

CIRCULAR 010-25 | July 14, 2025

## California Updates to Ballast Water Exchange Regulations for Fresh and Brackish Water Ports

California State Lands Commission (CLSC) has implemented an emergency rule to require vessels with ballast water sourced from a fresh water source with a salinity of less than 18 parts per thousand (ppt) to conduct ballast water exchange prior to discharging in California's fresh and brackish water ports, in addition to using the ballast water treatment system. This rule is in effect as of **June 18, 2025**. The emergency rule will be effective for 180 days, with the option for CLSC to extend for two 90-day periods while they consider the requirements for a permanent rulemaking.

This rule currently applies to vessels meeting all three conditions:

- (1) Arrival at a fresh or brackish water California port, including Sacramento, Stockton, and Carquinez Area Ports (see map below);
- (2) Discharging ballast water into California waters in one of the above ports; and
- (3) Carrying ballast water sourced from waters with a salinity of less than 18ppt (i.e., ballast sourced from a freshwater port)

Vessels meeting the above conditions must continue to meet the ballast water discharge standards using their approved ballast water treatment systems, conduct a ballast water exchange at least 50nm from land, and ensure that the discharge ballast is at or above a salinity of 30 ppt (ocean salinity).

### California Emergency Ballast Water Rule

Emergency rule only applies to vessel arrivals at:

- The Port of Sacramento
- The Port of Stockton
- Carquinez Area Ports (e.g., Rodeo, Vallejo, Crockett, Benicia, Martinez, Antioch, and Pittsburg)



# REGULATORY UPDATE

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response

A link to the emergency rulemaking notice and full regulatory text is included below, for reference. The Marine Invasive Species Program provided information about the emergency rule during a webinar on June 25, 2025, that is linked below.

## Required Actions

Please ensure your fleets calling these ports in California are aware of the updated requirements if they intend to discharge ballast water, and carry out an exchange outside of 50nm, in addition to using an approved ballast water treatment system, if they are coming from a freshwater port.

We have also updated our California and Ballast Water Management Checklists to incorporate these changes. The following revisions are now available on VesselPro™, and please discontinue use of all previous versions –

- 2025 BWM Checklist Rev 1
- 2025 California Checklist Rev 1

## Resources

- CSLC Website Notice – <https://www.slc.ca.gov/content-types/amendments-to-article-4-7-of-chapter-1-division-3-title-2-of-the-california-code-of-regulations/>
- CSLC Webinar – June 25, 2025 - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nXSLLrbb\\_PU&t=8s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nXSLLrbb_PU&t=8s)
- Notice of Approval for Emergency Regulation, Including Full Regulatory Text - [https://slcprdwordpressstorage.blob.core.windows.net/wordpressdata/sites/355/2025/07/4-9\\_SOS-Endorsed-Form-400\\_webacc.pdf](https://slcprdwordpressstorage.blob.core.windows.net/wordpressdata/sites/355/2025/07/4-9_SOS-Endorsed-Form-400_webacc.pdf)

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