

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

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By learning about the misfortunes of others, it is STI's hope to educate the public by creating a greater awareness of the hazards with storage and use of petroleum and chemicals. Please refer to the many industry standards and to the fire and building codes for further guidance on the safe operating practices with hazardous liquids. Thanks and credit for content are given to Dangerous Goods-Hazmat Group Network.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DangerousGoods/>

USA, CA, SAN BERNADINO

NOVEMBER 14 2014.

CALIFORNIA FUEL DISTRIBUTOR FINED NEARLY \$100K FOLLOWING FATAL EXPLOSION

Cal/OSHA has fined a fuel distribution company \$99,345 following an investigation into an explosion at the company's facility that killed one employee and left another with severe burns. The owner of the company had been previously cited for similar incidents.

On May 6, 2014, two employees attempted welding operations on a 9,000-gallon tanker truck containing an unknown amount of crude oil. The tank had not been purged or tested for flammable vapors, resulting in the explosion. One of the employees, a welder who had been with the company for four years, was found dead on the floor of the facility with his right hand and lower arm completely severed. The second employee, with five years of experience, suffered burns to more than 50 percent of his body.

Investigators from the San Bernardino Cal/OSHA District Office determined that the company contributed to this incident by failing to have required safety procedures in place for working with flammable vapors. Additionally, investigators found that the company failed to train employees on the dangers of welding near combustible materials.

"California requires employers to have and adhere to an Injury and Illness Prevention Program" said Christine Baker, Director of the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR). Cal/OSHA, formally known as the Division of Occupational Safety and Health, is a division of DIR. "This preventable death is a reminder of what can happen when that requirement is ignored," said Baker.

While investigating the May 6 event, investigators learned about a previous explosion at the same facility that occurred under similar circumstances, and involved the same two employees. On September 25, 2012, the lid of a fuel tanker blew through the ceiling of the repair facility after the employees commenced welding on a truck filled with flammable vapors. No injuries occurred on that date.

"Enforcement of California safety laws sends a message to non-compliant employers," said Juliann Sum, Acting Chief of Cal/OSHA. "You cannot cut corners when it comes to worker safety."

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration served the company with an emergency restriction order on August 14, prohibiting the company from using cargo tank motor vehicles. The company appealed the order in September.

The company's owner had served prison time following a 1993 incident that occurred while he was operating another business. In that incident, there was an explosion involving welding operations on a fuel tanker that had also not been purged or tested. This incident also took the life of a welder.

<http://safety.blr.com/workplace-safety-news/safety-administration/OSHA-and-state-safety-compliance-enforcement/California-fuel-distributor-fined-nearly-100K-foll/>

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

USA, WI, LA CROSSE

NOVEMBER 21 2014.

LA CROSSE FIRE DEPT. INVESTIGATING CAUSE OF EXPLOSION IN LA CROSSE

1 PERSON INJURED IN EXPLOSION; SHELTER IN PLACE ORDER CANCELED

The cause of an early Wednesday morning explosion at Midwest Industrial Asphalt on Sumner St., near Copeland Park in La Crosse is under investigation. Midwest Industrial Asphalt clarified during a news conference on Monday that it owns a sister company called Midwest Fuels that operates there, but the explosion happened at Midwest Industrial Asphalt.

The explosion happened just before 7 a.m. La Crosse residents around the area told News 8 it shook their homes. Emergency crews contained the fire at about 8:30 a.m. and a Shelter in Place order that had been issued was canceled.

Tri-State Ambulance said one person was transported to a local hospital with non-life-threatening injuries. La Crosse firefighters told News 8 male worker, who has not been identified, was treated and released for burn related injuries. Firefighters were not injured.

When crews arrived on scene, they found one fuel tank completely engulfed and were worried it would spread to other tanks.

"Not only are we going to deal with the situation that is at hand right here, but we have to think about step two, step three and what could possibly happen if things get worse," said Chief Gregg Cleveland with the La Crosse Fire Department.

Cleveland put his action plan into place by calling in emergency crews from surrounding areas. Cleveland said it was important to stay one step ahead of the disaster.

"We don't want to get behind the eight ball on these types of things because it's very critical to have a planning section set up and to make sure we anticipate what might happen," said Cleveland.

With 26 firefighters, 12 responding units and three supporting agencies, it took crews about an hour and a half to get the explosion under control. Cleveland said first responders and the public played major roles in helping distinguish the fire in a safe manner.

