

SAFETY ALERT



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Fire in Smoking Area Linked to Cigarette Butt Container



Damaged Freezer after fire.



Damaged Trash Can and Cigarette Butt Container

Recently, personnel on an offshore platform, smelled smoke and exited their quarters to find a small unplugged freezer in the smoking area engulfed in flames. Personnel extinguished the fire using fire extinguishers and doused all smoldering areas until the situation was brought under full control. It was determined that a plastic cigarette butt container had ignited, and the resulting flame spread to the freezer, another cigarette butt container, a plastic trash can, and the plywood support upon which all were located. The original butt container from which the fire emanated was completely consumed by the fire.

Although exact details about the ignition source remain unknown, the operator's investigation determined it was possible that a hot cigarette in an overfilled butt container ignited the other butts and the container before spreading and burning for as long as 20 minutes.

Therefore, BSEE recommends that Operators:

- Ensure all cigarette butt containers are not in the vicinity of combustible items.
- Create and enforce a policy for periodically emptying each cigarette butt container to avoid overfilling and the resultant fire hazard.
- Place every cigarette butt container on a noncombustible surface.

-- BSEE--

A Safety Alert is a tool used by BSEE to inform the offshore oil and gas industry of the circumstances surrounding a potential safety issue. It also contains recommendations that could assist avoiding potential incidents on the Outer Continental Shelf.