



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

MARINE SAFETY ALERT

Inspections and Compliance Directorate

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Safety Alert 14-15

DON'T FEAR, STEER CLEAR ***of dredging equipment hazards***

This safety alert reminds recreational boaters and commercial vessel operators to use caution when operating their vessels near areas where dredging operations may be taking place. There have been too many instances where outboard motor propelled vessels have allided with a dredge pipe causing the motor to recoil into the boat and strike the occupants or eject them from the vessel. Operators should always be on the lookout for floating debris and unmarked hazards and operate at a speed that allows them to see and avoid the hazards.

This alert also reminds commercial entities performing dredging in waterways to make sure all components of pipelines are properly marked and accounted for regardless of the recreational boating season and locations where dredging is taking place. Displaying proper lights and shapes in accordance with the Navigation Rules is a federal requirement applicable to all inland waters and the U.S. side of the Great Lakes.

Some dredge pipes are made of high density polyethylene. Although they are buoyant and float, they do so in a *mostly*-submerged manner.

Unmarked or improperly marked segments of dredge piping strings and equipment, un-retrieved piping near busy waterways, and unmarked piping in congested boating areas contribute to motorboat and sailboat allisions. The result is extensive damage to hulls, shafting, rudders and keels. The damage often sinks the involved vessel and causes passenger injuries and deaths.



The Coast Guard **strongly recommends** recreational boaters, commercial vessel operators, boat repair facilities and others to immediately report issues associated with improperly marked or unmarked dredging components to the nearest Coast Guard unit. All waterway users should operate at a safe speed when the potential for hazards such as dredging components are present.

The Coast Guard also **reminds** those persons and organizations associated with dredging and other commercial activities that cause or create navigation hazards to follow the requirements of the Navigation Rules, specifically Title 33, Chapter I, Subchapter E, Part 83, Subpart C, §83.27 (Rule 27). Failure to follow these regulations may result in federal fines or penalties in addition to any civil lawsuits that may be filed.



This Safety Alert is provided for informational purposes only and does not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational, or material requirement. This bulletin was developed by the Coast Guard Headquarters Offices of Navigation Systems, Auxiliary and Boating Safety, and Investigations and Casualty Analysis. For questions or concerns, please email hqs-pf-fldr-cg-inv@uscg.mil.