"We do have a pretty good network and good communications. Logistically we were in pretty good shape," said Cleveland.

At a late-morning news conference, Midwest Industrial Asphalt said eight people were working at the time of the explosion. Three of the seven tanks on the ground were empty. The one tank that exploded was about 40 feet high and 24-feet in diameter. It was a 132,000 gallon tank, but only had 7,000 gallons of asphalt that is stored at 200-degrees to keep it liquid, Midwest Industrial Asphalt told News 8.

The roof blew off of the tank and landed on the northside of Midwest Fuels' grounds. The company has a crew that is taking care of the cleanup from the explosion.

The La Crosse Fire Department said firefighters at Station 2 noticed thick black smoke northwest of the station and self-dispatched to the area. La Crosse Fire Chief Gregg Cleveland said crews were able to stop the runoff of chemicals and contain it to one tank. He said the tank had a mixture of 70-percent asphalt and 30-percent diesel.

Midwest Industrial Asphalt said an environmental specialist that they work with said except for the possibility of runoff of water used to put out the fire, there is no cause for concern about long-term environmental impact. People may have a slight headache or sore throat because of the fumes, but nothing long-lasting.

The 600 and 700 block of Sumner St. and the 300 blocks of Hagar St. were closed to traffic for most of the day.

The La Crosse Fire Department had issued a "Shelter in Place" order in the area between the La Crosse River north to Clinton Street, and from the Black River east to George Street. At about 8:20 a.m., La Crosse County Dispatch said the Shelter in Place order was canceled.

The La Crosse Fire Department said a "Shelter in Place" order means: "A warning of an event where

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

the public is recommended to shelter in place (go inside, close doors and windows, turn off air conditioning or heating systems, and turn on the radio or TV for more information). Examples include the release of hazardous materials where toxic fumes or radioactivity may affect designated areas."

In an email to parents in the School District of La Crosse, Superintendent Randy Nelson said district administrators were "working diligently to monitor and address potential safety issues for our staff and students" after the explosion was reported. School will go on as scheduled and children are safe.

"As a continued precaution, however, we will be limiting outdoor activity today at Northside Elementary, Summit Elementary, and Logan Middle School," Nelson wrote.

<http://www.news8000.com/news/explosion-at-la-crosse-chemical-plant/29816124>

USA, N.Y, GENEVA

NOVEMBER 27 2014.

DEC: CLEANUP COMPLETE AFTER CHEMICAL SPILL IN GENEVA

Department of Environmental Conservation officials say the cleanup is complete after hundreds of gallons of a chemical were spilled in Geneva. Officials say the spill happened at the Zotos facility on Forge Avenue. The DEC says the spill occurred after workers replaced a pump that moves ammonium hydroxide from one tank to another. The new pump overfilled one of the tanks and caused a release of the chemical through a vent in the roof. The chemical then spilled into the gutters and then into the storm sewer. The spill was discovered following pH test at a sewer outfall. We're told the outfall flows to a stream that leads to Seneca Lake. We're told crews contained the spill with sandbag dams and Zotos contracted a cleanup contractor. We're told pH levels are now at an acceptable level. The cleanup is complete, but the DEC is still investigating

<http://www.whec.com/news/stories/S3632813.shtml>

USA, LA CROSSE

NOVEMBER 28 2014.

LA CROSSE EXPLOSION CAUSE STILL UNKNOWN; ASPHALT TANK PERFORMED AS DESIGNED

Chris Hubbuch

Investigators have yet to determine the cause of last week's explosion at a North Side asphalt plant but say the tank containing liquid asphalt performed exactly as it was designed to.

The 132,000-gallon tank exploded just before 7 a.m. Wednesday at Midwest Industrial Asphalt's Sumner Street terminal, rocking the surrounding neighborhoods and blasting the 24-foot diameter steel lid about 150 yards, according to company and fire officials.

That vertical explosion contributed to the noise carrying to South Side residences, said Division Chief Craig Snyder of the La Crosse Fire Department; but it prevented the widespread damage and possible injuries that would have resulted from the tank walls rupturing.

"The tank did what it was designed to do," Snyder said. "The tank itself held together as it was designed to do."

