



SHIP SAFETY BULLETIN

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Subject: Guidance on Safe Lay-up and on Relocating Retired Single-Hulled Oil Barges.

Scope

This bulletin is for the Authorized Representatives, owners and operators of single-hulled oil barges. It is not intended for active barges that are laid-up seasonally.

Purpose

This bulletin is a reminder on the requirements in place for safely laying-up or moving retired single-hulled oil barges.

What you need to know

The [Vessel Pollution and Dangerous Chemical Regulations](#) prohibit the use of single-hulled oil barges and tankers. These vessels had to be taken out of service by 2015.

Although some were gas freed and converted into deck cargo barges, others were laid up in estuaries and rivers. Many of these laid up oil barges contain residual fuel oils in their tanks. These vessels may be in poor condition and are at risk of leaking fuel or gas into the environment or even exploding.

Polluting, no matter how little the spill, is not allowed. Transport Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard will use every tool at their disposal to prevent pollution and enforce Canada's laws.

What do with a laid-up barge

Keywords:

1. Oil barge
2. Pollution
3. Barge laid-up
4. Moving a laid-up barge

Questions concerning this Bulletin should be addressed to:

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Contact us at: marinesafety-securitemaritime@tc.gc.ca or 1-855-859-3123 (Toll Free).

- All compartments and tanks should be stripped clean of oil and be gas freed.
- The barge should be regularly inspected to make sure it stays in good condition and does not pose a risk to safety or the environment.
- The barge's mooring arrangements should be regularly inspected and maintained.

If the barge is of 300 gross tonnage or more and in Canadian waters, its owner must maintain insurance or other financial security and carry a Wreck Removal Convention certificate.

Should there still be oil or oily residue on board the barges, the owners may need other insurance or financial security. More information on the insurance requirements and how to apply for a certificate can be found [here](#).

What to do before a laid-up barge is moved and/or converted into a cargo barge

- All compartments and tanks must be stripped clean of oil and be gas freed.
 - If you cannot gas free the barge in its current location, you must submit a detailed towage plan to Transport Canada for approval. The towage plan must include a voyage plan, a vessel condition assessment, and a risk mitigation plan.
- Use Marine Communication and Traffic Services (MCTS)¹ to inform the closest [Transport Canada Marine Safety Office](#) and the Canadian Coast Guard about the move.
- If you want to use the barge as a deck cargo barge you must make load calculations in order to assess the strength of the main deck for carriage of the intended deck cargo.

Related links

- [Get a marine insurance certificate](#)
- [Impacts of wrecks and abandoned or hazardous vessels](#)
- [SSB 07/2021: Regulatory Compliance and the Safe Transportation of Oil and Fuels](#)
- [SSB 03/2018: Standards for the Construction, Inspection, and Operation of Barges Carrying Oil or Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk](#)
- [SSB 02/2018: Guidelines for Over-Wintering of vessels carrying oil or NLS in waters under Canadian Jurisdiction - TP 15295](#)

¹ See [Radio Aids to Marine Navigation 2024 Part 3: Vessel Traffic Services \(ccg-gcc.gc.ca\)](#) for more information