NOAA Nautical Charting Calendar

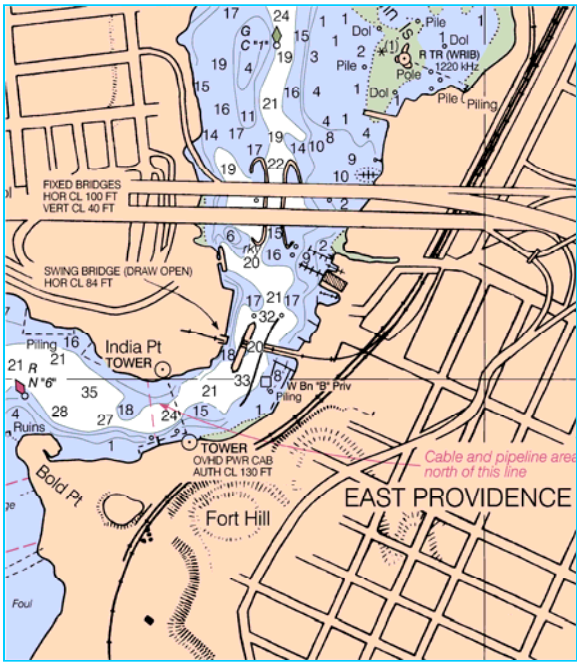
Bridge Clearances

Horizontal and vertical bridge clearances are provided on nautical charts where navigation can take place on both sides of the bridge. Clearances charted in feet are rounded down to the nearest foot; those in meters are rounded down to the nearest tenth of a meter.

Vertical clearances are most often charted relative to Mean High Water, and thus may *understate* the actual vertical clearance for safety. The approximate vertical clearance at a particular time is given by adding the mean range of the tide to the charted vertical clearance, and subtracting the calculated height of the tide at that time and location. Many bridges are equipped with "board gauges" (painted white with black figures) to show the clearance at the moment. For long-span fixed bridges, vertical clearance also depends on temperature and vehicular traffic.

The bridge label format is: bridge name, bridge type, horizontal clearance (including horizontal clearance in the up position if not a fixed bridge), the vertical clearance (or vertical clearance in the down position if not a fixed bridge), VHF radio information, and clearance data for any overhead power cables. If there is more than one draw, information is provided for each.

CONRAIL LIFT BRIDGE
HOR CL 500 FT
VERT CL 49 FT DOWN
VERT CL 135 FT UP
OVHD POWER CABLE
AUTHORIZED CL 140 FT



Examples of bridge labels showing clearance information on chart 13225, Providence Harbor

March 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Prepared by the Office of Coast Survey, National Ocean Service, NOAA, www.NauticalCharts.NOAA.gov, 1-301-713-2770				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31