Firefighters contained the resulting blaze within about 90 minutes, spraying water on adjacent storage tanks to ensure against additional explosions while employees deployed absorbent material to protect the nearby Black River from possible contamination by the mixture of asphalt and diesel fuel.

At a Monday news conference and tour of the 22-acre terminal situated between the Canadian Pacific rail line and Copeland Park, company officials stressed that a system of earthen dikes would have contained the 7,000 gallons in the damaged tank.

"Any of the tanks within this facility would be contained," said Tara Wetzel, the company's vice president for environmental protection.

Steve Mathy, president of Midwest's parent company, said cleanup was completed the day of the fire, and the seven-tank complex used to heat liquid asphalt remains out of service during investigations by fire, insurance and the company itself.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

“We can ensure everybody that everything here is secure,” he said. “There are no health issues or environmental concerns.”

Mathy said the employee who was injured in the blast was treated for minor burns and is back at work. The worker declined through the company to be interviewed by media but is cooperating with investigators.

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration has opened an investigation into the explosion, but a spokesman said details will not be available until it is completed, which can take up to six months.

Wetzel said Midwest employees used skimmers and absorbents to clean the estimated 90,000 – 100,000 gallons of water poured on the outside of the burning tank and those next to it and sent contaminated soils to the La Crosse County Landfill.

A draft spill report filed with the state Department of Natural Resources indicates a contractor was hired to treat the oily fire water, which Wetzel said could be discharged into the Black River once determined clean.

“Most of the time we let it evaporate,” Wetzel said.

With thick black smoke billowing from the burning tank, firefighters issued a “shelter in place” order, recommending that residents within a 10-block radius remain indoors to protect against possible airborne contaminants.

Snyder said that was a precaution taken out of concern that there could be potentially hazardous chemicals, which they later learned was not the case.

“Initially we were not sure what was in that tank,” Snyder said.

Snyder praised both firefighters and company employees, noting that Midwest immediately shut off heat to products in the six adjacent tanks and provided his crews with site plans and inventories.

“Everybody on site did their job,” he said.

Mathy said he thinks the experience will result in a stronger organization.

“When this process is over,” he said, “I’m sure we’ll learn a lot and be a better company.”

<http://lacrossetribune.com/tncms/asset/editorial/f6668d89-e492-5d11-a6a7-ed6388574d6c/#ixzz3NJamy6j4>

MEXICO, HUIMANGUILLO

DECEMBER 4 2014.

MEXICO THIEVES STEALING BILLIONS IN OIL, GASOLINE FROM COUNTRY’S PIPELINES

The big-time gasoline thieves had already come and gone during the wee hours, filling their tanker trucks with stolen fuel and then fleeing.

Then dawn broke, and word spread that a crime gang had again tapped into a gasoline pipeline, and it was spewing fuel into a ditch. At first, only a few farmers showed up, carrying plastic jerry cans. Then dozens. Then even more. All were eager to collect what spilled fuel they could.

Gasoline fumes filled the air, and puddles of rainwater and gasoline spread amid a drizzle.

“This is a gift from God,” said one of the farmers, who gave only his first name, Frank, as he partially filled a five-gallon white plastic container with gasoline.

Mexico is plagued by rampant energy theft. In the first eight months of this year, 7.5 million barrels went missing, a rate of about 30,000 52-gallon barrels a day, enough to fill a fleet of more than 100 tanker trucks. Organized crime groups are behind much of the theft, which occurs along a network of pipelines that carry gasoline, diesel, crude oil, natural gas and petrochemicals around the nation.

The problem just keeps getting worse. In 2000, Mexico tallied 155 cases of fuel theft from pipelines. Since then, it’s been a steady climb. In 2012, thieves drilled 1,635 illegal taps. That number grew to 2,614 in 2013. This year, the number of illegal taps is expected to top 3,000.

Constant spills caused by the theft spoil the environment and rob Mexicans of a valuable resource. But the piracy also may crimp Mexico’s success in opening its energy sector to international investment. In

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

early 2015, for the first time in eight decades, Mexico will allow foreign companies to bid for concessions and explore for energy on its soil or in its offshore waters. To deal with the piracy, and a web of corruption surrounding stolen fuel, foreign companies operating in Mexico will have to budget for high security costs.

Weak penalties for stealing oil and gasoline have exacerbated the problem.

