

MSF: Burn to arm from contact with tumble dryer

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The Marine Safety Forum (MSF) has published [Safety Alert 25-13](#) relating to a crew member burning themselves on a tumble dryer.

What happened?

A crew member suffered a minor burn on the left lower arm when reaching into a tumble dryer, and their arm touched the metal frame around the door. The incident occurred when the crew member opened the tumble dryer mid-cycle, before it had finished the program, and therefore it had not completed the cooling down session.

Why did it happen?

The heavy duty tumble driers used on board ships run hot. The manual for this tumble dryer states that during the drying process there will be a maximum temperature of 80°C inside the machine. A test follow-up test done on the vessel has confirmed this. After opening the tumble dryer while running the drying program, the temperature of the frame around the door was measured at 80.2°C. It took a further two and a half minutes before the temperature was below 60°C. Second degree burns can occur at temperatures of 60°C and above, depending on the surface and the duration of the contact. Another test showed, that if after full completion of the drying program, including the cooling down session, the temperature will be maximum 40°C.

IOGP Life Saving Rules:



Bypassing safety controls



Energy isolation

What can we learn?

- “Safety” isn’t only for when we’re at work and on shift.
- Tumble dryers are potentially as hazardous as any rotating machine or industrial oven, and should be treated with the same respect.
- WAIT! A few moment’s patience could have saved everyone a lot of trouble, discomfort and paperwork.
- How do we make it easy to do things safely? Should the door of a tumble dryer have an interlock so that it remains locked and closed until it has cooled sufficiently to be safely opened?

according to IOGP's Life Saving Rules.

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