



**PORT OF OAKLAND  
SEAPORT**

SEPTEMBER 2019

# MARITIME e-NEWS



## Refrigerated cargo volume soars in Oakland

Refrigerated export volume at the Port of Oakland has grown 20 percent in the past year. The increase could indicate that the Port's strategic bet on temperature-controlled cargo is paying off.

The Port said it handled 119,756 20-foot containers of refrigerated exports from August 2018 through July 2019. That was up from 99,740 in the same period a year ago. The figures reinforce Oakland's position as the largest exporter of refrigerated cargo in containers among U.S. ports.

"Our business partners are investing to meet increased overseas demand for U.S. farm goods," said Port of Oakland Maritime Director John Driscoll. "When you couple their expertise with our infrastructure, it makes a compelling case for running the transportation cold chain through Oakland."

The Port's fastest-growing refrigerated exports were beef and pork products from the U.S. Midwest. Beef exports have

*continues on page 3*

## Peak season begins with cargo growth

Peak season began at the Port of Oakland with growth in containerized cargo volume. The Port reported that import loads increased 3.1 percent last month compared to August 2018. Exports rose 1 percent. Empty container shipments declined 14 percent.

The Port said it handled the equivalent of 88,323 20-foot loaded import containers last month. That made it Oakland's busiest August ever for inbound loads. Export volume was 75,080 containers, the Port said. It pointed out that export totals have now risen year-over-year for six consecutive months.

The Port attributed August cargo increases to a pair of influences:

- Continued strong U.S. consumer demand that spurred import growth; and
- Overseas demand for American farm goods resulting in more exports.

"It's good to see volume trending in the right direction," said Port of Oakland Maritime Director John Driscoll. "Let's see now if we can keep it going through the fall."

August-through-November is shipping's highwater mark, the time of year when U.S. retailers import holiday merchandise. Cargo volumes can be a harbinger of the shipping industry's health as well as a broader economic indicator.

The Port reported that despite cargo volume increases, the number of ships visiting Oakland declined 13 percent in August. The Port explained that ocean carriers are loading more cargo on fewer-but-larger vessels to control costs.

The Port said 956 ships have called in Oakland so far in 2019. That's down from 1,066 in the same time period a year ago. According to the Port, fewer ships means less berth crowding in Oakland and a reduction in airborne diesel emissions.

# Wharfingers are the face of the Port of Oakland

In the maritime industry, Wharfingers are the face of a port. That's certainly the case at the Port of Oakland. Wharfingers are responsible for monitoring marine terminal operations, enforcing tariffs, managing lease terms for use of port facilities and facility maintenance. They balance the needs of marine tenants with the Port's interests.

Port Wharfingers are in the field every day. They visit continually with marine terminal operators and other tenants. Wharfingers answer questions, trouble shoot and assist with repairs or improvements to Port facilities.

Chief Wharfinger Eric Napralla manages the department in Oakland. Eric has worked with the Port for eight years in port security and managing leasing projects. He became Chief Wharfinger in July 2018.

Eric manages four Wharfingers at the Port with diverse backgrounds. He says their range of experience allows the Port to better understand tenant needs. "We may be a small team, but we have large accomplishments," he says.

## Meet the Port of Oakland Wharfingers:



### Ralph Reynoso

**Port of Oakland experience: 11 Years**

**Responsibilities: Ben E. Nutter and TraPac marine terminals, trucking companies, Customs operations, Comprehensive Truck Management Program.**

Since college, Ralph Reynoso has been familiar with the maritime industry. He began working in warehouses to put himself through school. Ralph also worked with a previous marine terminal operator at the Port of Oakland, Marine Terminals Corporation. Those opportunities led him to joining the Port of Oakland as a Wharfinger.

Ralph says he aims to provide exceptional service to his marine tenants and care for Oakland citizens. "Transparency, reliability and technology will drive the Port's success through the future," he says. "Not only do we serve our marine tenants but the community of Oakland as well."

Ralph manages the Port's Comprehensive Truck Management Program. The program addresses air quality, safety and security, business and operations and community issues associated with drayage operations at the Port.

In 2019, Port of Oakland Commissioners approved an Air Quality 2020 and Beyond Plan. The objective is to reduce diesel and greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the Port's maritime operations. Oakland's vision is a path toward zero-emissions seaport operations. Since 2005, the Port of Oakland and its partners have reduced diesel truck emissions at the seaport by 98 percent. Ralph says that the Port is addressing the remaining 2 percent of diesel truck emissions.



*Eric Napralla, Chief Wharfinger*



### Richard Taylor

**Port of Oakland experience: 13 years**

**Responsibilities: Charles P. Howard Terminal, Oakland International Container Terminal, warehouses within the Outer Harbor Intermodal Terminal**

Rich Taylor's background in the industry makes him essential to the Wharfinger Department at the Port of Oakland. Rich says maritime is in his blood because his father and grandfather served as ship captains. Rich worked overseas with shipping companies including Blue Star Line and P&O Nedlloyd. Rising through the ranks, Rich's jobs led him to the U.S. Thirteen years ago, he expanded his maritime experience by becoming a Wharfinger at the Port of Oakland.

