

Cargo Damage

Cargo damage is one such disaster that not only gives rise to product and financial losses, but could also affect the relationship between customers and their service providers. Below is a summary of “[Shipping and Freight Resource](#)” Cargo Damage Guide. It summarises the types of cargo damage, reasons why this damage happens, how to prevent it and how to handle a cargo damage situation. This is a great guide for our clients to use to help reduce the risk of damage to their cargo.

Types of damage:

- Physical damage
- Wet damage
- Contamination damage
- Reefer related damage
- Infestation damage

Reasons

- Lack of proper packaging to protect cargo
- Incorrect container type used
- Incorrect temperature or humidity settings in a reefer container
- Overloading or improper weight distribution
- Incorrect labelling of hazardous container

Watch this video to understand the stresses cargo undergoes in transit and why its so important to properly load and secure cargo in shipping containers:

<https://youtu.be/L6zUT55bnJ8>



Prevention

Preventative measures against physical damage

- Use correct type of container – check the weight allowance marked on the container
- Make sure lashing and dunnage material and methods are sufficient.
- Follow SOLAS VGM requirements at all times
- Plan how you'll pack the container before packing
- Distribute weight equally inside container
- Avoid concentrating heavy weights at one side or one end
- Stow heaviest items on the bottom for stability
- Box, crate or place on cradle the heavy items
- Ensure that incompatible cargo is not mixed in the container (like mixing clothing with chemicals)
- Ensure that cargo that is susceptible to leakage or spillage is not stowed on the top of other cargo
- Observe hazardous packing guidelines.

Preventative measures against wet damage

- Take note of route your cargo is taking and the affect that climatic conditions will have on your cargo
- If needed, use anti-humidity materials or use ventilated containers with side vents.
- Check the doors and rubber seals are in good working order and seal properly.

Preventative measures against contamination damage

Liquid Bulk

- Insist on a 'tank cleaning certificate'
- Provide all information about your cargo to the tank operator so the right ISO tank is provided.

Solid Bulk

- If loading cargo susceptible to odour and rust contamination (eg: nuts, tobacco, clothing, fabrics etc) request a food grade or A grade container from the shipping line.

Preventative measures against reefer cargo damage

- Ensure the reefer container you receive has a valid Pre-Trip Inspection Certificate.
- Pre-cool cargo to the required set temperature before packing into container.
- Don't leave reefer containers and trailers running while loading cargo.
- Avoid loading reefer containers in hot humid climates, instead load on a refrigerated loading dock with cold tunnels.
- Make sure temperature settings are set to correct temperature (paying attention to – and +)

Preventative measures against infestation damage

- Advise shipping line specifically what the goods are you want to ship
- Ensure the warehouse that cargo is stored is clean and free of pests and rodents
- Avoid using straw or unprocessed wood as packing materials, and if you do have these fumigated to lower the risk of infestation.

How to handle a cargo damage situation

1. Get proof of damage
2. Notify concerned parties (note the time limits for notification)
3. Arrange joint survey
4. Identify cause of damage
5. Mitigate / minimise loss
6. Secure documentary evidence
7. Provide documentary evidence
8. Submit priced claim

Credit to: ["Shipping and Freight Resource" Cargo Damage Guide](#)