

From the Island Manager:

Friday, September 17: This morning Coast Guard Lt. Winters arrived for the USCG inspection, which was brief, and appeared to be entirely satisfactory. Next to the water system, the ferry is members' biggest asset, and it's great to hear comments like "For a 21 year old vessel, it's in great shape." That speaks well of the care taken by our crew. Steve and Kevin have returned to the island, but here are the two guys who are there every day: Deck Hand Donnie Surratt and Sr. Captain John Farris.



The next photo shows you how the boat is draped to prevent dust escaping, as the ends of the ferry are being sandblasted to apply new nonskid surface, a major area of wear.



That's inside the tent.



From the center of the car deck.

Tacoma Diesel employees are still working on the engine rebuild. Here's one about to go below deck. He must like his work....



In addition to the engine rebuild as a major chunk of drydock expense, the ferry will receive new propeller shafts. Remember our statistics from 2009? Over 4000 trips and 66,000 passengers, 365 days a year.

That's a lot of wear and tear.

And finally, here is the Charlie Wells draped (not an artwork by Christo!) for the sand blasting on each end. Note the areas of spot sanding on the hull, which will be painted, and the zincs replaced.



By all accounts, the work is going well, the marine surveyor had praise for the boat's condition (report to follow), and the news about a return to service may be coming after the weekend.

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Tuesday, September 14: The ferry left Sunday morning, September 12, for drydock at the Vigor Marine shipyard in Tacoma (formerly Marine Industries NW). I could hear it from my house (new mufflers are a priority to replace!) in West Tacoma, and sped up to Pt Defiance to see if we could spot it. We did, but it's just a little dot in the first photo.



Tuesday morning I went to meet with the crew and meet the marine surveyor, Jerry Edwards. John, Steve, Donnie and Kevin were all hard at work cleaning the superstructure and the engine room, and preparing for painting some of it. Tacoma Diesel has begun work on the engines. John is guiding the marine surveyor around the boat today. This surveyor has examined the Charlie Wells several times previously. His job is to examine the entire boat for condition issues, make recommendations for repair or servicing, and come back later to confirm these things have been covered. The final survey report will be submitted to our insurance broker. Copies are in the office, of course.

The Coast Guard will conduct its "out of water" inspection on Friday at 0900. Stay tuned for updates.



Vigor Marine personnel cleaning the hull on Tuesday morning.



View of the busy Vigor Marine shipyard from the deck of the Charlie Wells. The refrigeration ship in the background has been cut in half, adding 40 feet to the center section, and 20 feet in length at one end. Amazing!



Few of you have ever had this view of the Charlie Wells!