



DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

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WebWatch

Division 8, 5NR

March 2011

A. Passed Over the Bar

K.C. Murphy, District Captain-West, D5NR

Fellow Auxiliarists, it is with a very heavy heart that I share with you the news that Past Division 5 Commander, Robert E. Schneider passed over the bar Saturday morning, February 12, 2011. His passing was very sudden and a shock to us all. Many of you got to know him during the AUX-12 Course at Cape May. His subsequent enthusiasm and support for Public Affairs missions has been most inspiring. Bob was named Auxiliarist of the Year for Division 5 for 2010 and had just earned his Public Affairs Specialist 1 rating. Bob was an integral member of the Harrisburg U.S. Coast Guard Recruiting Station and his caring for and counsel to potential recruits and enlisted Guardians was phenomenal. Bob was a cornerstone of Auxiliary operations and communications in the Western Area. To say that Mr. Schneider was the embodiment of our Core Values of *Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty* would be an understatement. Words simply fail to convey what a loss his passing is to us all.

B. State of the Coast Guard Address Now Online

Admiral Bob Papp, Commandant

Shipmates, earlier today, it was my honor to provide my first State of the Coast Guard Address. I was proud to have many members of the Coast Guard Family at the address including former Commandant's Admiral James Gracey and Admiral Bob Kramek. It was a great opportunity to catch-up with some old shipmates, take a fix on the Coast Guard and chart the course ahead.

For those who were not able to view the live broadcast, I am happy to inform you that the broadcast is now available on line at:

http://cgvi.uscg.mil/media/main.php?g2_itemId=1118951

In addition, the text of my speech and the new Commandant's Direction is now posted on the Senior Leadership page. You can access the Senior Leadership page at:

<http://www.uscg.mil/seniorleadership>

Thanks to all of YOU - I am privileged to serve with YOU...



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C. American Canoe Association and the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Promote Paddlesports Safety

Thomas Nunes, Director, Auxiliary Public Affairs

The American Canoe Association (ACA) and the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary announced signing of a Memorandum of Agreement to promote safety among those who use kayaks, canoes and other paddlecraft. The new agreement establishes cooperative efforts broadening outreach and education to the paddle sports community.

Paddlesports boating is one of the fastest growing recreation activities in the United States. In 2008 the Outdoor Industry Association reported that approximately 17.8 million people participated in paddlesports getting out on the water nearly 50,000 times daily. The explosive growth has triggered a disturbing increase in paddlesports injuries and fatalities. Often, with little investment inexperienced individuals are on the water without adequate paddle sport safety equipment or training.

The American Canoe Association and the Coast Guard Auxiliary are committed to reversing this trend. With input from the ACA a new Auxiliary Paddlesports America Course is now available nationwide complementing traditional safety courses that have been offered by ACA for decades. This classroom based training provides paddlers basic knowledge needed to safely operate their vessels including: knowing the paddlecraft, trip planning, safe operation, legal requirements, and paddling emergencies. The American Canoe Association and the Coast Guard Auxiliary will also reach out to paddlers through the paddlecraft vessel safety check program. Experts will talk with paddlers as they examine safety gear and provide personalized paddlesports safety guidance.

“With this cooperative effort we will reach out to the growing population of paddlers providing needed training to keep them safe on the water”, said Jim Vass, Auxiliary National Commodore.

"The ACA is proud to continue our partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary as we continually strive to improve the boating experience for the recreational paddler."- Chris Stec, ACA Chief Operating Officer

Founded in 1880, the American Canoe Association (ACA) is a national nonprofit organization serving the broader paddling public by providing education related to the aspects of paddling, stewardship support to help protect paddling environments; and sanctioning of programs and events to promote paddlesport competition and recreation. For more information about the American Canoe Association visit <http://www.americancanoe.org>



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D. United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Diversity Policy Statement

James E. Vass, National Commodore, U.S.C.G. Auxiliary

It is the policy of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary to ensure that all citizens, regardless of race, gender, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, religion, or physical or mental disability have an equal opportunity to become a volunteer of this organization. It is after all, part of our mission to become the volunteer organization of choice.

