

# MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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## Towing Vessel Safety Advisory During High Water

Due to the navigational hazards associated with high water on the Lower Mississippi River (LMR) there is an increased risk of marine casualties which could result in towing vessels taking on water. Therefore, the Captain of the Port New Orleans is strongly advising the following provisions for all towing vessel operations:

- Recognize the risks involved and avoid downstreaming under current high river conditions;
- Ensure that all doors and windows on the first deck are closed and secured;
- Ensure the vessel has adequate freeboard aft;
- Notify crewmembers of intentions prior to each vessel operation; and
- Position crewmembers to climb to safety in the event of a downstreaming casualty.

In addition, towing companies shall:

- Stress the need for safe operations during periods of high water, to include raising awareness of the risks associated with the current conditions;
- Conduct daily crew meetings and communications at watch changes to identify and discuss hazards and the procedures noted above;
- Institute and discuss high water procedures to address; the need to close and secure doors and windows on the first deck, the need to be aware of the location of crewmembers at all times (i.e. the "buddy system"), and actions and procedures to be taken in the event of a casualty.

For more detailed guidance please review the American Waterways Operators page at:

[http://www.americanwaterways.com/sites/default/files/Downstreaming\\_QAT.pdf](http://www.americanwaterways.com/sites/default/files/Downstreaming_QAT.pdf)

For further information, contact the following:

Vessel Traffic Center Lower Mississippi River (24 hours): (504) 365-2230, VHF-FM Ch 05A, 11, or 12

Coast Guard Sector New Orleans Command Center (24 hours): (504) 365-2543

Coast Guard Waterways Management: (504) 365-2280



**CAPTAIN K. M. LUTTRELL**  
**Captain of the Port New Orleans**

For a current list of MSIBs in the COTP New Orleans Zone visit: <https://homeport.uscg.mil/port-directory/new-orleans> under "Safety Notifications"