

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

INTER-DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATION

May 28, 2010

The Hampton River Bridge operates under the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 33, Part 117 "Drawbridge Operation Regulations" (33CFR117). Section 117.697 outlines the specific requirements for the Hampton River Bridge which are shown below:

§ 117.697 Hampton River.

The SR1A bridge, mile 0.0 at Hampton, operates as follows:

(a) The draw shall open on signal from April 1 through October 31 for the passage of vessels during daylight hours from three hours before to three hours after each high tide. "Daylight hours" means one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset. High tide occurs one-half hour later than the time of high tide for Portland, Maine, as published in the tide tables published by private entities using data provided by the National Ocean Service. At all other times, the draw shall open on signal if at least three hours notice is given.

(b) The owners of the bridge shall provide and keep in good legible condition two board gages painted white with black figures not less than six inches high to indicate the vertical clearance under the closed draw at all stages of the tide. The gages shall be so placed on the bridge that they are plainly visible to operators of vessels approaching the bridge either up or downstream.

(c) Vessels which can pass under the closed draw with a clearance of one foot or more shall not signal for the opening of the draw. In case a vessel gives the prescribed signal and the drawtender is uncertain as to whether the vessel can safely pass, the drawtender shall open the draw. If the drawtender finds that there would have been a clearance of one foot or more had the draw remained closed, the matter shall be reported immediately to the District Commander, giving the name of the vessel, the time of opening the draw, the clearance under the bridge as indicated by the gage at the time of opening the draw, and the approximate vertical clearance required by the vessel.

[CGD 82-025, 49 FR 17452, Apr. 24, 1984, as amended by USCG-2001-9286, 66 FR 33641, June 25, 2001]

The Bureau of Bridge Maintenance at the New Hampshire Department of Transportation took over operation of the Hampton River Bridge in July of 2009. To comply with Federal Regulations, we adopted formalized operating procedures for the bridge as follows:

April 1st to October 31st

The Bridge has scheduled staffing hours 3 hours each side of high tide during daylight hours (½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset). Additional staffing hours may be added during peak usage months; the additional hours will be shown on our posted schedule (<http://www.nh.gov/dot/org/operations/bridgemaintenance/documents.htm>).

November 1st to March 31st

The Bridge has no scheduled hours

Requesting Bridge Lifts

Bridge lifts may be requested as follows:

- During scheduled hours – No advance notification is required; call the operator's house as you approach the bridge. Call (603) 926-3348 or use Marine Channel 13.
- During non-scheduled hours – Per Code of Federal Regulations, 33 CFR 117.697, a vessel is required to give at least 3 hours notice prior to the time a bridge lift is needed. All requests for bridge openings during non-scheduled hours shall be directed to the following:

NHDOT Transportation Management Center (TMC) – 603-271-6862.
(This facility is manned 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

The TMC will log your request and contact an operator for the bridge lift. Do not contact the lift bridge operators directly as the available operators will vary from day to day. If a request is called in within 3 hours of scheduled hours, you will be directed to wait until the scheduled hours. Please plan your operations accordingly. Communication with the operator at the bridge house does not constitute official notification for a bridge lift during non-scheduled hours – you must contact the TMC.

A copy of our scheduled staffing hours can be obtained by calling (603) 436-1099.

Delays

If a vessel arrives for a scheduled lift or during scheduled hours and the lift bridge operator is not present, please call the TMC. They will work to provide an operator as quickly as possible and New Hampshire DOT will investigate the cause of the delay and take appropriate action.

During non-scheduled hours, if a vessel does not arrive at the bridge within ½ hour of their arranged lift time, the lift bridge operator will leave the bridge and may not be available without an additional 3 hours notice. The ½ hour time may be extended by the lift bridge operator if the vessel is in contact with the bridge and there are valid reasons for additional delay. Vessels that routinely show up outside their scheduled lift window will be reported to the Coast Guard.

Emergencies

During non-scheduled hours, the bridge will open as soon as possible for vessels in distress.

Questions should be directed to (603) 271-3667.
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