

## Near miss: Water bottles reused for fuel storage

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During a vessel inspection, plastic water bottles were discovered being reused to store diesel on board a fast rescue craft (FRC).

### What happened?

There was no proper labelling or means of substance identification. The bottles were emptied subsequently and discarded accordingly. A safety stand down was held with the crew.

### What went wrong? What were the causes?

- Inappropriate management and handling of flammable liquid – water bottles used not for their intended purpose, but for storage of diesel fuel without any proper labelling.
- The storage of fuel oil or other chemical substances in drinking water containers was a ‘usual’ practice for the crew due to alleged unavailability of special containers on board.
- Lack of safety awareness: the potential risks of fire or spill, and the possible consequences to the crew members, environment and to the vessel, were not identified, nor properly assessed.

### Lessons learnt / Actions taken

- All flammable and combustible liquids should be stored in a designated storage area in special containers with sufficient ventilation means in line with SDS indicated storage requirements.
- **Water bottles should not be reused.** There have been and are incidents in the industry of accidental consumption of fuel, thinners and other substances, due to water bottles being reused for other substances.
- Vessel management should identify requirements for appropriate and suitable containers for chemical storage, observing regulatory and operational requirements, and arrange delivery as necessary.
- Full crew discussion and review of risks associated with inadequate handling/storage of flammable and hazardous substances.

#### IOGP Life Saving Rules:



Bypassing safety controls

Members may wish to refer to the following similar incidents:

- Person accidentally drank hazardous substance
- Person accidentally drank hazardous substance: Unmarked bottle

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