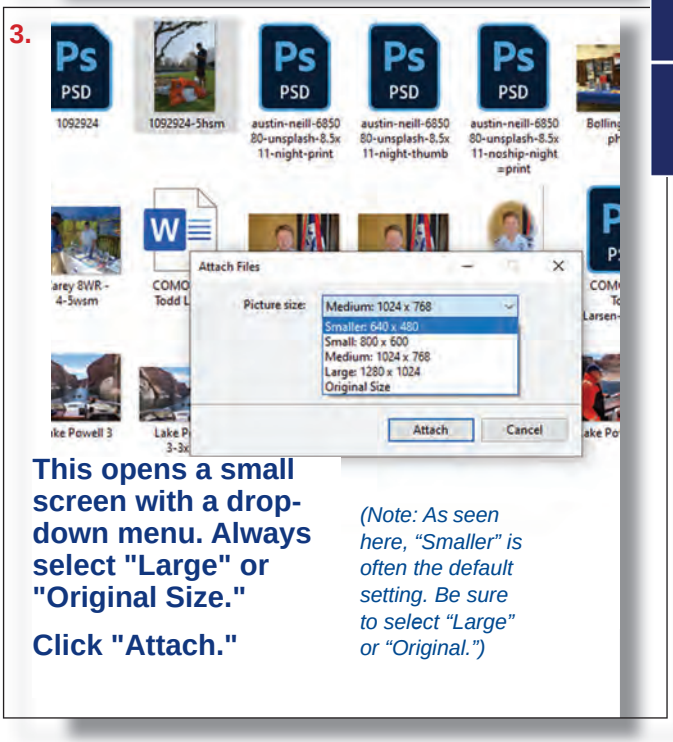

This opens a small screen with a drop-down menu. Always select "Large" or "Original Size."

Click "Attach."

(Note: As seen here, "Smaller" is often the default setting. Be sure to select "Large" or "Original.")

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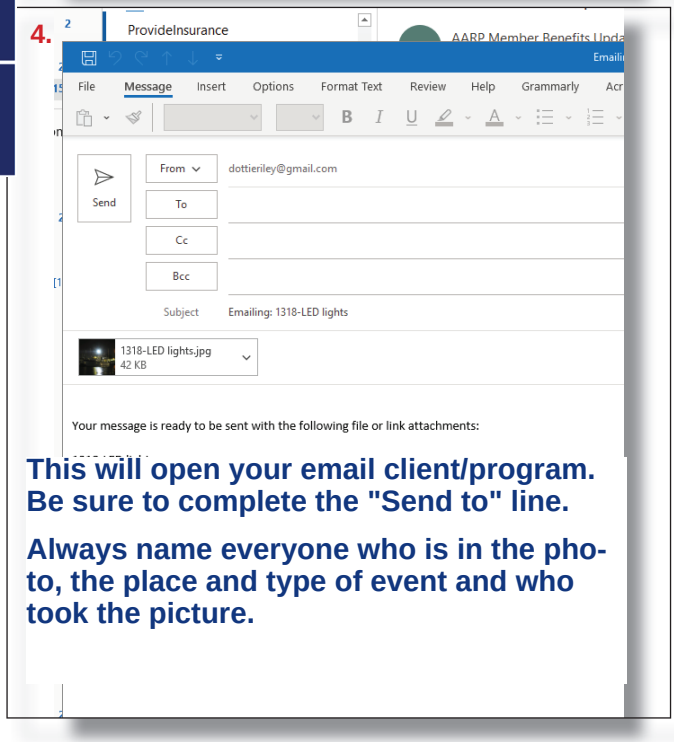

This will open your email client/program. Be sure to complete the "Send to" line.

Always name everyone who is in the photo, the place and type of event and who took the picture.

Encountering Hazardous Materials on Patrol

By Julie Carey, District Staff Officer-Marine Safety D8WR, Flotilla 31-9 Perry Lake

Although Marine Safety may be housed within the Prevention Directorate, it is inevitable that at some point, Marine Safety practitioners will find themselves working with our shipmates on response functions, including a pollution incident. While Assistant Pollution Responder is a qualification for which Sectors may decide to train Auxiliarists, any Auxiliarist conducting a patrol – whether it be mobile communications or surface operations – may find themselves as the initial Incident Commander of a pollution response (if this statement is confusing to you, review ICS!). Because of this, it is important that even members who normally focus on recreational boating safety and the typical safety patrol have a basic understanding of how our actions may impact the overall complexity of pollution response and have the basic vocabulary necessary to effectively communicate with the local authorities about what we are observing.

