



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region**

Notice No. 023

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OCS Operations Safety Alert

Sump Tank Fire -- Man Burned

A fire recently occurred on an offshore production platform when gas escaping from the top of an open sump tank ignited.

After swabbing a well, a wireline operator and helper were bleeding off a flowline and header through a hose into a sump tank which had the lid open. A gas operated sump pump was operating and the pump exhaust gas was being discharged into the sump tank. Gases escaping through the open lid of the sump tank ignited and the wireline helper working near the tank received minor burns and second degree burns on his left hand and around his mouth. A nylon control line located above sump tank ruptured from the heat of the fire and activated the platform emergency shutdown system. The cause of ignition is unknown. The fire was quickly extinguished and platform damage was negligible.

To prevent a recurrence of this accident the operator plans to modify all sump tanks in the area as follows:

1. Install seals and locking devices on the lids.
2. Install a connection for attaching bleed-off hoses.
3. Install a gas vent line and route to a safe location.

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Gulf of Mexico Area