



Interagency Aviation Accident Prevention Bulletin



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Subject: Hazardous Materials in Aircraft

Area of Concern: Flight Safety

Distribution: All Fire and Fire Aviation Operations.

Discussion: After completing a Search and Rescue (SAR) mission, a Colorado fire crew loaded their gear into an aircraft to prepare for their flight home. Approximately 15 minutes into the return flight, a crewmember stated that he could smell fuel inside the cabin. Upon confirming the odor, the crewmembers attempted to locate the scent within the cabin but were unsuccessful. With the smell still lingering, the pilot notified dispatch and made a precautionary landing to investigate further for possible leaks. After landing, a crewmember located a Vallfirest Compact Drip Torch (35oz) leaking in the internal cargo hold from one of the crewmember's line packs. After further inspection, it appeared that the line pack was loaded upside down and one of the gaskets on the compact drip torch appeared to be broken. The fuel leak (approx. 8oz) had spilled on other gear inside the storage compartment. The remaining fuel was discarded to prevent further leaking.



Kudos to the pilot and crew informing dispatch of their situation and for executing a precautionary landing. Once the smell was located, the crew disposed of the fuel and adjusted the line packs in the upright position. After returning to their home base, the crew discarded or washed the fuel contaminated gear (SAFECOM [23-0059](#)).

Before transporting hazardous material in an aircraft, *it is the responsibility of the crewmembers to package and secure hazmat in accordance with [NWCG Standards for Aviation Transport of Hazardous Materials, PMS 513](#).*

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