

SAFETY FLASH 25-109: ENTERING A CARGO HOLD

There are several reasons to enter a cargo hold, often to perform cleaning tasks. On most ships, you can only enter a cargo hold via a ladder.

GOOD PRACTICE

- In case of a risk of hazardous gases or vapors, first measure the oxygen and toxicity levels before entering the space. Consider phosphine, etc.
- Always use approved ladders that are in good condition.
- Before use, check that the ladder is stable.
- Make sure the ladder is properly secured before use.
- Keep ladders clear of obstacles.
- Use both hands when climbing or descending a ladder.
- Always descend steep ladders facing the ladder.
- Position the ladder in such a way that you can safely step over the den.
- During loading or unloading operations, only enter the hold with the captain's permission.
- Wear shoes with non-slip soles.
- Use sufficient lighting when working in the dark.
- When a skid steer loader or forklift is driving in the hold, alert the driver to the location of the ladder and that someone is entering the hold.



BAD PRACTICE

- x Entering the hold without knowledge of the product that was in the hold.
- x Using damaged ladders.
- x Entering the hold without reporting it during loading or unloading operations.
- x Using the ladder incorrectly, e.g. by sliding down the side.
- x Entering the hold out of sight of the crane operator during loading or unloading operations.
- x Holding materials in one or both hands when climbing or descending a ladder.



The left ladder was hit by a skid steer loader while cleaning the hold.



ACTION QUESTIONS

- Are there any residues of cargo present that could be dangerous? (Powder, liquid, vapour)
- Is the ladder being used in good condition and is it properly secured?
- Do I have the correct PPE to safely enter the cargo hold and carry out my work?
- Is there sufficient lighting?

