

HIRING BEGINS AT BAY SHIPBUILDING CO.



Tidewater Marine has its ships built by Sturgeon Bay shipbuilders in the Great Lakes. Tidewater Marine is located in New Orleans. The construction of the ships by Sturgeon Bay means that more jobs will be created and commercial business could also be positively affected. The shipbuilders have already laid a keel on the first ship and a second keel will be laid in the middle of December. "We are on an employment ramp-up, bringing back union workers, and we will get to full union employment by late December or early January," said Gene Caldwell, vice president and general manager at Bay Shipbuilding Co. For ships that conduct business on the Great Lakes, Bay Shipbuilding is responsible for repairing and overhauling those ships, both large and small. This is the busiest time of the year for Bay Shipbuilding, known as winter lay-up, because ships are brought in for maintenance and repair since the weather turns nasty. Caldwell is expecting the employment at the shipyard to peak at 800 in the middle of winter this year, with anywhere from 100 to 150 new workers brought onto the staff to help with the large number of ships. "The reason for a little bit of peak this year is because of our new construction," he said. There were only 250 employees at Bay Shipbuilding in the middle of November, which is a member of Fincantieri Marine Group. They share the same owner as Marinette Marine Corp. in Marinette and ACE Marine in Green Bay, Wisconsin. There have been over \$100 million in capital improvements in the Sturgeon Bay and Marinette shipyards by Fincantieri, an Italian company. On the shipyard's waterfront property, a host of new buildings has been constructed in an effort to boost profit. "The PSVs, which are an offshoot of workboats and off-shore supply vessels, are growing as you go into deeper water and longer distances from shore to support these larger drilling rigs," Caldwell said. "Now they're going into some northern regions and that's where we came in with our expertise in ice class (vessels) and that was one of the interests that brought Tidewater to us. It is something new for us, and I think it's the hot trend in the shipbuilding market right now. There are quite a few of them in contract right now around the world." Ship freighters will arrive at the shipyard beginning in January that will need major repairs. Those repairs include engine replacement and the replacing of steel parts in the ships' cargo holds. Some of the ships that will be at the yard for repairs were constructed there 30 years ago. "We plan on signing some more contracts and putting the shipbuilding part back at Bay Shipbuilding," Caldwell said. "There is very much a commercial flavor to what we are looking at "For 12 to 18 months the market was very slow, no one was contracting and now it has got some momentum."

<https://blog.granted.com/>