As the National Commodore, I will personally lead the diversity initiatives and challenge all who serve to do the same through leadership, mentorship, service, and example. As someone committed to diversity, I understand that providing [training](#) is one of the strategies that helps build an inclusive environment, which is crucial to attracting and retaining top talent, building member engagement, and fostering creativity and innovation. Our Strategic Plan for Managing Diversity will guide us in our efforts towards accomplishing this goal.

Diversity of thoughts, ideas, and competencies of our people, keeps the Auxiliary strong and empowers us to mission readiness and excellence.

Diversity is an imperative to the Auxiliary; it can increase morale and impact our success. In essence every member is responsible for fostering an inclusive team atmosphere and being a contributing part of Team Coast Guard.

The Auxiliary is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment, a journey guided by the deeply held values of *Honor*, *Respect*, and *Devotion to Duty*, as America's Guardians, we understand that diversity is not a problem to be solved, but is an asset to be developed.

E. 2011 National African American History Month

Admiral Bob Papp, Commandant

Shipmates, February 2011 marks the 85th annual observance of African American History Month. This year's theme is "African Americans and the Civil War."

Nearly 200,000 African Americans fought to preserve the Union and secure an end to slavery in the United States. In many cases, however, their contributions were not featured in our history books. As this year marks the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, it is appropriate to learn about and reflect upon the value of African American's contributions-both in the Civil War, and in all our Nation's conflicts.



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Throughout our Services 220 year history, African Americans have served in the Coast Guard and our many legacy agencies with distinction. A great place to learn about their contributions is the Coast Guard Historian's web site which features articles and oral histories of our African American shipmates. One of my favorite stories is "My friend! My brother! My shipmate!" By Coast Guardsman James Mooney. You can link to the web site here: http://www.uscg.mil/history/African_American_Index.asp

Coast Guard units and commands should take time during February to recognize the accomplishments and contributions that African Americans have made, and continue to make to our Service and our Nation.

Semper Paratus.

F. Commandant's Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service Message

Admiral Bob Papp, Commandant

Shipmates, January 17th is the 25th Anniversary of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. National Observance. The theme for this year's observance is "Remember! Celebrate! Act! A day on, not a day off."

While we have made a great deal of progress in advancing Dr. King's quest for equality, freedom and justice for all through non-violent change, 43 years after his passing, we still have much to learn from this hero. Dr. King dedicated significant time and effort to community service. He once said that "life's most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?"

As Coast Guard men and women, you have dedicated your lives to assisting others. During this year's Martin Luther King Day observance, if the opportunity exists, consider participating in a local service project with your neighbors and friends that enhances your community. Opportunities to spend your "day on" can be found at <http://mlkday.gov>. Additional resources and information about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. can be found at www.thekingcenter.com.

Semper Paratus.



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G. On Our Dime: New Reporting Fields Providing Significant Insight NAVIGATOR Express

New reporting fields incorporated into the 7029 reports in the 2010 calendar year are clearly demonstrating previously unreported value that many Coast Guard Auxiliary members are providing to the organization.

The new fields ask members to record non-reimbursable mileage and personal expenses incurred during the performance of Auxiliary-related duties and missions. "We need our membership to continue to embrace the revised 7029 forms and accurately report all requested information," said Jim Vass, National Commodore. "This will allow us to more clearly demonstrate the overwhelming out-of-pocket financial commitment our members make in support of the Coast Guard."

H. Ribbon Checker Website Helps Members Update Ribbon Packs NAVIGATOR Express

With the start of the New Year, many Coast Guard Auxiliary members are finding the need to update their ribbon packs. The Auxiliary Ribbon Checker website is a great tool to help members identify the precedence for all Coast Guard Forces ribbons. It is easy to use and provided a visual summary of what the member's ribbon pack should look like to assist in proper arrangement. All Coast Guard Auxiliary members are encouraged to visit the Ribbon Checker site at: <http://ribbons.cgaux.info/bin-cgi/ribbons.pl?config.txt>.

