



# Marine Safety Information Bulletin

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U.S. Coast Guard  
Sector Delaware Bay  
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## REPORTING MARINE CASUALTIES – GROUNDINGS

Recently, there have been multiple incidents within Captain of the Port, Delaware Bay's zone of deep draft vessels touching bottom while attempting to berth or while moored and conducting cargo operations. Regardless of the circumstance, if any part of a vessel touches bottom it is considered a "grounding" and is a Reportable Marine Casualty as outlined in 46 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 4.05. All unintended or intended groundings **must** be reported to the nearest Coast Guard Sector Office **immediately** after addressing resultant safety concerns by the owner, agent, master, operator or person in charge.

Additionally, groundings are also considered a "hazardous condition". A hazardous condition is *any condition that may adversely affect the safety of any vessel, structure, or shore area or the environmental quality of any port, harbor, or navigable water way. It may, but need not, involve collision, allision, fire, explosion, **grounding**, leaking damage, injury or illness of a person aboard, or manning-shortage* (33 CFR 160.202). In accordance with 33 CFR 160.214, whenever there is a hazardous condition on board a vessel, or caused by a vessel, or its operation., the owner, agent, master, operator or person in charge must **immediately** notify the nearest Coast Guard Sector Office.

Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay reminds mariners that an e-mail to the USCG is not considered a satisfactory form of immediate notification of a marine casualty or hazardous condition since e-mail may not always be monitored. The best method to notify us is either through a phone call or radio transmission to the Sector Delaware Bay Command Center. The 24/7 Sector Delaware Bay Command Center can be reached at (215) 271-4807 or via VHF Ch. 16.

Failure to report any grounding as a marine casualty or hazardous condition to the nearest Coast Guard Sector Office may result in a maximum fine of \$91,901 and/or possible administrative action against a merchant mariner credential.

If you have any questions regarding the content of this bulletin, please contact my Investigations staff at [PhillyIO@uscg.mil](mailto:PhillyIO@uscg.mil).

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Captain, U.S. Coast Guard  
Acting Captain of the Port, Delaware Bay