Incident / Near Miss Lessons Learned

- These stories are always of great interest at RVOC and RVTEC.
- How can we improve getting these stories to Crew and Techs to increase awareness of hazards?

Incident / Near Miss Story Example

What happened:

While working with PreLube 19 (a ship wire lubricant), equipment used for lubricating was returned to the lab for cleaning. The rags used during cleaning were rinsed and hung on a wire basket to dry.

Two days later, another employee needed the basket, saw the dry rags, and disposed of them in the trash around 8:00 AM. That afternoon employees noticed an odor in the lab. The source was identified as a trash barrel containing the discarded rags, which had begun to smolder.

Key Risk Factors:

- There are six employees working in the mooring lab and not all are aware of hazards associated with specific products.
- Even though the rags appeared to be dried out they can still pose a hazard. Per the SDS, the rags should of immediately went into a metal container full of water to prevent spontaneous combustion, then a waste collection should have been submitted.

Mitigation / Lesson Learned:

Moving forward, all rags used with PreLube 19 will be placed directly into a designated metal container filled with water, in accordance with the manufactures SDS.

Incident / Near Miss Story Example

What happened:
While loading Lube Oil Barrels in port with ships crane, a pallet holding the barrels snapped. The pallet tipped to one side sending one barrel to the deck from about 5 feet. Thanks to the Bosuns quick action the load was lowered to the deck quickly when he heard cracking a few seconds before hand. The other barrels stayed in place by being held up by the slings. No environmental damage occurred and no one was injured. Thankfully just a dented LO barrel.

Key Risk Factors:
Pallet integrity not suited for lifting - standard pallets (especially wood) *are often designed* for forklift handling, not dynamic crane lifts Hidden weaknesses (cracks, water damage, age) can fail under load.
Point loading and uneven weight distribution - Oil barrels concentrate weight; if not evenly centered, one side of the pallet takes excessive stress. Shifting during the lift increases load imbalance.
Lack of secondary containment - The pallet itself was acting as the primary lifting platform without backup support

Mitigation / Lesson Learned:
Pre-lift inspection & verification - Inspect pallets for: Cracks, rot, prior repairs Fastener condition. Confirm weight vs. safe working load (SWL). If in doubt = reject
Use secondary securing methods - Cargo nets. Additional slings around the load (not just under pallet). Ensure the load remains contained even if the pallet fails.

Reinforce Stop Work Authority - The Bosun's reaction is exactly what you want: Recognize abnormal condition (cracking sound) Immediately stop/lower load. We Highlighted this as a positive safety example.