I. Seventieth Anniversary of the Coast Guard Reserve Adm. Bob Papp, Commandant

The Coast Guard Reserve was founded in 1941 when Congress amended the Coast Guard Auxiliary and Reserve Act. On 19 February 2011, we celebrate its 70th anniversary and commend the men and women of the Coast Guard Reserve for another year of exceptional service.

Looking back, 2010 was a demanding year. In addition to ongoing operations overseas, we saw unprecedented reserve mobilizations in response to the earthquake in Haiti, floods in the Midwest, and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. All told, more than 40 percent of the Coast Guard Reserve Force deployed last year, adding another page to our rich Coast Guard history.



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To our reservists: you are a vital component of our Coast Guard and I am proud of your commitment and selfless service. I encourage all Team Coast Guard members to congratulate their Reserve shipmates on this seventieth anniversary of the Coast Guard Reserve.

J. Operational Tasking (OPTASK) Diversity Fy2011 SITREP One

Vice Admiral John Currier, Chief Of Staff/DCMS

1. In Jan 2010, Commander Atlantic Area (LANTAREA), Commander Pacific Area (PACAREA), Deputy Commandant for Operations (DCO), and Chief of Staff/Deputy Commandant for Mission Support (DCMS) developed diversity action plans relevant to their organizational focus in an effort to optimize workforce readiness and meet the maritime challenges of this 21st century. The resultant plans identify action items that will help the Coast Guard achieve its strategic diversity goals.
2. Quarterly progress reports and updates are to be submitted to Chief of Staff/DCMS. The following updates are provided to outline the progress and initiatives that have been accomplished in the last quarter.
3. Highlights Of The Last Quarter:
 - a. In an effort to develop and sustain robust applicant pools, the Coast Guard participated in over 60 outreach events and professional conferences targeting diverse populations for all accession opportunities.
 - b. As a Joint CGHQ/LANT/PAC effort, an Afloat Community Diversity Working Group was established. This group will work to identify diversity issues and challenges unique to the Afloat Community with the goal of increasing diversity and expanding opportunities throughout the cutter fleet.
 - c. Furthering collaboration between the Coast Guard and historically black colleges and universities, a memorandum of agreement was signed between the Coast Guard and Texas Southern University (TSU). This agreement is designed to optimize outreach and engagement efforts and synergize the Coast Guards overall civilian and military recruiting effort. This partnership has already resulted in a number of applications for the Coast Guard College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative Program.



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- d. Assessing organizational climate factors and trends associated with military equal opportunity and civilian equal employment opportunity issues is essential to successfully building, managing and sustaining an inclusive workplace environment. As such, the results from the 2010 Organizational Assessment Survey were made available to Coast Guard members for review via CGPORTAL at:
<http://cgportal.uscg.mil/lotus/myquickr/human-resources-surveys/library>
Results for the diversity dimension were 76.6 percent favorable, 18.15 percent neutral and 5.25 percent unfavorable.
 - e. VADM Currier, Chief Of Staff/DCMS and Dr. Antonio Flores, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) president, signed a continuation of a memorandum of understanding between the Coast Guard and HACU. The event highlighted a 14-year relationship which helps promote diversity recruiting in the Hispanic and Latino communities.
 - f. The diversity staff conducted a thorough review and identified and updated relevant goals and objectives. Based on accomplishments that have occurred over the last year, the revised plan will provide updated guidance and direction allowing units to maximize respective diversity initiatives. Release of the revised plan is anticipated in the 2nd Quarter of FY2011.
4. A service-level summary of the LANTAREA, PACAREA, DCO and Chief of Staff/DCMS Diversity Action Achievements can be found on the Coast Guard Office Of Diversity website at: www.uscg.mil/diversity/resources.asp.

