



Marine Safety Information Bulletin

Commandant
U.S. Coast Guard
Inspections and Compliance Directorate
2703 Martin Luther King Jr Ave, SE, STOP 7501
Washington, DC 20593-7501

MSIB Number: 39-13
Date: November 5, 2013
Contact: LCDR Andy Meyers
Phone: (202) 372-1232
E-Mail: CGCVC@uscg.mil

MARPOL Annex V – Wider Caribbean Region Special Area

On January 1, 2013, amendments to MARPOL Annex V entered into force and established a general prohibition on discharges of garbage into the sea. Under prescribed conditions, there are exceptions for food wastes, cargo residues, cleaning agents or additives contained in cargo hold, deck, and external surface wash waters, and animal carcasses. Of particular note, disposal of garbage from ships in special areas remains even more restrictive and is detailed in Regulation 6 of MARPOL Annex V. As a reminder, one of these eight special areas is the Wider Caribbean Region, which is outlined in MARPOL Annex V, Regulation 1.14.8, and includes the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea.

The Coast Guard has noticed a recent increase in the number of MARPOL Annex V related deficiencies during Port State Control exams of foreign vessels calling on ports around the Gulf of Mexico. Specifically, there have been a number of violations of the MARPOL Annex V, Regulation 6 requirement to comminute food waste prior to discharge in a special area. In many instances, the vessel has an updated Garbage Management Plan on board and posted placarding that includes the new provisions of MARPOL Annex V. However, the vessel's crew is unfamiliar with the new MARPOL Annex V provisions and is not properly implementing the approved Garbage Management Plan, resulting in the improper disposal of uncomminuted food wastes within the Wider Caribbean Region special area.

This improper disposal is considered clear grounds for believing that the master and crew are not familiar with essential shipboard procedures relating to the prevention of pollution by garbage as discussed in MARPOL Annex V, Regulation 8. As such, a foreign vessel that improperly disposes of garbage in a special area may be subject to a number of Port State Control interventions, including an International Maritime Organization reportable detention.

CG-CVC Policy Letter 13-01 titled "Interim Guidance for Revised MARPOL Annex V Implementation" is available on the Coast Guard's Homeport website at <http://homeport.uscg.mil>. Enter 13-01 in the search function.

Coast Guard units should share this bulletin with shipping companies, local vessel agents, and vessel masters during regularly scheduled PSC exams. Additional enforcement guidance will be sent internally to Coast Guard PSCOs via the next PSC monthly message.

Questions regarding Port State Control enforcement of MARPOL Annex V should be forwarded to the Office of Commercial Vessel Compliance, Foreign and Offshore Vessel Division (CG-CVC-2) at **202-372-1232** during regular business hours or by email at CGCVC@uscg.mil.

Commander Michael B. Zamperini, Chief, Foreign and Offshore Vessel Compliance Division (CG-CVC-2) in the Office of Commercial Vessel Compliance sends.

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