

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA WATERFRONT DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

Date: October 20, 2016
To: Harbor Commission
From: Scott Riedman, Waterfront Director
Subject: **Harbor Operations Report**

SANTA BARBARA HARBOR EARNS INDUSTRY CLEAN MARINA PROGRAM RECERTIFICATION

In September, Santa Barbara Harbor earned recertification in a broad industry-managed Clean Marinas Program, marking its second five-year recertification since originally gaining that recognition in 2007.

The Clean Marinas program is an ongoing endeavor by a marina industry alliance, dedicated to providing environmentally clean facilities and protecting coastal and inland waters from pollution through compliance with best management practices. The recent recertification, overseen by a trained Clean Marina Program inspector, covered 13 subject areas, ranging from emergency spill response to solid-waste storage, bilge water containment, boat sewage containment and more.

Santa Barbara Harbor enjoys the distinction of managing two, separate and robust clean-marina programs, one developed internally at the City level, plus the industry-wide Clean Marinas program. To date, 130 marinas have been certified under this regional program, nearly all in California.

LOBSTER TRAP STORAGE IN LAUNCH RAMP PARKING STALLS

For years, the Department has accommodated commercial lobster fishermen by allowing them to temporarily stage traps in trailer-boat stalls in the launch-ramp parking area several days before taking them to sea for the season “opener,” which occurs the first Wednesday in October. This facilitates taking the traps to their boats at the launch-ramp docks before hauling them to sea. Fishermen typically stage traps 7-10 days before the opener and remove all traps 3-4 days after the opener.

This accommodation worked well, without incident, until 2014, when other boaters complained that the traps were more plentiful than ever, taking up far too many stalls. Working with lobster fishermen in 2015, the Department established a policy by which they could stage their traps in certain Launch Ramp parking stalls, leaving room for other ocean users to park as well. The effort paid off. Other boaters did not complain, and fishermen policed themselves quite effectively. The same was true earlier this month, when flyers were distributed by email and posted at the harbor detailing the rules and displaying the same map used last year—with one small hiccup.

Due to a heat wave during the last week in September (100 degrees at the harbor), some of the tar-like substance used to coat traps and protect them from corrosion (an inert compound once it hardens) melted onto the stalls where the traps were staged, and was also tracked onto the launch-ramp docks. When fishermen loaded their traps onto their boats, many small spots of tar—most of them hardened with cooling weather, were left behind on the asphalt.

Concerned about possible contamination of the harbor, staff contacted the Coast Guard immediately to apprise them of the situation. Thankfully, no tar or oil ended up in the water. Maintenance staff monitored the situation until all traps were removed from the parking lot, then cleaned up with brooms, as the coating was removable once it hardened. Finally, they unscrewed the top non-skid surface off the docks and power-washed them offsite, to further prevent tar from entering the water.

Thankfully, this unusual event concluded with no harbor pollution.

A SURGE IN SURRENDERED VESSELS KEEPS ANCHORAGE NUMBERS LOW

Since 2003, the Waterfront Department has benefitted from state Department (now Division) of Boating and Waterways (DBW) grants, for disposing abandoned vessels under an Abandoned Watercraft Abatement Fund program (AWAF), and, more recently, a Vessel Turn-In Program (VTIP), by which a boat owner could voluntarily surrender a boat for disposal. In 2014, DBW combined the two grants into a Surrendered and Abandoned Vessel Exchange (SAVE) program, with grantees allowed to spend funds on either abandoned *or* surrendered boats.

In 2015, DBW awarded the Waterfront Department a two-year, \$30,200 SAVE grant. Its popularity, especially relating to surrendered vessels, has exceeded staff expectations. Staff coordinated the disposal of 19 surrendered vessels in the first year of the grant (compared to an average of six per year under the VTIP program, which had limited funding), often given up by slip permittees in the process of putting new boats in their slips and disposing of vessels that previously occupied their slips. Without question, many of these surrendered boats would have ended up in the East Beach Anchorage, the primary source of vessel abandonments and groundings during winter storms. In fact, the number of boats in the Anchorage this summer maxed out at about 30, compared to upward of 80 in the past.

Unfortunately, however, while the demand for disposing surrendered vessels remains, the Department's SAVE grant was recently depleted, although staff was able to add another \$5,000 via a "fund shift" from the San Mateo Port District, which had remaining unspent money from an AWAF grant.

Moving forward, the Department will continue to accept and pay for disposing surrendered vessels for the next year, until a new grant is in place. The cost may approach an estimated \$25,000, but is far less than the cost of cleaning vessels off the beach that run aground from the anchorage, not to mention the public-safety and

environmental hazards posed by beached vessels. Next year, staff intends to apply for a \$75,000 SAVE grant, counting on our demonstrated need and historically good relationship with DBW related to these grant programs.

31ST ANNUAL PARADE OF LIGHTS DECEMBER 11TH

On Sunday, December 11th, boats will decorate to the theme of “Wild West Holidays” during the 31st annual Parade of Lights. Activities begin at 3:00 p.m. with Santa’s Village on the City Pier, where Santa Claus and his elves will treat kids to goody bags, a 10-ton snowfield and a visit with the bearded one. The parade begins at 5:30 p.m., followed by a five-minute fireworks show care of Garden State Fireworks, plus a lively awards party at the Maritime Museum. Slip permittees will receive sign-up forms in their November billing statements. Forms are also available now at the Waterfront Office, Harbor Market and Fuel Dock. Best views of the Parade are from Stearns Wharf and the breakwater.

Prepared by: Mick Kronman, Harbor Operations Manager