

MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Volume XX Issue: 014

Time: 1000

Date: 24 JAN 2020

HIGH WATER SAFETY ADVISORY:
PREVENTING DAMAGE TO RIVERBANK INFRASTRUCTURE

During high river stages, levees and revetment along the Lower Mississippi River are at increased risk for damage caused by tows and barges pushing into the riverbank, as well as wake from vessels traveling at excessive speeds. Pipeline crossings at river banks and levees may also be vulnerable to damage from vessel and barge operations such as anchoring, wheel washing, spudding, or mooring operations. These activities may result in damage to oil and gas pipelines possibly cause an explosion, fire, or spill.

The Army Corps of Engineers requires all vessels to maintain a minimum of 180 feet distance from the crown of the levees and flood control structures to minimize the chance of accidental damage. Damage to flood protection systems such as levees or revetments is a violation of federal law. Mariners responsible for causing damage to these structures not only assume liability for repair, but in the extreme case of a breach, assume liability for any flooding or pollution that may occur. In addition to federal regulations regarding vessel operation, all mariners operating on the Lower Mississippi River must also comply with state regulations as set forth in Louisiana Revised Statutes Title 38, Sections 225, 326, 411, 413, 415, and 418. Failure to comply with applicable regulations may result in assessment of the maximum penalty provided for therein.

Mariners navigating the Mississippi River between Baton Rouge and the Head of Passes are strongly advised to adhere to the following safety recommendations:

- Do not push vessels up to the riverbank including levees, revetment, and flood control structures.
- Transit at the slowest safe speed in order to minimize wake and resulting damage to flood protection systems.
- Use extreme caution when operating vessels in the forebays of the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal, Algiers, Harvey, and Port Allen locks in order to prevent damage to the levees.
- If an emergency situation arises, and requires a temporary landing in a place near a levee, revetment, or flood control structure, mariners should do so in a prudent manner with due regard to minimizing contact/impact.

For further information, contact the following:

Vessel Traffic Service 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) 365-2542
Coast Guard Sector New Orleans Waterways Management: (504) 365-2280



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

For a current list of MSIBs within the COTP New Orleans Zone visit: <https://homeport.uscg.mil/nola> and look under "Safety Notifications"