Coast Guard Conducting Mandatory Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Exams

Local News

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SEATTLE, Wash. - On October 16, 2012, the U.S. Coast Guard began implementing a requirement enacted as part of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 that certain commercial fishing vessels demonstrate full compliance with existing commercial fishing vessel safety standards by completing a mandatory safety examination at the dock.In the Pacific Northwest, this requirement applies to all commercial fishing vessels operating beyond three nautical miles from the baseline of the U.S. territorial sea along the Oregon and Washington coasts.The applicable safety requirements (46 C.F.R. Part 28) have not changed and vessels should already be in compliance with the regulations. Vessels that currently have a valid Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety decal will not be required to get the exam until the decal expires.During routine vessel boardings at sea, Coast Guard law enforcement units will check for proof of a mandatory dockside safety exam. Vessels that cannot provide such proof will be issued a written warning to obtain an exam within the next 30 days.To schedule a dockside examination, Pacific Northwest commercial fishermen should contact:Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Portland, Ore. at (503) 240-9337 or -9373Coast Guard Sector Puget Sound, in Seattle, at (206) 217-6208Visit the Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety web page at www.uscg.mil/d13/cfvs to view the Coast Guard letter to industry on mandatory dockside exams. This site also provides a checklist generator application. By answering a few questions the checklist generator will provide the user with the list of items required by the existing commercial fishing vessel safety regulation required for their specific vessel.If you have any questions about the new requirements please contact Mr. Dan Hardin at the 13th Coast Guard District office in Seattle at (206) 220-7226 or daniel.e.hardin@uscg.mil.