

Safety Alert

Number: 24-10

Published: 08/10/2024

Subject: Chemical Contact with Cooks Eye

What Happened / Narrative

During the routine cleaning of the galley after dinner service was complete the vessel cook was using Foaming Oven Cleaner which contained Sodium Hydroxide. He had sprayed the cleaner into the cooker hood, leaving it a while for the cleaner to activate, he then went back to inspect the area that was being cleaned when some of the chemical cleaner dropped from the cooker hood falling between the cook's prescription glasses and his left eye. The cleaning solution made contact with the cooks left eyeball causing severe irritation and a burning sensation. The crewmember contacted the vessel Master, who then initiated a thorough cleanse of the crewmember's eye using sterile eye wash and Fluorescein Eye Drops. As a precautionary measure the Coastguard Doctor was called who advised that the crewmember should be medevac'd and so was airlifted to a local hospital for review and further treatment.

Why Did it Happen / Cause

- Crewmember not wearing the correct Protective Eyewear
- Lack of situational awareness and not adhering to the guidelines provided on the substance Safety Data Sheet
- Perception that normal prescription eye wear would guard against chemical contact

Corrective Actions Taken / Recommendations

The following actions were taken by the vessel / vessel owner:

The crewmember's eye was flushed using several litres of sterile eyewash, Fluorescein eye drops were also administered. Medical advice was sought and a medical evacuation to a local hospital recommended.

Any routine task requiring the use of chemicals need to be closely supervised.

Photographs / Supporting Information



The information contained within this Safety Alert and the associated MSF web site is provided in good faith for the benefit of our members and does not constitute and is not intended to constitute professional advice or any form of formal representation on behalf of any MSF member or officer. The text as provided by submitting organisations may be amended to ensure that it is brief, informative and readable but will as far as reasonably practicable remain as per the intent of the original submission. For the avoidance of doubt, no liability whatsoever shall be attached to any guidance, recommendation or statement contained therein. Contents should be reviewed individually by recipients who will determine relevance to their own operations.