Hazardous waste materials are often found in or near the water. It is important that Auxiliary members who normally focus on recreational boating safety and on-the-water operations have a basic understanding of the overall complexity of pollution response.
(CC-RF no rights reserved image by NeuPaddy)

First there is the initial encounter. I am assuming that our "happen upon" hazardous materials (HAZMAT) incidents are going to involve smaller orphan containers – drums or totes that have an unknown source. Larger incidents involving storage tanks, vessels, trucks, or trains will have likely already been reported to the local authorities who will have assumed incident command and subsequently requested our support through the Sector. The rule of thumb I promote for any "happen upon" hazardous materials incident is that our personnel remain upwind and upstream a minimum of 330 feet. This guideline is based upon the 2016 Emergency Response Guide (ERG), page 111 for "Mixed Load or Unidentified Cargo." Yes, this means that you're going to need a good pair of binoculars.

The reason for this is twofold. The first is to take into account the ways hazardous materials can enter our bodies and do us harm. There are four routes of entry - inhalation (breathing), ingestion (eating or drinking), injection (such as with a needle), or absorption (through the skin without needing a break in the skin). It should go without saying that we should never touch an unknown substance, so injection and absorption are non-issues for our members. However, inhalation and ingestion (accidental, of course!) are very real threats. Some chemicals are gasses at atmospheric pressure in their normal state, but then there are also chemicals which, through evaporation or their reaction with water, may produce gas. Unfortunately, there are countless dashcam videos of first responders who have rushed into a scene involving a toxic gas where they themselves become victims due to the harmful effects of the gas. The inadvertent ingestion can occur in situations where water particles get thrown into the air either through wave action caused by wind or from the movement of our vessels.

The second reason is the potential impact our vessels can have on the overall incident. Not all pollution will be visible from the surface of the water. To illustrate this, fill three containers with water. In the first, add vegetable oil. In the second, add ketchup. In the third, add vanilla (or similar) extract. You should observe three very different behaviors. The vegetable oil will float on the surface, representing a chemical that is lighter than and does not mix with water. Depending

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Encountering Hazardous Materials on Patrol.

(Continued from page 12)

on the color of the chemical and the weather conditions, we may be able to see these and easily avoid them with our facilities. The ketchup sinks, representing a chemical that is heavier than and does not mix with water. These we most likely won't be able to see from our vessels, leading to a situation where, if we're not careful, it would be very easy for our propellers and impellers to stir up the chemical and underlying sediments, spreading the pollution and increasing the difficulty in mitigating the damage. The extract represents a chemical that mixes with water and would be very hard, if not impossible, for us to tell that it is present without sampling.

Once situated upwind and up-current, some observations can be made about the drum to help responders start to plan what equipment they might want to bring on-site. The first of those is drum type and color. Metal, plastic, or fiber drums can be used for different categories of materials due to material compatibilities and Department of Transportation regulations. The type of "head" it has, whether it is open where the entire top surface can be removed or closed where materials are added or removed via holes in the top ("bung holes") can start to provide additional clues about the consistency of the material (solid, granular, liquid, etc.) which will dictate the sampling equipment needed to make a positive identification. It's also important to note any markings that are on the drum. Globally Harmonized System (GHS) hazard pictograms, the red diamonds with a white background, and black picture of the specific hazard posed by the product, as well as the color of any other labels can give indications of the nature of the chemical even if specific markings can't be distinguished. For example, a yellow label with red writing is a clue that the material was being shipped as hazardous waste when the container became orphaned. Finally, if you're able to make out either a "UN" or "NA" followed by a four-digit number that is the most valuable information as that can be directly related to a page in the ERG for actions to be taken within the first 30 minutes of the response – once direction is received from the experts! All of this assumes that the container holds the material described on the outside – it may not, thereby increase the danger and require experts to handle the hazmat situation.

As Auxiliarists, we should always strive to limit our exposure to hazardous materials, especially those which we do not have the authority or authorization to approach. Beyond doing the appropriate reconnaissance, the best actions for us to take in these situations will be to help with crowd control and personnel movement as the incident evolves. Remember to always coordinate and maintain contact with your Sector – local authorities may request us to take any action that as Auxiliarists we do not have the authority or training to take and it's important that we ensure we are constantly within the scope of our duties in the event harm were to come to one of our shipmates. Our primary responsibility is to "Observe and Report" – thus maintaining our safety while on patrol. Ω

Common hazardous materials symbols

So You Want to Undertake A Marine Safety Qualification ...

