



# Lake Carriers' Association

## For Immediate Release

June 11, 2009

### No Flowering for U.S.-Flag Cargo Movement on Lakes in May

CLEVELAND—The recession tightened its grip on Great Lakes shipping in May. U.S.-Flag lakers moved only 7.1 million tons of cargo, a decrease of 40 percent compared to a year ago.

The steel industry's struggles were clearly evident in May. Loadings of iron ore in U.S. hulls fell 62 percent to 2.2 million tons. When the nation's steel mills are operating at or near capacity, one U.S.-Flag Lakes fleet can move nearly that much iron ore in a month.

Shipments of limestone also plummeted again in May, totaling only 1,989,470 tons, a decrease of 35 percent compared to a year ago. However, the stone trade has been sluggish for the past two years. In May of 2006, U.S.-Flag lakers hauled almost 4.1 million tons, so compared to that period of time, shipments this May were down 51 percent.

May coal loadings were within striking distance of a year ago; shipments were down 220,000 tons, or 9 percent. Relatively strong demand for low-sulfur coal is buoying the trade.

For the year, U.S-Flag carriage stands at 13.7 million tons, a decrease of 50 percent from a year ago. The plunge in demand has taken a toll on the number of vessels in service. On June 1 of this year, 49 U.S.-Flag vessels were working the Lakes. A year ago, the active fleet totaled 75 vessels.

Lake Carriers' Association represents 18 American companies that operate 65 U.S.-Flag vessels on the Great Lakes and carry the raw materials that drive the nation's economy: Iron ore and fluxstone for the steel industry, limestone, and cement for the construction industry, coal for power generation.... Collectively, these vessels can transport more than 115 million tons of cargo a year when high water offsets lack of adequate dredging. More information is available at [www.lcaships.com](http://www.lcaships.com).

Source: Lake Carriers' Association.

Contact: Glen G. Nekvasil, Vice President - Corporate Communications (440-333-9996).

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Information based on data from knowledgeable sources. However, accuracy cannot be guaranteed. Lake Carriers' Association assumes no legal responsibility for the outcome of decisions or commitments made on the basis of this information. This report represents the views of Lake Carriers' Association and may not necessarily represent the views of its individual members.

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Suite 720 ♦ 20325 Center Ridge Rd. ♦ Rocky River, Ohio 44116-3572 ♦ Fax: 440-333-9993 ♦  
[www.lcaships.com](http://www.lcaships.com)

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***The Association Representing Operators of U.S.-Flag Vessels on the Great Lakes***

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