

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA WATERFRONT DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

Date: May 20, 2010
To: Harbor Commissioners
From: John N. Bridley, Waterfront Director
Subject: Harbor Operations Report

Operation Clean Sweep

On Saturday May 8th, the Waterfront Department conducted its fourth annual Operation Clean Sweep, during which 35 divers and dock workers removed 3,000 pounds of seafloor junk from dive-boat docks and Cabrillo Landing (in front of the Waterfront Center Building), Fish Float North and the City Pier. To date, this brings the total of junk removed from the harbor via "Clean Sweep" to 15,000 pounds.

This year's participants included NOAA, SB Surfrider, Maritime Museum, SB Channelkeeper, Salty Dog Dive Service and many volunteers from our boating community. Sea-urchin divers were particularly helpful, cleaning areas beneath their leased docks in front of the Waterfront building and beneath the Fuel Dock and City Pier. Their sense of responsibility and stewardship was much appreciated.

Debris removed included wire traps, fish receivers, tires, pipes, bicycles, bottles, cable, diving equipment and two marine batteries. (Over four years, Operation Clean Sweep has removed a total of five marine batteries from the harbor.) Next year, Clean Sweep will shift to Marina 1, as we reach the half-way point in the Department's initial 10-year effort to "sweep" all marinas free of seafloor debris.

Cruise Ship Visit May 9th

The cruise ship *Sapphire Princess* visited Santa Barbara for one day on Sunday, May 9th. The 950-foot vessel anchored a half-mile offshore, from where its 2,700 passengers and 500 crew were shuttled to Sea Landing—the departure point for walking tours, bus tours, wine-country visits and shopping trips in town. The ship arrived at 7:00 a.m. and departed at 4:00 p.m., its tenders enduring stiff afternoon winds in the process. Occasional cruise-ship visits benefit the community and the Department, which charges \$5 per head (passengers and crew). One more cruise-ship visit is scheduled this year (in December), though "feelers" have been extended to cruise-ship lines to learn if more interest in Santa Barbara port calls are possible.

Harbor Nautical Swap Meet and Hazmat Turn-In Day May 15th

The Harbor Nautical Swap Meet, sponsored by the Waterfront Department and Harbor Merchants Association, returned to Santa Barbara Harbor on Saturday, May 15th. Staff will report on this event at the May 20th Harbor Commission meeting. This year's Swap Meet again included a Hazmat Turn-In opportunity. Boaters disposed of old cans of varnish, lacquer and paint, plus small amounts of gasoline and diesel.

NOAA Information Kiosk Back Online

NOAA's touch-screen information kiosk in the public lobby of the Harbormaster's Office is back online after six months out of service. The interactive station offers education about the Channel Islands, plus marine weather data, including forecasts, swell models, offshore buoy reports, radar images and more. The kiosk is one of 30 NOAA has installed around the country. The public is welcomed to use the kiosk at any time (except between 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m., if Harbor Patrol is out of the office and the building is locked).

Fish Die Off

On Monday, April 26th, schools of baitfish—anchovies, sardines and small mackerel—unexpectedly entered the harbor in fairly large numbers. Some died and were subsequently eaten by birds and crabs. By the next day, the bait had departed. When the bait incursion and die-off event in Santa Barbara Harbor occurred, a similar phenomenon was recorded in other harbors, including Ventura.

The immediate cause of the die-off was low dissolved oxygen (D/O) levels in the harbor, which occurs occasionally for reasons not entirely understood. On Tuesday, April 27th, all signs of the bait had disappeared and D/O tests on Wednesday, April 28th, indicated that oxygen levels had returned to normal. Subsequent tests, however, provided mixed results, and the die-off continued intermittently for a week.

During events like these, the Department posts D/O readings on marina gates, especially intended for commercial fishermen who store their catch in receivers. This notification provides information they can use to make decisions such as temporarily relocating receivers outside the harbor, where D/O levels are typically higher.

Harbor Patrol Rescue

At 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 21st, Harbor Patrol received a report of an overturned skiff about two miles off Summerland. Officer Erik Engebretson and Crew Billy Larsen responded to the location, where a man already suffering mild hypothermia was drifting, awash, in stiff winds, his engine having failed. Known to Harbor Patrol from previous contacts in the East Beach Anchorage, the victim began seizing. Harbor Patrol warmed him and rushed him to the east side of Stearns Wharf, where medics and City Firefighters met him and sent him by ambulance to Cottage Hospital. The victim

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subsequently recovered from the accident. Key to the rescue was the reporting party, who was parked at the beach near Hammonds Reef checking the surf when he spotted the emergency. He never lost sight of the victim, guiding Harbor Patrol to the rescue point. Without his assistance, the victim would have been difficult to locate and save. This incident, like many in the past, demonstrates that cooperation between trained Harbor Patrol Officers and an alert, educated public often yields life-saving results.

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