

What is all this stuff?

When Congress passes and the President signs a Bill or Act such as the Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Act of 1988, it becomes law and is placed in the **United States Code** under a specific title. The title related to commercial fishing vessels is in **US Code Title 46 – SHIPPING**. Some other Titles can also have some applicability to commercial fishing vessels.

The Secretary of Homeland Security is the Secretary under which the Coast Guard operates. The Coast Guard must use the US Code and draft regulations based on Congress' intent. These regulations are placed in the **Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs)**.

Before being placed in the CFRs an Advanced notice of Proposed Rulemaking or a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking may be published in the **Federal Register** and often allowed time for the public to comment, provide input, and feedback to the proposed regulations. Once all public comments have been taken into consideration at some point a Final Rule will be published and it is this final language that is placed in the appropriate section of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs).

On occasion the Coast Guard finds that additional or clarifying information or guidance on a particular topic is necessary. The Coast Guard releases this additional guidance in various forms. **Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circulars (NVICs)**, **Head Quarters (HQ) Policy Letters**, or **Safety Flyers**.

I have placed each of the above that have applicability to the commercial fishing industry in the folders below.