

Marine Safety Flash



A18-05 (15th Feb)

High Potential Electrical Event

Incident Overview

A leaking water cooler located in the gym of an offshore vessel had leaked so much water that the 230V power input leading into the lower rear of the machine was immersed, resulting in an earth fault. See below photos.



Key Findings

- (1) The event was identified through a 230V earth fault.
- (2) This water cooler was previously removed due to leaks. It was put back, in a secondary containment to catch the leak.
- (3) There was no formal assessment of additional hazards/risk this may impose.
- (4) The water level in the secondary containment was not monitored, resulting in the power supply connection being immersed.
- (5) High potential of electrocution / personal injury.

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Recommendations

- The equipment was immediately isolated and removed from service.
- Faulty equipment should be condemned or properly repaired before re-instatement. Adding secondary containment to any leaking source is not addressing root cause and not a sufficient control.
- Improve ships husbandry, hazard inspection and training of shipboard crew on management of change, particularly highlighting the assessment of new hazards a change may bring.