

Southern Towing Company

Newsletter

July 2010

CAFFEINE

Along with nicotine and alcohol, caffeine is one of the three most widely used mood affecting drugs in the world. As a stimulant, caffeine can play a positive role in alertness and reducing fatigue if used properly. But consumed in high doses caffeine can result in increased anxiety, lack of concentration and digestive disorders. Frequent consumption of caffeine can also result in addiction. A moderate dose of caffeine is considered to be 300 mg. per day. Once people start consuming more than that they are liable to end up with more side effects and less therapeutic effect.

Safety Orientation

Coast Guard regulations (46CFR27.209) state that the master must ensure that each new crewmember who has not participated in a fire drill receives a safety orientation within 24 hours after reporting on board. The safety orientation must include instruction in the location and use of firefighting equipment, the engine room fuel shutoffs and operation of the general alarm.

FCC License

We now have a link on our web site (www.southerntowing.net) with help and instructions to apply for a Restricted Radio Operators Permit. This license is required of all wheelhouse personnel.

Notice from Coast Guard

The Coast Guard has told us that all towing vessels are required to have the following publications:

- Light Lists
- Local Notice to Mariners
- Tide and Current Tables
- U.S. Coast Pilot
- VTS Manuals

These publications should be on board. If you don't have them contact Mike Slack.

Devlin Award

The Chamber of Shipping of America annually presents the 'Jones F. Devlin' award to vessels that have had no loss time personnel injuries for a minimum of two years. This year the M/V FRANK HOLLOWAY received an award for 4 accident free years, the M/V LAURA ELIZABETH received one for 3 accident free years and the Jo Anne Stegbauer for 2 accident free years. Congratulations to the crews of those boats. Keep up the good work. This is a goal that we all should strive for. Every boat can achieve this if you'll pay attention and follow our Safety Rules.

On Board Training

Please remember to log all training conducted on board. We keep thorough records of all training including drills. Without a log entry we don't know if training is being completed.

Zodiac Recklessness

Due to recent **RECKLESS** accidents caused by crews not paying attention to what they are doing; effective immediately you will be charged for repairs to damaged wheels and motors on the Zodiac that you cause. The cost to repair or replace these wheels or motors starts at \$150.00.

Health Insurance

August 1 is Open Enrollment for your health insurance. You may add or drop your dependents to your health insurance at this time. If you wish to make any changes to your insurance, please let Paula know before August 1. We must have this in writing with your signature.

Please call Paula and she will send the necessary forms.

Electronic Chart – CEACT

A recent accident of a vessel running the wrong span of a bridge and causing serious damage to a STC barge was caused by a pilot following solely the CEACT, not looking at the bridge projection and not using charts. The CEACT is an **“AID”** only to navigation. An up to date chart should be available at all times when the vessel is moving. We will remove this **“AID”** if these careless accidents continue.

Up-to-Date Publications

All navigation publications are required to be kept up to date with the latest information provided through the local notice to mariners. These publications include navigation charts and light lists.

Galley Fire

The Baxter Southern recently had a galley fire. The cause was that some bacon being cooked was left unattended and it caught fire. The resulting damage was the vent-a-hood, overhead and the stove needed to be replaced. *PAY ATTENTION* to what you are doing. This could have easily been avoided and it could have easily have been much worse.

AIS Safety Alert

The Coast Guard has issued a safety alert concerning AIS text messaging. While acknowledging that this feature can help to reduce the risk of collision, the Coast Guard strongly reminds operators that AIS text messaging does not relieve a vessel of other requirements, such as the Vessel Bridge-to-Bridge Radiotelephone requirements, or the requirements to sound whistle signals or keep a proper lookout in accordance with the Rules of the Road.

Lifestyle Event Changes

After your initial eligibility period you may not make a change to your benefits unless you experience a qualifying lifestyle event change. Changes include: marriage, divorce, birth or adoption of a child, loss or gain of other coverage, loss of eligibility of a dependent, or if you switch from part time to full time. If you experience one of these changes you have 30 days to notify STC. If you do not notify STC within 30 days you will not be able to make a change until the plan's next open enrollment period which is held every August.

Vessel Security

All vessel personnel are required to participate in annual "Vessel Security Awareness" training. This is especially true of all personnel on ammonia tows, **including trip personnel**. It is the Captain's responsibility to make certain this training is completed and logged. Everyone is reminded to continue to be vigilant and follow the guidelines set forth in the STOP manual regarding security of our boats and barges.

Remember that no one is allowed on our vessels without permission. The Coast Guard has asked us to be aware of and report unusual or suspicious circumstances or events. Report anything out of the ordinary to the office. The office will contact the Coast Guard if necessary. Contact Mike Slack with any questions.

Who's Fred Newton?

Fred Newton is the only person to ever swim the length of the Mississippi River. He covered 1,826 miles over a 6 month period in 1930.

Pollution Prevention

One of the most important considerations when preparing for a transfer (whether fueling the boat or transferring UAN or ammonia) is to be absolutely certain that all valves in the system are lined up properly. That means those that should be open are open and those that should be closed are closed. Check and recheck to be sure. If you are using a crossover hose make sure you are not loading a barge instead

of sending the product to the terminal. A good number of pollution incidents are caused by improper alignment of valves. Read and follow the transfer procedures; don't make a stupid mistake. It could be your last. Remember to take your time to do it right and pay attention all the time. Get help if you need it. Pollution prevention is always a priority.

Ammonia Tankerman Trainee

If you want to become an ammonia tankerman you must first have the recommendation of a boat captain and the lead ammonia tankerman. You also need to have been employed at Southern Towing Company for one year. Talk to Bobby Jones, then you contact Mike Slack if you need help in applying for a Coast Guard issued Merchant Mariner Credential, or MMC (formerly called a Merchant Mariner's Document, or MMD). The MMC you apply for is "Ordinary Seaman & Wiper". Once the Coast Guard issues you an MMC you will be eligible for the ammonia tankerman training program.