"It's not considered a serious crime and as a consequence, the penalties are truly reduced," Omar Fayad Meneses, head of the Senate Commission on Public Security, said in a speech Nov. 11 in which he called for prison terms of 25 to 35 years for those involved in major energy theft. His bill is still pending.

Fayad, a member of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party, said he believes organized crime groups rake off \$1 billion a year from energy theft.

The head of the state oil giant Petróleos Mexicanos, also known as Pemex, Emilio Lozoya Austin, has called energy theft one of the worst crimes against the nation because it hijacks revenues that otherwise would go directly into state coffers.

"Schools, hospitals and highways won't be built," Lozoya said.

But Lozoya said prosecutions are difficult even against the few people caught red-handed with what is believed to be stolen gasoline, diesel or crude oil.

"If you catch a presumed criminal with tanks of gasoline or diesel, it's not a trivial matter to prove that he stole it," Lozoya said. "He can say he got it anywhere."

Theft from Pemex pipelines and installations involves far more than a few clandestine tanker trucks and some rogue engineers. More often, the chain of criminal involvement extends from local police to gas station owners and seemingly legitimate distribution companies. It also may penetrate deeply into Pemex itself, which enjoys a monopoly on retail sales in Mexico.

In late September, prosecutors announced they had smashed a huge energy theft ring that dealt more than 1 million gallons of stolen gasoline and diesel a month. The ring was headquartered in the central state of Guanajuato.

At the heart of the ring was Petrobajio SA de CV, a seemingly legitimate company that has held a concession since 2011 to transport gasoline for the state's Pemex.

Petrobajio, however, also bought stolen fuel from an organized crime group that siphoned it from pipelines in Tamaulipas state, which abuts Texas, prosecutors said. As part of their raids, authorities seized 78 tanker trucks that helped transport stolen fuel to the nearby states of Jalisco and San Luis Potosi.

Organized crime was firmly in control of Petrobajio – a lesson, experts say, for foreign energy companies eager to come into Mexico.

"The use of firms that appear to be legitimate by criminal groups is a common practice in Mexico," IHS Inc., a Colorado-based global information company, said in a report Oct. 1. A foreign company that failed to properly vet its Mexican partners might find itself not only the victim of theft, but facing potential prosecution, IHS warned.

Mexico is not alone among oil-producing nations with rampant theft. Nigeria loses an estimated 400,000 barrels a day to pirates. Indonesia is also plagued by oil theft.

As in those countries, the thievery in Mexico usually occurs at night, and the teams of crooks tapping pipelines employ a battery of skills to avoid triggering an explosion.

"You need technical expertise, engineers and welders, support crew for them, and the security side, the people with the guns," said Dwight Dyer, a senior analyst based in Mexico City for Control Risks, a global consultancy on political and security risks with headquarters in London.

Dyer said the methods used by thieves range from drilling into pipelines to siphon off fuel to actually installing valves that allow criminal gangs to return again and again.

"It's getting far worse," Dyer said. "If you look at Pemex's numbers, the number of (illegal) taps identified has roughly doubled every two years."

"This is a major issue not only for the oil and gas sector. It's a major issue for the country as a whole," he added.

Pemex, one of the world's largest companies with 155,000 employees, has been opaque about how

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

many of its workers have been disciplined, fired or prosecuted for collaborating with organized crime. The company did not respond to email requests for an interview over a period of two months.

Outside experts say, however, that the oil and gasoline thefts could not be done without some help from within the state oil giant.

“You need people from Pemex with experience in the sector to know how to tap these pipelines without making a huge mess,” said Carlos Petersen, an analyst on Mexico with Eurasia Group, a U.S. consultancy.

Lozoya, the Pemex chief, appearing at a Nov. 5 forum, did not respond to a question about Pemex employees collaborating with organized crime. Rather, he said the oil company is spending tens of millions of dollars to detect illegal taps.

The company is installing a \$282 million system to alert technicians whenever pressure drops anywhere along the 22,000 miles or so of pipelines that Pemex operates, allowing the company to respond rapidly to an illegal tap.

Most major crime groups are believed to have diversified into energy theft, including the New Generation Jalisco Cartel, the Gulf Cartel and the Zetas.

The Gulf Cartel and Los Zetas are the ones established along the Gulf Coast where Pemex has most of its installations, Petersen said.

Pemex operates all gas stations in Mexico, although individuals or companies may own them. It's clear that a significant number sell stolen fuel from time to time.

