



Marine Safety Information Bulletin

Commander
Ninth Coast Guard District
Prevention Division
1240 E. 9th Street
Cleveland, OH 44199

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Contact: Mr. Kirk Beckmann
Phone: (216) 902-6050
Email: Kirk.J.Beckmann2@uscg.mil

Great Lakes Winter Layup (Inactive Status) Survey

The Ninth Coast Guard District is issuing this Marine Safety Information Bulletin (MSIB) to reduce the risk for catastrophic fires onboard commercial freight vessels during “winter layup¹” or during inactive periods. Following recent casualties, Commander, Ninth Coast Guard District, has determined that freight vessels conducting winter maintenance while unmanned may pose a unique fire hazard to Great Lakes vessels, waterfront facilities, and navigable waters. This risk is exacerbated by the fact that the Great Lakes fleet conducts winter layup simultaneously, often mooring in close proximity to one another.

To reduce this risk, the cognizant Officer In-Charge, Marine Inspection (OCMI) will schedule a **winter layup survey** in preparation of vessels transitioning into winter layup (inactive status) to ensure all safety, security, and pollution prevention concerns are addressed by the owner/operator and to discuss planned work for the inactive period. National Fire Protection Association Standard 312, “*Standards for Fire Protection of Vessels During Construction, Conversion, Repair, and Lay-up*”, can be used as a reference to assist owners/operators in the development of company policies and procedures to address these hazards.

To reduce and mitigate the risk of fires to the Great Lakes fleet, OCMI's will work with vessel owners, operators, and port partners this winter to conduct **winter layup surveys** using the attachment as a guide to verify safe work practices and emergency procedures during winter layup or inactive periods.

During the **winter layup survey**, Coast Guard marine inspectors will meet with the owner/operator to review hazards and develop appropriate mitigation strategies for the vessel while in winter layup (inactive status). Owners/operators should be ready to address, explain, or provide, as applicable the following topics or items:

- Procedures for reduced manning that provide for a continuous safety/security watch to conduct regular rounds and checks of emergency equipment, vessel alarms, and maintenance/hot work. Personnel name(s), contact information, required knowledge/training, duties, and emergency response procedures.
- Contact details and available assets (local fire departments, oil spill removal organizations, facilities, or others) contracted for assistance with firefighting, law enforcement, pollution response, icebreaking, salvage, medical and other applicable emergency services. It is recommended that the owner/operator facilitate a joint walkthrough with any external provider of emergency services to allow them to gain familiarity of the vessel in advance of an emergency.
- Safety procedures for fire, flooding, safety, severe weather, security, and pollution prevention while inactive.

¹ On the Great Lakes, industry refers to a vessel's winter dockside maintenance period as “winter layup.” Per applicable statutes, a “laid up” vessel is exempt from Coast Guard inspections; a vessel exempt from regulations may not maintain an active Certificate of Inspection (COI). However, on the Great Lakes vessels generally elect to maintain an active COI during winter dockside maintenance periods. Accordingly, said vessels are not “laid up” exempt, but rather, inactive, meaning vessels remain subject to Coast Guard inspection regulations. For ease of understanding, this MSIB will refer to vessels as in “winter layup.”

- Safety considerations and risk mitigation strategies for temporarily installed equipment on board (including use of heating appliances or open flame) and safety systems inoperable during inactive status.
- Safety/suitability of the location, including mooring arrangement, emergency embarkation procedures, and lighting.
- Engineer preparation of vessel engine room systems including proper valve alignment to prevent flooding and emergency suction default position in the event of a power loss (fault open or closed).
- Practices employed to minimize ignition sources by ensuring proper storage of equipment and materials.
- A copy of the approved ship fire control plan.

While in “winter layup¹”, owners and operators are reminded that:

- The Certificate of Inspection (COI) and Certificate of Documentation (COD) must remain valid, as well as remaining current on all vessel inspection fees.
- All other required plans, such as Vessel Response Plan (VRP) and Vessel General Permit (VGP), shall be maintained onboard and updated accordingly.
- If a vessel is sold, the new owner should notify the local OCMI of any change in registry or ownership. If the new owner wants to change the status of the vessel, the new owner should contact the local OCMI.

If hazardous conditions are identified on board and not mitigated by the vessel owner/operator in a timely manner, the cognizant COTP may issue an order under Title 33 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Part 160.111 requiring identified hazards to be mitigated with an acceptable safety plan. This MSIB is provided for information purposes only and does not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational, or material requirement. For additional information or inquiries, please contact Mr. Kirk Beckmann at (216) 902-6050 or email at Kirk.J.Beckmann2@uscg.mil.

Sincerely,



K. D. FLOYD

Captain, U.S. Coast Guard

Chief, Ninth District Prevention Division

By direction

Winter Layup Survey

Describe manning/watch onboard. Detail personnel, position descriptions, and schedule:

Name/location/contact info for overnight occupants:

Emergency communications procedures:

Contact Information:

Company	POC: _____	Phone Number: _____
QI	POC: _____	Phone Number: _____
Gate/Access	POC: _____	Phone Number: _____
Shipyard Rep	POC: _____	Phone Number: _____
CG Inspector	POC: _____	Phone Number: _____
Ships Watch	POC: _____	Phone Number: _____

Emergency Contacts ****IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY****

Local Fire: _____ Local PD: _____ USCG Command Center: _____

Location of fire control plan and stability information: _____

Date of USCG vessel walkthrough and/or fire drill: _____

Attendance: Vessel Rep/Shipyard Rep/Local Fire Dept Rep/CG Rep

Winter layup emergency procedures/fire control plan provided to CG and posted at gangway: _____

Provided copy of vessel emergency procedures to include:

- Copy of vessel Fire Control Plan
- Vessel/company procedures to fire/flooding/pollution/security/heavy weather while in layup

Notes: _____

****The Coast Guard encourages vessel owners/operators to apply the standards of *NFPA 312 Fire Protection of Vessels During Construction, Conversion, Repair, and Lay-Up* to improve safety.**