

## PORT AND SOLID WASTE DEPARTMENT

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **DNR STUDY FINDS BALLAST WATER REGULATIONS NOT FEASIBLE**

*Wisconsin is proposing more realistic requirements*

**(Green Bay, WI)** The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is proposing changes to its original ballast water regulations for ocean-going vessels. The proposed changes follow a year-long study that found no existing ballast water treatment systems would be able to comply with the DNR's strict standards.

"We knew that the technology wasn't going to be available to meet what the DNR wanted," stated Dean Haen, manager of the Port of Green Bay. "The ultimate concern was that the regulations would negatively impact not only the operations of the Port of Green Bay, but other ports along the Great Lakes as well."

Regulating ballast water helps to control the risk of carrying invasive species in ocean-going ships' ballast water. Most Great Lakes states put ballast water regulations in place that were similar to the international requirements established in 2004 by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), an agency of the United Nations. Wisconsin, however, enacted a requirement that ocean-going vessel operators install ballast water treatment systems to achieve a ballast water quality standard 100 times more stringent than the IMO standard.

The recently-completed DNR study concluded that:

- No existing ballast water treatment system could comply with Wisconsin's original "100 x IMO" requirement.
- No treatment systems were commercially available to meet Wisconsin's original "100 x IMO" requirement.

***(More)***

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- It was not yet feasible to install treatment system technology on vessels at this time.
- The state's compliance deadline (2014) is workable. Vessel operators should be able to install IMO compliant technology by that date for existing ocean-going vessels.
- There will be a public comment period on the proposed change until January 26, 2011.

"The shipping industry objected to Wisconsin's proposed water quality standard, insisting it was unachievable with current technology," Haen stated. "Although the shipping industry is supportive of regulating ballast water through federal, instead of state implemented standards, we are pleased to see the DNR took the time to conduct a study in Wisconsin to find out if what was being asked was unrealistic at this time."

Haen says that Wisconsin is not the only state to deal with unsupportable ballast water regulations. New York is facing the same unrealistic regulations that, if not revised, threaten to cut off shipping to ports in several states including Wisconsin. "The Port of Green Bay is hopeful that Wisconsin's decision will help convince New York to modify its unworkable rules," Haen stated. "No one wants to see commerce stopped along the Great Lakes."

The shipping industry is also waiting on the U.S. Coast Guard to finalize its national ballast water regulations, which are expected during the spring of 2011. "We look forward to continued dialogue with the Wisconsin DNR as we move toward a workable, long-term solution," Haen stated.

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