



GOOD CATCH from **The American Club**

Oil-Soaked Lagging

Description

A vessel was mid-ocean and over 800 nautical miles from her next port when the fire alarm sounded in the engine room. The engineer on watch saw smoke coming from one of the generators. He quickly shut down the generator and reported the emergency to the bridge. The general alarm was sounded.

The crew used CO₂ from a large extinguisher with a hose reel and extinguished the fire that was smoldering in the generator exhaust lagging. Their quick reaction prevented the fire from spreading and minimized the damage.

An investigation revealed that the exhaust lagging had been soaked with some oil during previous repairs. An inspection of the other two generators revealed similar issues with their exhaust lagging.

Actual Damages

The damage was fortunately limited to the exhaust lagging of that generator. The lagging was replaced on all three generators at the next port at a cost of \$4,500 each.



Potential Damages

The price of new lagging was a small price to pay for what could have happened. Had the lagging been more heavily oil-soaked, or had the fire not been caught early, the damage could have been significantly worse. The generator could have been damaged. Electrical equipment and wiring could have been damaged, too. Had the fire gotten worse, efforts to extinguish the fire could also have caused additional damage. The costs to repair damage from large engine room fires can be significant plus the vessel can be out of service for months. Lastly and most importantly fires are a colossal risk to human life.

Prevention

- ★ Engineers should regularly inspect engine exhaust lagging and insulation on other hot surfaces to ensure it is not oil-soaked and replace it if it is oil-soaked.
- ★ When the engines are running, engineers should regularly look for indications that exhaust lagging may be smoldering or smoking and know what actions to take when that happens.
- ★ Mariners should always conduct fire drills as if there is a real fire. That will better ensure a high level of preparedness in the event of an actual emergency.

When you identify a hazard before something goes wrong...

it's a Good Catch.

When you stop an operation before something bad happens...

it's a Good Catch.

When you recognize and address a problem with oil-soaked exhaust lagging...

that's a Good Catch, too!



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