

Alert No 21/2015

This safety alert has been prepared by the RSTA. Completed forms for adding to the RSTA website should be submitted to Clive Mitchell clive@rsta-uk.org For further information regarding this safety alert please email Clive or phone 07557529410

**Safety Alert**

 **Skip Fire**

A fire started in a general waste skip in a Devon depot, spreading to the adjacent red diesel tank. Although the side of the tank was damaged, the bottom 25% and the outer skin remained intact due to the low level of fuel. The immediate cause of this fire was an ignition source entering the skip of mixed waste. This was either hot thermoplastic material or a discarded cigarette. However, there are a number of root causes that have come out of the investigation which we can all learn from. These include:

1. This site has been audited on a number of occasions. The findings from the audits indicate that there is a endemic issue with the segregation of waste. The skip contained aerosol cans – despite this being picked up as an observation in previous audits. There have been issues in relation to audit findings not being actioned and closed out. These have then not been escalated and addressed.
2. Changes in depot layout have resulted in the storage of

highly flammable materials being in close proximity at an



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ignition source. Any such changes such as this must be reviewed via the fire risk assessment for the location.

1. Correct disposal of hot materials not being followed. A process was in place but it wasn’t being adhered to. Management controls must ensure that procedures such as these are being followed and prompt action taken should it not be the case.

This incident could have been far worse. We must all learn from this and take the opportunity to review the management systems in each division.

