

U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION
Department of Homeland Security
AREA PORT OF HOUSTON/GALVESTON

PUBLIC INFORMATION NOTICE

DATE: August 10, 2020	NUMBER: HOU-SEA-20-010	FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL: Chief Kenneth Western (281) 842-0300
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SUBJECT: Procedures for the Clearance of Vessels Arriving from AGM Regions

Purpose

This notice is to inform concerned parties of updates to vessels arriving from East Asian ports in China, Japan, South Korea, and Eastern Russia between 24 and 60 degrees North Latitude where Asian Gypsy Moth is presently known and established. The procedures will apply to vessels arriving into the Houston/Galveston Seaport, Port of Freeport, Port Arthur, Port of Beaumont, and Port of Corpus Christi.

Background

U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) and the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) have coordinated efforts to prevent the introduction of harmful pests into the United States. One such pest is the Asian Gypsy Moth (AGM), an extremely invasive species of moth that has not been introduced into the United States and is not presently in North America. Thus, U.S. Customs and Border Protection's primary objective of facilitating trade must be proportionally balanced with appropriately managing the agricultural risks associated with vessels and cargo arriving into the Houston/Galveston Seaport, Port of Freeport, Port Arthur, Port of Beaumont, and Port of Corpus Christi.

Procedure

Beginning September 1, 2020, all vessels having called a port in Japan, South Korea, Eastern Russia, and China (north of Shanghai) within the last 12 months must provide a Port of Calls list and a copy of the AGM Certificate when filing the CBP Form 3171. If the vessel is lacking an AGM Certificate, the agent must notify CBP when filing the CBP Form 3171. Vessels arriving from Far East Russia lacking the certification and vessels that have been previously excluded due to an AGM infestation will be required to take a lay berth at a place and time designated by CBP.

DISCLAIMER: This information has been prepared for your convenience by the CBP officers at the Port of Houston/Galveston. This material is intended to provide guidance. Recognizing that many complicated factors are involved in Customs matters, an importer may wish to obtain a binding ruling under 19 CFR Part 177. Reliance solely on this information may not be considered reasonable care. Importers are referred to Treasury Decision 97-96, which was published in the Federal Register of December 4, 1997, and in the Customs Bulletin of December 17, 1997, for in-depth information on the concept of reasonable care.

(Continued)

Berthing Options for vessels from Far East Russia lacking certification and previously excluded vessels:

- Houston:
 - Vessels must berth at Galveston or Pelican Island Piers
- Galveston/Texas City
 - Vessels must berth at Galveston or Pelican Island Piers
- Freeport
 - All docks are available for berthing
- Corpus Christi
 - All docks are available for berthing
- Port Arthur/Beaumont
 - Berthing at Port Arthur City Docks only

This protocol does not apply to non-AGM vessels.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection will use available tools to ensure the efficiency of the inspectional process and facilitate the arrival and clearance of vessels and associated cargo at all ports of entry, which may include increasing the hours of operation for Agriculture Specialist via reimbursable overtime in accordance with Public Information Notice HOU-SEA 14-07: ***Guidance for Agricultural Reimbursable Overtime*** dated June 24, 2014.

/s/

Roderick W. Hudson
Area Port Director
Port of Houston/Galveston
U.S. Customs and Border Protection