K. SHIPMATE 10 - FY 2012 Presidents Budget

ADM Bob Papp, Commandant

1. Yesterday the President delivered the Coast Guards Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Budget to Congress. There is no doubt that the current fiscal environment compelled us to make difficult decisions, however, even in these challenging times, it is clear that we continue to receive strong support from the President and our Department. The FY'2012 budget outlines the Secretary's and my priorities for the service. It requests 8.7 billion dollars in discretionary funding, including 1.42 billion dollars to recapitalize our fleet of cutters, aircraft, boats, and C4ISR equipment. This is the most the President has ever requested for our recapitalization programs.

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- The FY 2012 budget was built with my guiding principles in mind and supports my Commandant's Direction announced last week at the State of the Coast Guard address.
2. Sustain Mission Excellence: the FY 2012 budget fully supports pay and benefits increases for military service members and funds operation and maintenance of new assets and systems delivered to the fleet, including the National Security Cutter (NSC), Fast Response Cutter, Maritime Patrol Aircraft, Response Boat Medium, and The Rescue 21 System.
 3. I told you last week that one of our toughest challenges is sustaining mission excellence. As we work to improve proficiency through evaluation of doctrine and policies, we must also examine the manner in which we conduct our business. The FY 2012 budget includes an administrative savings initiative of 92 million dollars. This initiative is consistent with overarching DHS efforts to maximize organizational efficiency, and is unequivocally the right thing to do in this fiscal environment. This will require all levels and segments of our organization to look closely at how we spend our appropriated funding, and to make the best use of the resources we are provided to most efficiently execute our missions.
 4. As part of sustaining operations, we must continue the transition to our fleet of new highly-capable assets, including the NSC. As proposed in the FY 2011 Presidents Budget and provided for in current legislation, we will proceed with the decommissioning of *CGC Hamilton*, *CGC Chase*, and *CGC Acushnet* this year. We continue to make great progress with the our NSC acquisition, including the planned delivery of *CGC Stratton*, the third NSC, in FY 2011, and the recent award of the production contract for the fourth NSC and long lead time materials contract for the fifth NSC. The FY 2012 budget continues this NSC fleet transition by requesting funding to complete the fifth NSC and proposing the decommissioning of one high endurance cutter in FY 2012.
 5. Additionally, as proposed in the FY 2011 Presidents Budget we will decommission *MSST Anchorage* in Fiscal Year 2011, enabling partial reinvestment of savings to address critical capacity and readiness gaps of our law enforcement detachment teams (LEDETS). Furthermore, to best sustain polar icebreaking capacity, the Coast Guard plans to decommission *CGC Polar Sea* in FY 2011, and focus our resources toward returning *CGC Polar Star* to full operational capability in 2013. With *CGC Polar Star* in the midst of a major overhaul that will extend its service life seven to ten years, it will provide the nation the more enduring capability until long-term requirements decisions are



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made and capabilities are acquired. In FY 2012, DHS will lead an effort to study icebreaking requirements to inform future icebreaking needs for the nation.

6. Recapitalize and build capacity: recapitalization of our fleet is necessary so that we may effectively carry out our missions in the maritime environment. The budget requests 642 million dollars for vessel replacement, including six fast response cutters and completion of the fifth NSC and 290 million dollars for aircraft replacement and sustainment, including two HC-144s, and one HH-60 aircraft to replace CG-6017 lost in a tragic accident in 2010. Additionally, the budget includes 187 million dollars to recapitalize aged, failing shore infrastructure across the Coast Guard and provide infrastructure enhancements to support operation of new assets delivered via our major system acquisitions (e.g., Fast Response Cutters, Maritime Patrol Aircraft, etc.).
7. Enhance Crisis Response And Management: our response to Deepwater Horizon was exceptional, but we must continue to enhance our Crisis Response And Management capability. The FY 2012 budget requests 22 million dollars and 192 personnel to improve marine safety and environmental response mission effectiveness. These resources will better enable the Coast Guard to prevent incidents in the maritime domain and enhance our response when disasters do occur.
8. Prepare for the future: when I speak with you, I often reference adherence to one of my guiding principles - respect our shipmates as critical to the performance of our missions. The health and welfare of families is the heart of operational readiness. The FY 2012 budget includes 29 million dollars to address critical military housing shortfalls and improve access to affordable, quality childcare.
9. I urge you to review the FY 2012 budget, Coast Guard Posture Statement and budget-in-brief at: <http://www.uscg.mil/posturestatement>.

