

FMI Examines Accessorial Risk in Drayage Planning

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ITASCA, IL - May 28, 2026 -
Freight Management Inc. (FMI), a U.S.-based freight brokerage with more than 40 years of experience, is examining how container-related accessorial charges are becoming a more important factor in drayage planning as logistics teams manage tighter appointment windows, uneven inland execution, chassis availability issues, and billing exposure.

The company said many added drayage costs appear after a shipment is already under pressure. A container may be available, but the warehouse appointment may not line up. A driver may be ready, but the chassis may not be in position. A shipment may be scheduled, but a clustered vessel arrival, ramp delay, or empty return restriction can change the cost profile of the move before delivery is complete.

FMI said these conditions are making early planning more important for shippers, forwarders, brokers, and transportation teams working to reduce unnecessary demurrage, detention, per diem, storage, pre-pull, chassis rental, driver wait time, and missed appointment charges.

Recent industry reporting shows why the issue remains relevant. C.H. Robinson?s May 2026 drayage market

update reported that clustered vessel arrivals were creating uneven gateway pressure at major coastal gateways, including Houston, Los Angeles/Long Beach, New York/New Jersey, and Savannah. The report also noted that chassis availability and appointment access were tightening during peak arrival windows, while the National Drayage Spot Market Index was tracking roughly eight percent higher year over year.

FMI said those conditions do not always create visible systemwide disruption, but they can increase cost exposure on individual container moves. When rail ramps, terminals, chassis pools, warehouses, and final delivery locations are not aligned, logistics teams may have less time to correct problems before charges begin to accrue.

?Accessorial charges are rarely the result of one bad decision,? said Bob Mayo, CEO of Freight Management Inc. ?They usually come from timing gaps. If the container is ready but the appointment is not, or the warehouse is ready but the chassis is not, the shipment can start creating cost exposure before anyone thinks of it as a problem.?

The company said the financial impact of these charges is one reason demurrage and detention have remained a regulatory and operational focus. In 2024, the Federal Maritime Commission issued updated detention and demurrage billing rules establishing requirements for who can be billed, invoice timing, dispute processes, and the information that must be included on invoices. The FMC said the rule was intended to promote supply chain fluidity by creating a clearer connection between the failure to pick up cargo or return equipment in a timely manner and the appropriate fee.

FMI said the rule changes highlight the importance of documentation as well as planning, especially for teams monitoring demurrage and detention exposure across container moves.Transportation teams not only need to understand when charges may begin, but also need accurate records showing container availability, appointment timing, free time, equipment return requirements, billing dates, and communications between parties.

The company said added charge exposure is also affected by how drayage information is managed before the move is booked. Teams that rely on disconnected emails, spreadsheets, carrier portals, terminal notices, phone calls, and warehouse schedules may miss timing conflicts that are visible only when the full shipment sequence is reviewed together.

Mayo said many freight teams are now evaluating drayage planning less as a one-step transportation task and more as a series of time-sensitive checkpoints.

?The truck move is only one part of the equation,? Mayo said. ?The real planning challenge is knowing when the container is available, when the free time expires, when the warehouse can receive it, when equipment

must be returned, and whether the carrier has what they need to execute without creating additional charges.?

FMI said this is especially important in drayage involving inland rail and high-volume port markets, where localized disruption can change quickly. Chassis constraints, gate congestion, appointment shortages, vessel bunching, rail dwell, and warehouse delays can each affect whether a planned drayage move stays within the expected cost range.

The company said businesses are increasingly looking beyond linehaul pricing when evaluating container transportation. While rate competitiveness remains important, FMI said many logistics teams are also paying closer attention to accessorial transparency, documentation accuracy, carrier communication, and planning discipline.

FMI said accessorial risk will likely remain a central planning concern throughout 2026 as cargo patterns fluctuate, appointment windows tighten during peak periods, and inland execution varies by ramp, terminal, and market. The company said reducing preventable charges will depend less on reacting to problems after they occur and more on identifying timing conflicts before the container move is already under pressure.

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Freight Management Inc.

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