



THIS DAY IN NAVAL SAFETY HISTORY

OCT. 5, 2010

USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD 41) FIRE

At about 0400 while in port, watch standers smelled smoke and Damage Control Central (DCC) received at least one high-temperature alarm for the space. The fire was extinguished nearly three hours after the first indications.

The Command Investigation determined the most probable cause of the fire to be the spontaneous combustion of unauthorized linseed oil stored in the Deck Division office. Investigators estimated the loss in excess of \$9 million with damage spread across 48 spaces. The audible alarm signal was out of service and the watch stander failed to identify the visual alarm in a timely manner due to poor watch standing practices.

LESSONS LEARNED/PREVENTATIVE ACTIONS: Most significant causal factors identified included: acquisition and storage of unauthorized hazardous material, poor watch standing resulting in delay in detection and identification of fire, and lack of damage control knowledge and proficiency during fire response.

