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Dania Beach boatyard rolls out 900-ton boatlift

Derektor sets its sights on mega-yachts and a revived marine industry

EILEEN SOLER • Waterfront Times

Boatyard Derektor of Florida has finished building a 900-ton mobile boat hoist — the largest in Florida and the tallest in the world.

Dwarfing buildings and people to the size of toys in Derektor's 17-acre Dania Beach boatyard, the \$3.5 million monster machine will give the mega-yacht construction and maintenance business

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growing power.

"We'll be able to go from servicing three yachts on shore right now to servicing eight at a time," said James Brewer, Derecktor's business development director.

Previously, the company operated fine with only a 500-ton lift. But the equipment had not been upgraded since the company opened the location in 1967 on the Dania Cut-off Canal, just one mile from Port Everglades.

To further accommodate larger mega-yachts, Derecktor is also giving its outdated boat slip a \$2.5 million makeover.

The old slip depended on a marine elevator operated by eight winches to lift boats for on-ground service. The new slip will be 6 feet wider with new seawalls and a concrete pad to hold the new more maneuverable, remote controlled boat hoist that uses straps to lift and then drive vessels onto dry locations.

The new boat hoist, fabricated by Cimolai Technology in Italy, is 100 feet long, 62 feet wide and 80 feet tall. Its wheels are 9.5 feet in circumference. It will be put into operation in mid September, Brewer said.

"We're moving forward on the belief that an economic recovery is near and the marine industry will be able to begin hiring more people to service a pent-up demand," Brewer said. "It's an investment for our benefit and for the marine industry at large."

Meanwhile, the Dania Cut-off Canal is being dredged by the Florida Inland Navigation District to deepen its floor from 10 to 17 feet. The project will give super yachts up to 250 feet better access to the canal and, as a result, bring more work to waterfront businesses.

Call it a perfect and good storm for Derecktor of Florida.

"Everything is occurring at the same time and that is a great thing. The old ways served us well but we were constrained for more than 30 years by the tide. The new changes will effect all the subcontractors and clients we've had to turn away," Brewer said.