



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

MARINE SAFETY ALERT

Inspections and Compliance Directorate

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Washington DC

Safety Alert 07-24

OPEN ROTARY MACHINERY HAZARDS

A recent Coast Guard investigation into a fatality on a commercial fishing vessel highlights the serious risks of working near open rotary machinery. The incident occurred when the vessel's operator was manually adjusting a winch's cable guide. This practice exposed the operator to significant danger, placing him near moving parts and risking entanglement. The cable guide, weakened by excessive corrosion, broke in half, causing the operator to fall into the winch. The investigation also revealed that the winch lacked essential safety features, such as a guard or an auxiliary stop device, which significantly contributed to the fatality.

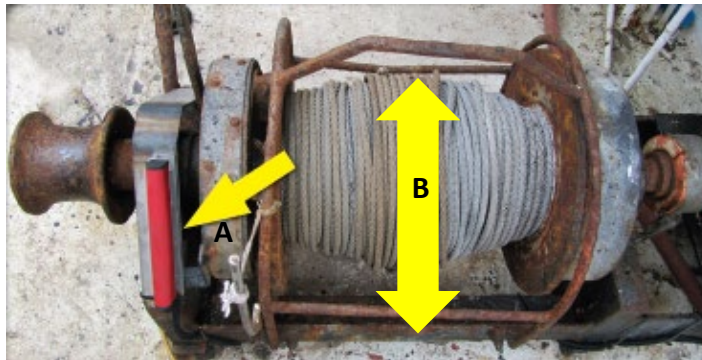


Figure 1. A – Auxiliary-stop device; B- Winch safeguard. ¹

The Coast Guard **strongly recommends** that owners, managers, and operators of uninspected vessels:

- Install guards around winches and other rotating machinery, ensuring the barriers are of sufficient height and strength to effectively block access to moving parts, and always maintain a safe distance.
- Install auxiliary-stopping devices to automatically de-energize winches and other rotating machinery during emergency situations.
- Regularly inspect all components of the winches and other rotating machinery, including the cable guide, drum, motor, and related machinery. Look for signs of wear, corrosion, cracks, or any damage that could compromise the equipment's integrity or functionality.

Investigations and inspection personnel are encouraged to maintain an acute awareness to these issues and initiate corrective actions as needed.

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¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015, December 7). Reducing Winch entanglements with auxiliary-stop device. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2016-105/default.html>