MARINE PIPELINE AND UTILITY HAZARD AVOIDANCE CHECKLIST

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Damage to underwater pipelines or utilities from vessels, dredging, marine construction, large anchors, spuds, propwash, pads of a jack up, etc. could cause flammable gas or hazardous liquids to be released, spills or critical utility outages. Studies have shown that ignition of gas or liquids could occur within seconds. Before any water-bottom contact is made from vessels, marine equipment, digging, spuds, anchoring, dredging or marine construction follow this Marine Hazard Avoidance Checklist below to reduce risks.

PRE-MOBILIZATION PLANNING

- ☐ All pipeline and utility locate notification requests must be initiated by contacting 811. There is no fee for the service, and it is the law.
- ☐ Notify Pipeline and Utility operators of the project scope as early in the design phase as possible, some 811 notifications have a “Design Ticket” for this purpose, and field excavation is not yet occuring.
- ☐ 811 fieldwork ticket notifications are recommended at least 7 days in advance of start. A minimum 75ft marine exclusion zone (or Tolerance Zone) on either side of an underwater pipeline or utility is recommended unless all parties agree. Electronic marking, such as GPS points or KMZ type files etc. are acceptable recognized methods of marking underwater lines.
- ☐ Establish, communicate, and agree upon safe access routes with pipeline and utility operators.
- ☐ Ask the pipeline or utility operator representative to be on site to help ensure safe activity around the pipeline or utility and review avoidance plans.
- ☐ Confirm all vessels are able to have a minimum of 3 feet of water clearance under vessels draft for safe passages over pipelines or utilities?
- ☐ Is vessel draft appropriate for the navigation area planned where wheel or propwash will not occur?
- ☐ Updated and reviewed the most recent Coast Pilot, S-57 or Electronic Navigation Chart information to plan your voyage routes?
- ☐ Have the potential effects of tide and weather been considered in assessing navigable depths?
- ☐ Is a recent hazard, pipeline and utility surveys available for the locations, and are results incorporated in the work or avoidance plans?
- ☐ Have all known hazards been identified or marked using GPS, and/or field markings or surveys, including pipeline or utility crossings, obstructions, and shallow or exposed lines? They should be communicated and agreed to by all stakeholders prior to project.
- ☐ Have pipelines and utility crossings been identified in our voyage plan?
- ☐ Have stakeholder safety or project meetings been conducted that covers the hazards and avoidance plans of working near pipelines, utilities, and associated facilities?
- ☐ Is there an emergency evacuation and response plan in place in the event contact is made with an underwater pipeline or utility?
- ☐ If ANY contact with an underwater pipeline or utility occurs, there is a requirement to contact the National Response Center at telephone number 1-800-424-8802 and the facility owner.

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MOBILIZATION

- ☐ Have designated safe anchor, spud, jack-up, or fleeting areas near pipelines, utilities or facilities been approved by the facility owners or operators? 811 notifications are required for all these.
- ☐ Have ALL barge spuds and anchors been secured to prevent area accidental lowering while underway?
- ☐ Has coordination taken place with pipeline or utility operators to have a representative on board the vessel when working near their lines?
- ☐ DO NOT moor or anchor near signs that indicate a pipeline or utility crossing. These are not safe mooring locations. The sign is only a general indicator of where the lines may be located.

EVALUATING CONTACT WITH AN UNDERWATER PIPELINE

- ☐ Is there a blowing or hissing sound or blowing water or continuous bubbling?
- ☐ Is there a gaseous, hydrocarbon or other unusual odor or an oil/gas smell?
- ☐ Are there liquids bubbling to the surface, or a has a rainbow colored spill or sheen appeared?

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING IF A STRIKE OCCURS

- ☐ Immediately minimize potential ignition sources like cell phones, motors, pumps, switches, cigarettes, lighters, etc. (Major sources of ignition are the air intake of engines or the generators)
- ☐ Assess the situation and report:
  a. Is it getting worse?
  b. How large does the leak appear to be? Note: Could make it worse if equipment is moved.
  c. Weather conditions – lightning, rough seas, etc. Move where will you be safest.
- ☐ If you evacuate or move the vessel, and personnel move at least ¼ of a mile or to a safe location upwind or as far as possible. Note the strike time and location.
- ☐ Try to prevent unsuspecting vessels and people from entering the area. Use VHF radio to broadcast accident information.
- ☐ Do not attempt to extinguish a natural gas fire. When out of the hazard area, call 911, the Coast Guard, and the National Response Center at 800-424-8802.
- ☐ If you see a pipeline or utility crossing sign, call the number on the sign and provide your general location and coordinates so the Operations Control Center can begin isolating the pipeline or utility.