

SAFETY ALERT



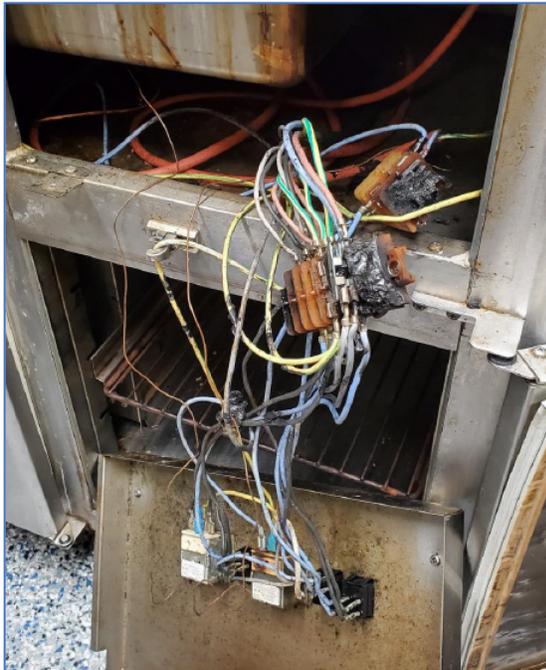
Safety Alert No. 431

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Galley and Living Quarter Fires



The crack on the surface of the steam table may have allowed steam to enter the enclosure and short out the electronics inside, causing a fire.

Recently reported galley and living quarter fires have highlighted maintenance concerns within grills, stoves, ovens, dryers, power connections, and electrical wiring. According to Operator's reports:

- A cook noticed an unusual smell and saw a small flame coming from a crack in the steam table. The cook extinguished the flame with water and notified the supervisor. The supervisor noticed a small amount of black smoke coming out of a crack on the steam table and immediately unplugged it. The cabinet doors were opened, and no flame was seen. The electricians removed the electrical panel access cover and found the terminal block smoldered (see photos above).
- A kitchen worker was prepping a gas chargrill for a meal. While trying to light the grill with the electrical ignitor, the worker witnessed an electric arc coming from the hinge bracket on the grill. The worker shut off power to the grill and notified the control room. Further investigation found that the hinge bracket had broken and was pinching the ignitor wire causing it to arc and to be cut in half.

- A general alarm was sounded due to smoke in the laundry room. Smoke appeared to be coming from the dryers. The clothes were removed from the dryers and found to be extremely hot. A full muster occurred. The dryers were taken out of service and upon further inspection, it was discovered that the heating cycle was not working correctly causing the dryer to over-heat.
- A member of the catering/steward staff discovered smoke coming from a dryer in the laundry room. The individual immediately notified the chief steward. The two returned to the laundry room to discover small flames in a dryer drum. The chief steward immediately notified the captain, who sounded the alarm and dispatched the fire team.
- Galley personnel were in the process of removing a drip pan, located below the galley griddle, when liquid from the drip pan splashed on the lower controls of the unit. This shorted out the controls and tripped the galley breaker. No flames were observed, but slight charring was noted on the electrical wiring behind the panel.
- Sparks and smoke were observed from a receptacle in a stateroom. A hand-held chemical extinguisher was used on the receptacle, and the incident was reported to the bridge. The breaker was opened and locked out. It was discovered that the 16 amp circuit could not withstand the prolonged use of 12.8 amp portable space heaters.
- A galley fire resulted in a crew muster. The source of the fire was hand towels which were folded up inside a stainless-steel cabinet with no electrical or chemical source in the cabinet. The fire was extinguished with a dry chem extinguisher. The fire may have been caused by drying laundry with oily residues.

Therefore, BSEE recommends that operators consider:

- Developing a galley equipment annual service review. The review should include electrical connections, ground fault analysis, hidden wires and components that aren't often visually inspected, as well as OEM recommended maintenance.
- Ensuring that the electrical components of galley equipment are not exposed to liquids, steam, or food scraps. Check enclosures for damage.
- Unplugging galley equipment during maintenance and certain cleaning operations.
- Ensuring grease collection associated with galley cooking equipment is working properly, drained regularly, and kept free of debris.
- Increasing inspections of galley electrical equipment, ovens, and ranges, with additional focus on electrical switches, panels, receptacles, and connections.
- Removing from service any galley equipment with electrical concerns or defects.
- Inspecting fire extinguishers monthly and service them annually. Refer to 33 CFR 145 for fire extinguisher type, location, and quantity requirements.

– 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.

Category: Fire, Personnel Safety