

Date: Thu, 27 Jul 2000 14:15:53 -0500  
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Subject: Ames Blue Alert- Incompatible Washers From Vendor

An Ames Laboratory research group ordered a cylinder of 1% HCl in air, a new regulator and extra teflon washers for the regulator. Teflon washers resist corrosion caused by the HCl. Upon arrival, the cylinder was set up with the new regulator and enclosed washers. The group member who put the regulator on didn't notice that the washers were actually copper (not teflon) and assumed that they were acceptable to use.

Later, another group member noticed the extra copper gaskets that came with the regulator and checked the purchase order to see if the wrong materials were specified. The purchase order specifically requested teflon washers. After some additional investigation, which included contact with the vendor, it was determined that the copper washers were sent by mistake. The company apologized for the error, sent the teflon washers, and has been in communication with the regulator vendor about the mistake.

Ames Laboratory personnel should carefully review equipment as received from suppliers. Careful vigilance on the part of a research group member not only averted a potential accident in the future but also prompted the manufacturer to educate their suppliers and staff on the importance of filling orders correctly.