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# DEC: Marshall Islands-based ship dumps oil in Hudson River on Earth Day

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation charged a Republic of the Marshall Islands-based vessel after its crew dumped approximately 20 gallons of waste oil in the Hudson River on Earth Day Friday, Acting Commissioner Basil Seggos announced today.

DEC Environmental Conservation Officers (ECOs) received a call Friday afternoon at 5:15 p.m. reporting an oil sheen observed in the water around a bulk carrier named South Wind, which was docked at Grimmel Industries in the Port of Rensselaer.

ECO Brian Canzeri and members of DEC's spills response team investigated the incident with help from Port of Rensselaer security. The captain of the ship, Ion Lemnaru, told Canzeri a build-up of pressure from the engine's waste oil tanks backed up through the vent pipes and caused oil to spill onto the deck.

The South Wind is a 538-foot ship based in Majuro, Marshall Islands, that transports scrap metal around the globe.

It was determined that crew members collected the spilled oil and poured at least 20 gallons into the ship's drain ports on deck, which then discharged directly into the river.

"It's unfortunate that in 2016 we're still tasked with policing this type of behavior," said Acting Commissioner Seggos. "Whether it's 20 gallons or 200,000 gallons, we're going to treat illegal dumping with the highest degree of scrutiny."

ECO Canzeri issued several violations to the captain and owner of the ship, South Wind Shipping Corporation, including discharging waste oil into waters of the state, failure to contain waste oil, unlawful disposal of used oil, and failure to report an oil spill.

Due to low tide going out, the oil dissipated before the spills response team could contain it. The oil was determined to have caused only minimal environmental impact.

Further investigation revealed that the ship was also storing waste oil in 55 gallon drums in the hull of the ship along with several open 5-gallon pails of oil. DEC alerted the United States Coast Guard, and crews investigated the ship over the weekend and found several deficiencies, including overfilled waste oil tanks and excessive waste oil on board.

The USCG ordered the removal of 4,000 gallons of waste oil from the vessel and mandated the engines be repaired before it can leave the port.

Both USCG and ECOs continue to investigate the incident.