



News Release

Expanded Air Quality Program for Ships Approved Commissioners OK 40-mile slow-down zone

December 9, 2008

The Port of Long Beach will invest as much as \$4 million a year to expand the successful Green Flag Incentive Program and achieve even greater reductions of air pollution from cargo ships that visit the Port, the Harbor Commission decided Monday, December 8.

The Commission voted unanimously to expand the Green Flag program to include additional incentives that will encourage ships to slow down within 40 miles of the Port. Slowing down ships reduces fuel consumption and cuts air pollution by hundreds of tons every year.

"The Green Flag program has been a hit -- it's been well received in the shipping community and has achieved major reductions in air pollution," said Port of Long Beach Executive Director Richard D. Steinke. "It's the right time to expand the program for even greater air quality benefits."

In the three-year-old Green Flag program, more than 90 percent of vessels near the Port now voluntarily reduce their speed to 12 knots, reducing air pollution by more than 650 tons a year, in exchange for reduced dockage fees. Expanding the reduced speed zone to 40 miles, with a dockage discount of 25 percent, could achieve air pollution reductions of more than 2,000 tons.

The current Green Flag zone extends 20 nautical miles from Point Fermin, the southern tip of San Pedro. Under the proposal, the Port would expand the program to offer a higher rate of dockage fee reduction for vessels willing to consistently reduce speeds within 40 nautical miles of Point Fermin.

Under the proposal, vessel operators whose fleets comply with the 20 nautical mile range on at least 90 percent of ship visits in 2009 will be eligible for the standard 15 percent dockage fee reduction in 2010. Those who comply with the 40 nautical mile range on at least 90 percent of ship visits will be eligible to receive a 25 percent reduction.

The Port will spend about \$1.5 million on the Green Flag Program this year. Under the expanded program, the Port will invest as much as \$4 million a year on the air quality improvements. If all ships were to comply with the 40-mile speed limit, the program

would cut 2,041 tons of smog forming nitrogen oxides (NOx), and 180 tons of diesel particulate matter a year.

In 2007, the Green Flag program reduced CO2 (greenhouse gas) pollution from ships by 26,700 tons.

Contact: Art Wong, Port of Long Beach Assistant Director of Communications/Public Information Officer, office (562) 590-4123, cell (562) 619-5665, or wong@polb.com.

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