



Near Miss!



Date: November 12, 2020

Activity: Mixing Household Chemicals

What Happened:

A new employee was tasked with cleaning an outdoor area used for breaks. It's a flat steel deck and had a good bit of grime, so the employee decided this called for a powerful cleaner.

He brought a mop bucket, wringer, and mop outside and, after sweeping, mixed up a solution of hot water with bleach, pine cleaner and ammonia. He began mopping the deck and, shortly after, the Steward came out to check on him and noticed an extraordinarily strong odor.

He asked the employee what was in the mop water and, on learning what it was, immediately emptied it down the janitor sink and flushed it with copious amounts of running water.

He explained that the hand had made chlorine gas - a toxic substance extremely harmful to the lungs. If this had been inside the building, there could have been serious injury to one or many.

Why it Happened:

The crew member didn't realize that he shouldn't be mixing chemicals. He wasn't properly trained to perform the work.

Typical Hazards:

- Chemical burns

Corrective Actions:

- The team held a meeting to discuss (not) mixing chemicals
- A JSA was prepared for mopping procedure
- The chemical labels were reviewed with the team
- The hand who mixed the solution spent time working with a more experienced team member.