Thank You for your dedication and service in our Coast Guard. *Semper Paratus.*

L. SILVER ANCIENT MARINER SELECTION

RDML Vincent B. Atkins, Assistant Commandant For Capability.

1. The incumbent Silver Ancient Mariner, BMCM Steven Hearn is scheduled to retire during the summer of 2011. The selection process to identify his successor is underway. Any enlisted member who was designated a permanent cutterman prior to 01 Feb 89, has 10 years cumulative sea duty, and if selected, will remain

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- on active Duty for at least one year, is asked to contact COMDT (CG-751) by 04 Mar 2011.
2. COMDT (CG-751) will establish a list of candidates who meet the eligibility requirements. Personnel Service Center (PSC), in coordination with COMDT (CG-751), will convene a panel to review the military records of the Silver Ancient Mariner candidates to ensure the individuals meet all criteria. The panel will include COMDT (CG-751), MCPO-CG, and other representatives as PSC selects. The panel will forward its results, including a recommended award Recipient, to COMDT (CG-00) for final approval.
 3. An appropriate ceremony will be hosted at a location designated by the Incumbent to recognize the transfer of this title. The ceremony will be conducted on or immediately prior to the Incumbents official date of retirement or release from active duty. COMDT (CG-751) will notify affected commands, assist in the planning as necessary, and will provide funding for travel and Per Diem for the principals to participate in the ceremony. Funding for the spouse of the Silver Ancient Mariner selectee will be provided. COMDT (CG-7) will serve as the Travel Approving Official.

M. Shipmates 9 - Commandants Direction 2011

ADM Bob Papp, Commandant

1. Shipmates, I am pleased to release my Commandants Direction 2011, which sets the course for our service through 2014 and beyond. In my State of the Coast Guard Address, I quoted the legendary football coach Vince Lombardi who said, "We are going to relentlessly chase perfection, knowing full well we will not catch it. But we are going to relentlessly chase it, because in the process we will catch excellence." My direction is our playbook for catching excellence. So I need you to link to it, read it, and learn it:
<http://www.uscg.mil/seniorleadership/docs/ccgs-direction-2011.pdf>
2. My direction begins with our heritage, our value and role, our future operating environment, and our greatest strength, you our people. This is who we are, this what we do. It is followed by my priorities and objectives, which are derived from my four guiding principles. To ensure we remain always ready, we will sustain mission excellence, recapitalize and build capacity, enhance crisis response and management, and prepare for the future.

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3. Each of you - Active Duty, Reserve, Civilian and Auxiliary – in both mission execution and mission support, deliver extraordinary service on a daily basis. Our nation is safer and more secure because of your actions. I am proud to be your Commandant. *Semper Paratus!*

N. Coast Guard Reading List

ADM Bob Papp, Commandant

1. Shipmates, one way to honor our profession is to be a student of leadership and Coast Guard history. Therefore I am pleased to announce the new Coast Guard Reading List. For the first time ever, the list features the choice selections of the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard, The Chaplain of the Coast Guard and other Coast Guard senior leaders.
2. The reading list can be accessed at the following link:
<http://www.uscg.mil/leadership/resources/readinglist.asp>
3. The Coast Guard Reading List is intended to be a living document. As such, you are encouraged to submit your recommendations. Recommendations should follow the format posted on the website, and be sent to veronique.freeman@uscg.mil.

O. Solicitation for 2011 Higgins and Langley Memorial Awards In Swiftwater Rescue Nominations

RDML C.B. Thomas, Director of Response Policy

1. The Swiftwater Rescue Committee of the National Association For Search And Rescue (NASAR) is seeking nominations for the 2011 Higgins and Langley Memorial Awards for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Swiftwater-Flood Rescue. Individual achievements, Rescue Team efforts, and applicants dedicated to the development/implementation of Swiftwater-Flood rescue training programs and Public Safety Education will be considered for nomination. The awards will be presented during the annual NASAR Conference, 2 June 2011, in Sparks, NV.



