

# The Post-Standard

## **Port of Oswego Authority chief expects this year's cargo traffic to be a bit better than last season's**

**Oswego expects cargo traffic similar to last season's**

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**By John Doherty**

**Staff writer**

At a time when cargo shipments on the Great Lakes are foundering, the port of Oswego could be one of the few safe harbors.

"We should hold our own and maybe do a little better than last year," said Jonathan Daniels, executive director of the Port of Oswego Authority.

Shipping on the Great Lakes could drop significantly this year, according to the Cleveland-based Lake Carriers Association, an organization representing 16 shipping companies with 63 vessels. "It's already down and it could drop further," said Glen Nekvasil, spokesman for the association. "Our limestone (shipment) numbers for April just came out and it's down 50 percent and iron ore will be down too."

However, Oswego does not cater to limestone, iron and coal, and other large commodities shipped on the Great Lakes.

"Those items don't affect our operation," Daniels said.

Instead, cement, road salt, petroleum products, aluminum and some agricultural products top the list of commodities handled at the Port of Oswego.

"We hope to at least maintain what we have," Daniels said.

Last year, more than a million tons of cargo went through the Port of Oswego, including 182,000 tons of foreign cargo. That's a 287 percent increase over 1999 when the port logged 47,141 tons of foreign freight.

"We have an aggressive program to market the port and attract new customers," said Daniels, who was in Chicago promoting the port at a wind energy conference.

More than 100 156-foot windmill blades, built in Brazil and destined for a windmill farm in Steuben County, were brought by ship to the port in 2007.

The port could benefit from the Northeast's growing wind farm market if more blades and other parts are shipped to Oswego, Daniels said.

Other new commodities will pass through the port this season, Daniels said.

This summer several barges, bound for Three Rivers, in Quebec, will be loaded with corn at the port. That operation will take several weeks, Daniels said.

The port also will ship rebar reinforcing bars typically used to strengthen concrete for the first time.

And new customers from Georgia and Kentucky will begin shipping aluminum through the port, Daniels said.

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