

§97.15-17

shall immediately be reported to the master, owner or agent, and the Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection.

[CGD 95-028, 62 FR 51207, Sept. 30, 1997]

§97.15-17 Loading doors.

(a) The master of a vessel fitted with loading doors shall assure that all loading doors are closed watertight and secured during the entire voyage except that—

(1) If a door cannot be opened or closed while the vessel is at a dock, it may be open while the vessel approaches and draws away from the dock, but only as far as necessary to enable the door to be immediately operated;

(2) If needed to operate the vessel, or embark and disembark passengers when the vessel is at anchor in protected waters, loading doors may be open provided that the master determines that the safety of the vessel is not impaired.

(b) For the purposes of this section, “loading doors” include all weather-tight ramps, bow visors, and openings used to load personnel, equipment, cargo, and stores, in the collision bulkhead, the side shell, and the boundaries of enclosed superstructures that are continuous with the shell of the vessel.

(c) The master shall enter into the log book the time and door location of every closing of the loading doors.

(d) The master shall enter into the log book any opening of the doors in accordance with paragraph (a)(2) of this section setting forth the time of the opening of the doors and the circumstances warranting this action.

[CGD 89-037, 57 FR 41823, Sept. 11, 1992]

§97.15-20 Hatches and other openings.

(a)(1) With the exception stated in paragraph (a)(2) of this section, it shall be the responsibility of the master to assure himself that all exposed cargo hatches and other openings in the hull of his vessel are closed, made properly watertight by the use of tarpaulins, gaskets or similar devices, and in all respects properly secured for sea before leaving protected waters.

(2) A vessel engaged in a voyage exclusively on Great Lakes waters and having 6 feet or more of freeboard,

measured vertically from the water's edge at the lowest point of sheer to the top of deck at the ship's side, may, at the master's discretion, omit tarpaulins on the ship's hatches from 16 May through 15 September (both dates inclusive). This exemption does not relieve the master of any responsibility for the securing and protection of his hatches during the interval of exemption and, in case of indications of bad weather or other threatening conditions, he shall not leave protected waters until the exposed cargo hatches and other openings in the hull of his vessel are properly covered, secured and protected.

(b) The openings to which this section applies are as follows:

(1) Exposed cargo hatches.

(2) Gangway, cargo and coaling ports fitted below the freeboard deck.

(3) Port lights that are not accessible during navigation including the dead lights for such port lights.

(c) Vessels which, by their design, do not require cargo hatch closing devices and to which §45.01-20 of subchapter E (Load Lines) of this chapter applies need not comply with the requirements of this section as to exposed cargo hatches.

(d) The master at his discretion may permit hatches or other openings to remain uncovered or open, or to be uncovered or opened for reasonable purposes such as ship's maintenance while the vessel is being navigated: *Provided*, That in his opinion existing conditions warrant such action.

(e) In the event the master employs the discretionary provisions of this section after leaving port he shall cause appropriate entries to be made in the official log or equivalent thereof setting forth the time of uncovering, opening, closing or covering of the hatches or other openings to which this section applies and the circumstances warranting the action taken.

(f) The discretionary provisions of this section shall not relieve the master of his responsibility for the safety of his vessel, her crew or cargo.