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2. The awards honor civilian rescuer Earl Higgins who lost his life in February 1980 while attempting to save a child being swept away in the flood-swollen Los Angeles River, and Firefighter/Paramedic Jeffrey Langley of the Los Angeles County Fire Department, who lost his life in a helicopter accident in March 1993.
3. There are several award categories, some of which specifically recognize noteworthy technical Swiftwater/flood rescues. Other categories recognize significant achievement in the development of Swiftwater/flood rescue training programs, flood disaster preparedness and response, flood and Swiftwater safety education programs, etc.
4. All nominations must be received NLT 21 Feb 2011. Only nominations for the period 1 Jan 2010 thru 1 Feb 2011 will be considered for these awards. Coast Guard personnel have been nominated for these awards over the past 17 years and a select number have been honored as recipients.
5. The direct supervisor in each nominee's chain of command should submit nominations to the Higgins and Langley Awards Committee. Specific award details, nomination forms, and additional information can be found online at <http://higginsandlangley.org>.

P. FORCECOM Transfer To The Mission Support Organization

VADM J. P. Currier, Chief Of Staff/DCMS

1. I am pleased to announce that the CG Force Readiness Command, under the leadership of Radm Sullivan, transferred to the Mission Support Organization effective 21 Jan 2011.
2. I welcome FORCECOM as a valued partner in performance and readiness in the Mission Support Team. FORCECOM will continue to be a Flag Level Field Command supporting Operational Commanders. FORCECOM will prepare the workforce by implementing a doctrine system, developing tactics, techniques and procedures (TTP), overseeing the Coast Guards International Award Winning Training System, and providing standardization/compliance assessments and exercise support to the field. All existing subordinate command structures performed by FORCECOM and its elements remain the same.



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3. FORCECOM's steady focus on providing our operational partners with a more agile workforce through standardized procedures for training, operating and assessment will advance the mission support organizations goal to deliver optimal support for all Coast Guard people, assets and systems. The Force Readiness Command achieved significant success in its first year and was recently awarded the CG Unit Commendation. In its second year, FORCECOM will continue to mature the human performance cycle. This is the first step in a deliberate and phased transition of FORCECOM to mission support and the commands relocation to the Tidewater, Virginia area. Resource constraints prevent full staffing or functionality of FORCECOM at present. Further review is underway to create close functional alignment with the newly established Director Of Operational Logistics field-level element and eventually determine the optimal field mission support end state. Thanks to all who worked hard to ensure a smooth hand-off between PACAREA and the mission support organization.
4. I encourage you to download and read the 2011 FORCECOM business plan at <http://www.uscg.mil/forcecom> and select downloads.

Q. Increased Ethanol in New Gas Blends Could Lead To Costly Repairs in Boat Engines

By DEREK HARPER, Staff Writer pressofAtlanticCity.com

Gasoline may soon include more ethanol, but people who work on boats and small engines say they fear the change will lead to many more damaged engines and costly repair bills.

Even though the federal Environmental Protection Agency did not approve the blend for many types of engines, some may still inadvertently fuel their craft at a station that sells it.

"The problem is they [boats] can't run anything more than 10 percent" alcohol in those engines, said Andy Biddle, 36, of Northfield.

Biddle, who manages Professional Boat Sales at Sea Village Marina on Margate Boulevard in Northfield, said he and others have warned boaters to avoid the new blends, which can include as much as 15 percent ethanol. Sea Village Marina does not sell gas. But Biddle said the company is putting together a flier to alert boaters who dock at the marina of the potential problems.

Jim Dunkelberger, owner of Cape Power Equipment of Cape May Court House, said he thought that more than 70 percent of his current repair business is due to ethanol corrosion.

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"It's created a lot of work," he said. "When they do what they're trying to do, it will create a whole lot more."

He recommended people either drain their snowblowers and lawnmowers, or run them until the tanks are empty. Additives are good, but they will not do well in long-term storage.