“They are threatened if they don't buy it. They have to buy from the mafia and from Pemex,” said Emilio Moller, a newspaper columnist in the city of Mérida.

Tabasco state has tallied more than 180 illegal taps on pipelines so far this year. That's more than three a week, and many leave significant spills.

“It just gushes out of the pipe. This situation just can't go on,” said Jose Manuel Arias Rodriguez of the Santo Tomas Ecological Association, an advocacy group in Villahermosa, the state capital.

Arias said little action has been taken to stop the theft.

“If you're cynical, you begin to think a lot of people are involved,” he said.

On a recent morning, motorists along a main highway could notice a steady trickle of bicyclists and motorcyclists on the shoulder, some carrying empty jerry cans. Those heading in the opposite direction had jerry cans full of gasoline.

“When word spreads, ta-ta-ta, everybody comes running,” said Antonio Rodriguez, a 38-year-old farmer who toted a plastic jug full of gasoline. “There's no other work around here.”

He signaled a site further along the road where he said a visitor could walk along a muddy path through sugar cane fields for 400 yards and come upon a spill.

“There's like 100 to 150 people up there,” he said, all using buckets and sponges to skim a layer of gasoline off the surface of water in a ditch.

But he urged caution.

“There are people who faint because of the fumes,” he said.

<http://www.fresnobee.com/2014/12/02/4265477/mexico-thieves-stealing-billions.html#storylink=cpy>

USA, PA, HARRISBURG

DECEMBER 4 2014.

PENNSYLVANIA FINES GAS DRILLER IN EXPLOSION, SPILL

Pennsylvania environmental regulators are fining Houston-based Cabot Oil and Gas for a storage tank explosion and wastewater spill at a gas drilling site. The Department of Environmental Protection said Tuesday it fined Cabot \$120,000 for the January incident at its Reynolds well pad in Susquehanna County. Officials say vapors in the headspace of the wastewater tank ignited and caused the Jan. 11 explosion, rupturing the tank. The Times-Tribune of Scranton reports that inspectors found that a worker checking the level of fluid in the 21,000-gallon wastewater tank ignited the vapors while using his cellphone as a

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

flashlight. The department says an employee was injured and more than 2,800 gallons of wastewater spilled, tainting soil beyond the well pad. It says Cabot cleaned up the spill.

http://www.sharonherald.com/news/pennsylvania-fines-gas-driller-in-explosion-spill/article_01cbc6bc-7aea-11e4-a61f-ef155441ef57.html

OMAN, MINA AL FAHAL

DECEMBER 6 2014.

FIRE AT MUSCAT REFINERY PUT OUT, ORPIC SAYS

Saleh Al Shaibany

A fire that broke out at the Muscat Refinery in Mina Al Fahal has been put out, Oman Oil Refineries and Petroleum Industries Company (Orpic) said on its website.

"There were no serious injuries reported and we would like to assure you all that there are no direct impacts of this incident on fuel supplies to Omani local market or any contamination of oil products on the surrounding environment," the Orpic statement posted on its website said.

The fire had broken out at the 85,000 barrels per day refinery on Thursday afternoon and all the staff were evacuated. There were no fatalities reported but three people sustained injuries due to burns.

Orpic did not say what had caused the fire but witnesses heard a blast moments before the incident.

"We heard a blast then saw smoke on top of the tanks and processing units. We don't know what has exactly caused it." one of the refinery staff, told Times of Oman.

The refinery is managed by Oman Oil Refineries and Petroleum Industries Company (Orpic). The company is also managing another refinery in Sohar, which has a capacity of 120,000 barrels per day.

Meanwhile, Public Authority for Civil Defence and Ambulances (PACDA) said that four people suffered medium injuries in the incident and that they have been admitted to the hospital.

The civil defence authority added that fire in Muscat Refinery is under control.

"Fire is under control. Employees have been evacuated," the PACDA tweeted on its official twitter account.

The reason behind the fire is not yet clear.

<http://www.timesofoman.com/News/43711/Article-BREAKING-Fire-breaks-out-at-Muscat-Refinery>

USA, TX, DALLAS

DECEMBER 13 2014.

3 DEAD WORKERS IN TANK WERE TRAPPED BY FIRE UNDER DOWNTOWN

DALLAS HIGH-RISE

Naheed Rajwani, Claire Z. Cardona, Julie Fancher, Tristan Hallman and Robert Wilonsky

Three workers died Thursday after they were trapped by fire in an underground tank at a downtown Dallas skyscraper.

