



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**

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**NOTICE TO NAVIGATION INTERESTS**

**DATE:**  
**POC:** John Dilla  
(412) 395-7651

**NOTICE NUMBER:** 8461  
**LOCAL NUMBER:**  
**WATERWAY:** OHIO RIVER

**EFFECTIVE:** 03/05/2018 00:01 thru Until Further Notice EST

**Emsworth Lock and Dam Ohio River Mile 6.2, Closure of the Primary Lock Chamber**

1. **TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:** Notice is given that the U.S Army Corps of Engineers Repair Fleet will be working on installing a new maintenance closure system for the 110-ft x 600-ft primary lock chamber from 12:01 AM March 05, 2018 through 11:59 PM June 08, 2018.
  2. **MAJOR DELAYS TO NAVIGATION:** For the period 05 March through approximately 27 April, the primary lock chamber at Emsworth will be totally closed. All navigation traffic will pass through the 56-ft x 360-ft auxiliary lock chamber using the below procedures.
  3. **PROCEDURES:** The Corps will institute the following lockage procedure which has been developed in cooperation with the Waterways Association of Pittsburgh. Boat locking order will be determined by arrival time at Emsworth L/D, all pilots should radio Emsworth L/D at normal arrival points. All red flag barges in the tow must also be reported by the pilot during this radio call. No adding or swapping of barges will be allowed once the tow's lock turn has been established. **No crew changes, taking on stores etc will be permitted during the closure. These activities will need to be arranged at landings or other approved locations and must not impede the lockage process.** All tows must be ready to lock when put on the waiting list. The lockages will be accomplished as a standard series of three tows in one direction. Because of approach conditions (outdrafts and short river guard walls), it is recommended that users limit their tow size to no more than a triple lockage. **Due to the location of the tow haulage equipment and the length of the upper and lower middle walls, tow configurations of less than 50-ft in width will require self-help.** Under normal river conditions the Lockmaster will allow, if requested by the pilot when calling for position of the tow, a towboat to lock through with a maximum of five (5) lockages. **No building, staging or reassembly of tows on the Lower Mooring Cell of the upper pool for the LAST tow of an upbound tier. This will allow a better flow of navigation traffic and reduce delay of downbound exchange entries.** By following this procedure, there will be a minimal tow make-up and approach time when changing directions. Without a program of "self-help" by navigation interests, the Corps can only handle up to a triple lockage, or one (1) super tanker/super jumbo, with its on-site tow haulage equipment.
  4. To help eliminate some of the waiting time for towboats, an arriving tow can designate to be broken up into a maximum of three (3) separate tows. Each tow will then be locked in accordance with the procedure outlined in paragraph 3 above. The pilot of the large tow will have to notify Emsworth L/D of the intent to breakup into smaller tows and must provide the Lockmaster with the names of the other towboats designated to handle the other tows not later than six (6) hours before their lockage turn. If the designated towboat(s) are not available when called by Emsworth L/D, they will lose their turn and go to the end of the waiting line.
  5. During the closure of the 110-ft x 600-ft primary lock chamber, tows should move to the closest mooring cell for staging prior to their lockage turn, rather than waiting at landings. It will be necessary for tows, under normal river conditions, to follow one another on the river guard wall when a series of lockages are being made in one direction. Each tow in the series should be aware of the tow that they follow and be on the river guard wall as soon as that tow enters the lock chamber. While this practice will speed up the lockage process, it is imperative that tows exercise extreme caution when encountering outdraft or backlash conditions.
  6. In an effort to reduce delay time at the locks, a program of "self-help" by navigation interests is necessary. A "self-help" program will allow waiting towboats to assist tows out of the lock chamber. The Lockmaster will designate the helper boats as tows arrive for position. The second and third towboats in the first series of lockages in the opposite direction will be the designated helper boats unless conditions, equipment or cargo prevent the use of that towboat as a helper. It will be necessary for all towboats to monitor their radios 24 hours a day.
  7. Other specific procedures to facilitate lockage operations through the auxiliary lock Chamber have been developed in cooperation with the towing industry. **The Corps is asking for everyone's cooperation and help in making the locking operations go as smoothly as possible during the closure of the large chamber.**
    - a. All excess rigging will be removed prior to entering the lock chamber. Remaining rigging should be ready to be knocked loose after the cut is secured in the lock chamber.
    - b. **All upbound lockages will require three locking lines, two head and one stern and must be available on each cut. All downbound lockages will require two locking lines, one head and one stern.** Each line must be at least 75 feet long and 1-1/2" in diameter. To minimize locking time, all lines will stay with each cut. Lines will not be permitted to be carried from one cut to another.
- c. Three deckhands are required during multiple lockages.**
- d. All multiple cut tows will be made up in designated staging areas, clear of the lock gates, so as not to interfere with lockage operations.
  - e. The Emsworth lock filling system may cause turbulence and surging of water while filling the small chamber. **Deckhands need to be extra vigilant in tending lines to avoid an accident which could close the locks totally.**
8. Towboats are cautioned to use minimal power when operating over the lower sill to avoid forcing debris onto the miter sill. This debris could prevent the miter gates from closing and require stoppage of navigation until the material is removed by dredging or diving operations.
  9. If critical industrial shipments are essential to sustain continued operation, the affected companies should immediately contact the Waterways Association of Pittsburgh. They will review all requests for priority before submitting them to the Corps for consideration. If it becomes necessary to prioritize lockages through the small chamber, the Corps will make the final decision concerning lockage procedures as conditions and situations change. In accordance with standard Corps policy, the Lockmaster may also vary the locking procedure in an effort to equalize waiting times.
- 10. Information concerning lockages and queue will be broadcast by radio on Channel 13 and any towboat not answering a call from the locks will be dropped to the end of the waiting list.**
11. All towboats are to stay with their tows while waiting for lockages unless designated to assist other tows through the auxiliary lock chamber.
  12. **For the period 28 April through 08 June the primary chamber will have partial closures. Details for this period will be provided in an amendment to this Notice.**

FOR THE DISTRICT ENGINEER:

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Kathy M. Griffin  
Chief, Operations and Regulatory Division