Small engines are "barely holding on at 10 percent" alcohol in gasoline, Dunkelberger said. "You go to 15 percent, you'll have real problems."

The EPA has sanctioned ethanol in gasoline for more than 30 years, as a way for gasoline engines to burn cleaner. The most common blend is E10, or a fuel with 10 percent alcohol and 90 percent gasoline. The EPA first mandated ethanol use in cities and states such as New Jersey with air quality problems.

In October, the Environmental Protection Agency approved increasing the amount of ethanol that can be blended into gasoline from 10 to 15 percent for cars built from 2007 to the present. Last month the agency expanded the use of that fuel, "E15," to include cars, SUVs and light trucks built since 2001.

Boats, small engines, motorcycles and off-road vehicles were excluded because of the potential damage. The EPA is expected to require gas stations that dispense "E15" to mark the pumps with warning stickers. It is unclear when the gasoline will arrive locally. A survey of several stations found no station selling it.

The recent increase follows the federal Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, which calls for significantly increasing biofuels such as ethanol in the nation's fuel supply.

The National Marine Manufacturers Association challenged the increase with a federal suit in December.

Ethanol is typically made from corn in this country. Consequently, critics have blamed the increased use of corn in the ethanol market for rising global corn prices, which elevates food prices, as well as deforestation as people seek to grow crops elsewhere. Critics have also said ethanol boosts water usage for the additional crops.

Ethanol supporters such as Growth Energy, an ethanol advocacy group based in Washington, D.C. and Omaha, Neb., say expanding its use increases energy independence by replacing gasoline with a home-grown alternative that would provide jobs for Americans. It has challenged assertions that increased ethanol comes at the expense of food, saying other factors are involved.

Growth Energy has said that up to 90 percent of the nation's gasoline usage could be replaced in 20 years. The Renewable Fuels Association has said 62 percent of

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vehicles now on the road can use "E15," or a gasoline blend containing between 10 and 15 percent ethanol.

Regardless, the Boat Owners Association of the United States warned that older engines might not be able to compensate for additional alcohol in gasoline, burning hotter than normal and potentially creating damage.

Dan Connor, a small engine mechanic with Swanson Hardware Supply in Vineland, said he has seen more and more engines damaged by ethanol-blended gasoline, to the point that practically every piece of equipment is affected.

"I just did two chainsaws today," Connor said Monday.

Before, he said he could store gasoline for a year or two, but gasoline now goes bad in four or five months, turning black or a really dark green.

In two-stroke engines, common in smaller machines like lawnmowers, oil blended into the gasoline lubricates the engine as it burns. But he said in his experience, ethanol appeared to be keeping that lubrication from happening.

Connor said consumers should either use stabilizers in the gasoline, or drain the tank entirely.

Connor said he had his own engine problems with ethanol-blended gasoline last summer.

He and a friend took his friend's center console boat on a fishing trip off Long Island in New York. They put in new fuel injectors and gas lines, but once they were out in the ocean, the engine failed.

They eventually got the engine restarted and returned to port, he said. They ran the engine at full throttle, but only proceeded at a stately five miles per hour.

While newer engines may handle the fuel with minimal problems, Biddle said, "older boat engines, from the '80s and '90s ... E15 will absolutely destroy these engines."

Tracy Blumenstein, 45, owner of Professional Boat Sales, said he suggested boaters use an enzyme additive to kill algae growth that may increase with E15 use, as well as fuel stabilizers to keep the fuel from separating.

Boaters should also consider replacing fuel lines with alcohol-resistant lines, upgrading fuel filters, and consider replacing fiberglass fuel tanks with metal ones that are less likely to corrode, Blumenstein said.



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In the meantime, the Boat Owners Association of the United States warned that people who transport their boats on trailers need to remain extra vigilant when filling up at a local gas station.

"When filling up at gas stations, boaters are used to pulling up to the pump and filling up the tow vehicle first, and then putting the same fuel nozzle into the boat," said BoatUS Director of Damage Avoidance Bob Adriance. "If that happens with E15, it could be a big mistake."