Rich calls himself an advocate for marine tenants due to his maritime history. He approaches his work with integrity and provides balance between the Port and tenants. "Our customers want the support of Port business leaders and I intend to be that voice for them," says Rich.

Last year, the TraPac marine terminal introduced full-service night gates for Port of Oakland harbor truckers. Rich saw this as an important step for the Port because freight haulers can complete transactions efficiently.

Currently, CenterPoint Properties is breaking ground on the Seaport Logistics Complex. The facility will serve to improve transactions between shippers and truckers. Rich says the facility will modernize the Port and make it even more efficient.

*continues on page 3*





## Mark Simpson

**Port of Oakland experience: 3 years**

**Responsibilities: Oakland International Container Terminal, trucking companies**

Prior to becoming a Wharfinger at the Port of Oakland, Mark Simpson worked with marine terminal companies such as A.P. Moller (APM) and Seaside Transportation Services (STS). After 26 years of working in the terminal industry, Mark became curious about business through the Port's perspective. Becoming a Wharfinger meant understanding how to best support marine tenants and the Port's best interests, he says.

Mark's work history proved beneficial to the Port. He knows the jargon of marine tenants like the back of his hand. His knowledge allows him to effectively communicate with tenants about their needs and to provide support. "Knowing both sides of the maritime industry, I can communicate efficiently with our tenants," says Mark. "This allows business to run smoothly. Tenants can trust that they are in good hands."

Mark sees a bright future for the maritime business. "The Port is growing and our tenants are as well," he says. "We want them to recognize the Port of Oakland as an important partner."



## Kevin Wong

**Port of Oakland experience: 3 years**

**Responsibilities: Tenant billing process improvements, leasing contract development**

Kevin Wong is the newest Wharfinger with the Port of Oakland. Born and raised in the Bay Area, Kevin was fascinated by the cranes at the Port of Oakland. Before joining the Port, Kevin worked for an accounting firm that specialized in auditing. He received his master's in public administration to branch out from the accounting field.

Prior to becoming a Wharfinger, Kevin managed billing contracts with the Port's Finance Division. "Kevin formed relationships with our tenants through his last position, so they are familiar with him. Having him on our team helps streamline how we interact with them financially," says Chief Wharfinger, Eric Napralla. Kevin plans to use his financial background to assist with Wharfinger responsibilities and ensure quality service for Oakland Seaport tenants.

## Reefer Cargo Volume from page 1

increased 45 percent in the past year. Pork volume is up 38 percent in that same period.

The Port attributed its growth in refrigerated cargo to strong consumer demand, increased U.S. farm production and Oakland's location on the eastern edge of the Pacific Rim. Oakland is the final stop for Asia-bound container ships leaving the U.S. That makes it the fastest gateway to Asia, the Port's primary market, for shippers of perishables.

The Port has taken steps this decade to strengthen its foothold in cold chain logistics including:

- Developing new distribution capability;
- Extending operating hours to ease delivery of export containers to the Port for overseas shipment; and
- Installing hundreds of additional electrical outlets to plug in refrigerated containers awaiting vessel loading.

Last fall, Lineage Cool Port Oakland opened at the Port. It's a collaboration of logistics and warehousing industry leaders, Lineage Logistics and Dreisbach Enterprises. The 283,000-square-foot refrigerated distribution center handles containerized perishables mostly beef and pork.

The Port listed other companies that provide temperature-controlled services for exporters through Oakland: PCC Logistics, Pacific Transload Systems, AGRO Merchants Group, Preferred Freezer Services, United Cold Storage, Americold, and United States Cold Storage.

## Lifetime honor for retired Exec Director Chris Lytle

Port of Oakland retired Executive Director Chris Lytle received one of the shipping industry's top honors this month. The Containerization and Intermodal Institute presented him its Lifetime Achievement Award for a 53-year maritime career. The recognition came during the Institute's annual Connie Awards banquet in Long Beach, Ca.

Mr. Lytle, 73, stepped down in July 2019 after six years at the helm in Oakland. He had previously served as Executive Director of the Port of Long Beach. Both are among the nation's 10 largest container seaports.

"I've had a long and satisfying career and this recognition makes it easier to step away," said Mr. Lytle. "I'm leaving the industry with great memories and pride in what I've accomplished alongside hundreds of wonderful colleagues."

Connie Awards are presented annually to maritime industry leaders who've had substantial impact on container shipping. Lifetime Achievement awards are given out less frequently, recognizing prolonged contributions to trade and transportation.

Mr. Lytle is credited with leading Oakland to record-high cargo volume in each of the past two years. His tenure was marked by the introduction of industry service innovations that included:

- Near round-the-clock cargo pick-up and delivery for harbor truckers;
- Online transaction-time reporting at marine terminals; and
- Warehouse and distribution center development adjacent to the docks.

Mr. Lytle is serving as a consultant to the Port of Oakland through year-end.



Chris Lytle