By Maxine (Libby) Rattrie, Division Chief, Ports and Facility Activities, Prevention Directorate

One of the Four Cornerstones of the Auxiliary is Operations and Marine Safety. The Auxiliary Manual states that the Auxiliary has a general mission responsibility of providing resources, personnel, and facilities in support of the operations and marine safety, security and environmental protection missions. Auxiliarists are required to pursue advanced training that mirrors the Active Duty training in these areas, which means training to the same standard as our Reserve/ Active Duty Coast Guard colleagues.

The objective of U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Performance Qualification training program is to effectively and efficiently provide Marine Safety personnel with the knowledge, skills, and experience required for performing both general and specialized activities, along with practical experience as it applies to the Auxiliary Marine Safety qualification training program. Training is accomplished through structured courses along with important practical experience. The USCG Marine Safety Manual, Volume 1, states that Marine Safety programs provide the resources, Commands provide the opportunity, and the individual provides the motivation and initiative. Most of these Auxiliary qualifications require a considerable commitment of time and effort. The PQSs are available on the Prevention Directorate website: http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=P-DEPT&category=ms-pqs.

This study was prepared to better inform Auxiliarists of the time commitment required to complete a particular Marine Safety qualification successfully. Active Duty Coast Guard personnel are involved in the training of the Auxiliarist, both with time and resources. The Auxiliarist who starts a qualification but fails to complete it due to lack of understanding of the amount of commitment required may waste valuable Coast Guard time and resources. When this happens, respect for the Auxiliary could also decrease in that Sector.

The Study

This study was conducted by using the Auxiliary Directory to obtain the names of all members who hold one of the Marine Safety qualifications. Each of these members was contacted via email, asking for their time frame to complete that specific qualification. This consisted of completion of the PQS booklet, including the oral board and routing the packet through the Sector Command for the Letter of Designation. Members were also asked for explanations of any anomalies that may have influenced the time frame. However, not all members contacted responded.

The Results

For the majority of Auxiliarists, the time commitment to complete a marine safety qualification averages 12 to 18 months. Time frames reported were either longer or shorter, depending upon individual circumstances. Raw data by qualification will be available on the Prevention Directorate website soon.

Conclusions

This study clearly shows that the Marine Safety qualifications require a substantial commitment from the Auxiliarist for successful completion. If the member does not have the time to devote to the qualification training, then the process could end up taking longer, which can lead to frustration with the member giving up entirely. When this happens, the Coast Guard becomes equally frustrated and eventually might not offer the qualification training. We, as Auxiliarists, need to convince the Coast Guard that it is worth their time and resources to train us by completing the training. We need to remember that with our qualification, it is also imperative that we continue to work in Marine Safety/Marine Environmental Protection missions with our Active Duty colleagues, showing that the Auxiliary has value as a force multiplier! Ω

References:

Auxiliary Manual, COMDTINST M16790.1G, Washington, D.C., U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, 2017.

Marine Safety Manual, COMDTINST M16000.6, Washington, D.C., U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, 2017

U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Alert

Let us enlighten you about LED lighting!

Potential interference of VHF-FM Radio and AIS Reception.

The U.S. Coast Guard has received reports from crews, ship owners, inspectors and other mariners regarding poor reception on VHF frequencies used for radiotelephone, digital selective calling (DSC) and automatic identification systems (AIS) when in the vicinity of light-emitting diode (LED) lighting on board ships (e.g., navigation lights, searchlights and floodlights, interior and exterior lights, adornment).

Radiofrequency interference caused by these LED lamps were found to create potential safety hazards. For example, the maritime rescue coordination center in one port was unable to contact a ship involved in a traffic separation scheme incident by VHF radio. That ship also experienced very poor AIS reception. Other ships in different ports have experienced degradation of the VHF receivers, including AIS, caused by their LED navigation lights. LED lighting installed near VHF antennas has also been shown to compound the reception.

For more information and instructions on how to test for the presence of LED interference and possible remedies, read the complete **Coast Guard Marine Safety Alert 13-18** found at:

https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/DCO%20Documents/5p/CG-5PC/INV/Alerts/1318.pdf?ver=2018-08-16-091109-630

(Tampa Lighted Holiday Boat Parade photo by George Papabeis, Flotilla 74 Brandon, D7)