



in the Shredder!

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Those who think an office-bound, desk-stationed, squadron intelligence specialist's job is hazard-free should think again. As an IS1 discovered, one office hazard was a paper shredder, and not because someone got a finger or shirttail caught in the blades, either.

One day after shredding countless documents, the IS1 thought his overheated machine needed oiling. He lubed it and continued shredding, but the shredder began making strange noises. The petty officer thought paper might have jammed the blades, when suddenly blue flames shot from the machine. The IS1 tried to blow them out—guess what happened next: He blew flames through the shredder and ignited the storage bag where shredded paper had accumulated.

His department head was working in the same office and quickly unplugged the shredder. The IS1, meanwhile, grabbed a CO₂ fire extinguisher. He grounded it and pulled the pin, and was ready to smother the fire when his department head realized using CO₂ in the office might not be such a good idea (CO₂ displaces oxygen). The department head then began to stomp out the burning shreds.

Afterward, the IS1 noted someone had shredded plastic, along with paper. Lessons learned? Shred

only paper and do not lubricate shredders when the equipment is hot from use. Know your firefighting techniques, and use the appropriate extinguishing agent for the specific class of fire and other conditions. ☺

Petty Officer Filson wrote this article while assigned to VAQ-132. —Ed.



Photo by Matthew J. Thomas