

Crewman badly scalded during tank cleaning

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Seahealth.DK has circulated a report of an incident during tank cleaning in which a crewman was badly scalded, receiving first and second degree burns over a third of his body.

What happened?

The incident occurred during hot water cleaning on lube oil tanks, when cleaning machines were exchanged between sequences of cargo tanks. When changing sequence, the tank cleaning hose, when pressurized, opened up and hot sea water released freely from the line. The injured party was positioned alone right in front of the hydrant and not expecting the failure. None of the crew saw what caused the failure, but they noticed steam clouds from hot water coming off the hydrant and the injured person next to the hydrant.

Another crewman jumped towards the valve to close it down. The injured person was sitting down under shock and not responding. He was helped to undress and put under running freely safety shower to cool down.



Unsafe condition • Unsafe act • Near miss • Accident

Our member's investigation noted the following:

- The personal protective equipment (PPE) used for this operation were boiler

suits, safety shoes, safety goggles, helmets, safety gloves, all according to company procedures.

- The plan for the tank cleaning had been discussed and a risk assessment had taken place as part of the procedures.
- The sequence in which the tanks were to be cleaned had been agreed before preparations started.
- Tank cleaning hoses for the next sequence of cleaning were prepared in advance and connected to the system during the previous sequence.
- The cleaning temperature was approx. 80°C.
- At the time of the incident six crew members were working on deck: Bosun, pumpman, two AB's and two seamen.
- Crew were standing by different tanks opening and shutting down appropriate tank cleaning machines.

Immediate cause

Investigation revealed that the most likely cause was that the securing mechanism/locking mechanism for the camlock coupling was either defective or not properly locked, leading to the coupling to break off when pressure was applied. When the hose was found, after it had gone off the connection point, one of the locking handles was found broken off; the shaft missing and the gasket was found on the deck.

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