

Regulations covering charcoal carried in containers tightened

Regulations governing the carriage of charcoal carried in containers are being tightened to protect crew, cargoes and vessels.

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In response to a number of serious fires on containerships caused by charcoal carried in containers, the IMO has updated its International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code to improve the safety of all participants in the supply chain.

The World Shipping Council (WSC), together with the International Group of P&I Clubs and the TT Club have published a [quick reference guide](#) to the updated provisions. Below is a summary of the key changes.

Key changes

- Shippers must declare all charcoal shipments as Dangerous Goods, with detailed documentation requirements. There are no exemptions.
- Charcoal must undergo a specific weathering process after production, or a specific process after pyrolysis, unless otherwise approved by the competent authority.
- Charcoal must not exceed a temperature of 40°C on the day of packing into packagings. The transport of unpackaged charcoal in containers (bulk transport) remains prohibited.
- A 30cm gap must be left between the cargo and the top of the container. This is combined with two options: either i) the stowage height of the package(s) in the CTU should not exceed 1.5m, or ii) the maximum block size of the packages should be 16m³ and a minimum of 15cm of space between blocks should be maintained.