

LP BULLETIN

Friday 22 February 2008

Bulletin 568 - 2/08 - Preventing Laundry Fires - Worldwide

The majority of ship board fires originate in the engine room, but a substantial number of preventable fires occur in laundry rooms due to poor practices.

Lint

The main cause of dryer fires is the build up of lint inside and under the dryer. Regular maintenance should include accessing dryer vents and vent hoses to ensure they are clear. The build-up of lint causes dryers to run longer and hotter than they should. Heat limiting switches can wear out and fail from fatigue.

- Rig vent hoses as short and straight as possible with a direct route to the outside
- Ensure dryers are checked frequently according to the planned maintenance schedule
- Remove lint which can build up beneath the unit, in filters, hoses and vents.

The image (right) shows a build-up of lint, on fire, inside a vent hose. Once ignited, the fire can quickly spread.



Washing powder



Many washing powders contain oxidizing agents, or oxygen-based bleaching agents, to promote cleaning. Oxidizing agents are substances that, while in themselves not necessarily combustible, may, generally by yielding oxygen, cause, or contribute to, the combustion of other material.

If too much powder is used in a wash then it is often not all removed during the wash cycle. If the washing load is then transferred to a dryer machine, any washing powder present may assist in the ignition of a fire.

- Use written notices in laundry rooms to inform staff of the danger of putting too much washing powder in machines
- Ensure guidelines, including those on washing powder packaging, are translated into the working language of the crew.

Source of information: UK P&I Club
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