Their bodies were recovered from below a Thanksgiving Tower parking garage as grieving relatives stood by helplessly.

The victims were identified as Oscar Esparza-Romo, 36, Luis Carrillo-Solorzano, 43, and Nicacio Carrillo-Martinez, 60. Nicacio Carrillo was Luis Carrillo's uncle.

The three were subcontractors working on a thermal storage tank that is part of the building's heating, ventilation and air conditioning system, a Best Mechanical Inc. spokeswoman said.

"Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to these families, especially at this time of the year," said the spokeswoman, Cheri Torres. "It was a very, very tragic accident."

She said safety equipment and evacuation procedures were in place at the work site when the fire broke out about 10:30 a.m. near Elm and Ervay streets.

The executive vice president of Thanksgiving Tower's management company said it was not clear what type of work the men were doing when the fire broke out.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

“Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of the victims who suffered a loss today,” said Jay Johnston of Lincoln Property Co.

Investigators had initially suspected the fire was electrical, but Dallas Fire-Rescue spokesman Jason Evans said the cause now is undetermined and is still being examined.

Officials did not know whether the workers might have been welding or cutting, and Dallas Fire-Rescue Assistant Fire Chief Ted Padgett said Best Mechanical hasn’t had a valid permit to do that kind of work since December 2009.

He also said Thanksgiving Tower’s permit for welding, cutting and hot work expired in March.

Juan Rodriguez of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration said federal authorities will investigate the fire at the skyscraper, which is undergoing an \$18 million renovation.

Emergency personnel initially believed they were responding to a car fire in the building’s garage in the 1600 block of Elm Street. But firefighters soon found that the source of the blaze was about 35 feet below ground.

Crews learned workers might be in the tank, but intense smoke and heat prevented them from trying to rescue them.

Several people were evaluated at the scene for smoke inhalation, and three people were taken to hospitals for non-life-threatening injuries.

Although the fire was extinguished by noon, it took several hours to ventilate the area well enough for the workers’ bodies to be recovered.

The victims’ relatives gathered in Thanksgiving Tower’s lobby as authorities tried to confirm what happened.

“We don’t want to tell you something that isn’t true,” a police officer told the anxious family members.

While they waited, they tried frantically to call their loved ones’ cellphones.

About an hour later, officials reported that the three bodies had been found.

Zaira Martinez said her uncle and cousin had died. The third man was a family friend, she said. One of the workers had five young children, and his wife was devastated.

“She’s out of it. She doesn’t know what to think or say,” Martinez said of the woman.

The CEO of the company that wrote Dallas Fire-Rescue’s high-rise response plan said firefighters handled the situation as well as they could.

Curtis Massey said the confined spaces of Thanksgiving Tower’s underground areas make them vulnerable to heavy smoke that can hamper rescue efforts.

“There was excellent interface between building staff and fire commanders,” he said. “It seemed to be a very well-coordinated operation.”

Firefighters evacuated the 2,800 people who work in the building, and some surrounding streets downtown were closed for more than six hours.

Thanksgiving Tower reopened about 2 p.m., but many of the offices inside remained closed for the day.

<http://www.dallasnews.com/news/metro/20141211-3-workers-die-in-fire-at-thanksgiving-tower-in-downtown-dallas1.ece>

USA, AK, KAKE

DECEMBER 16 2014.

900-GALLON FUEL SPILL REPORTED IN KAKE

Joe Viechnicki

Kake Tribal Fuel reported spilling about 900 gallons of unleaded gasoline at a tank farm in the Southeast Alaska community Sunday.

The company is owned by the village Native corporation for the community of about 600 people on northwestern Kupreanof Island.

1116, 1117, 1118, 1119, 1120

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

Kake Tribal Fuel reported a leak from one of the company's tanks to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Sunday afternoon after a local resident noticed a strong odor.

The tank was holding around seven thousand gallons of gas, according to the DEC. The fuel leaked from a thumb-size hole in the tank into a secondary containment area.

A year ago, the same facility leaked an estimated 55-hundred gallons of gas into the salt water after a fuel line broke at Kake Tribal's dock.

Local responders closed the road near the tank farm and worked to plug the leak. The remaining gas was pumped into other tanks and a fuel truck.

On Monday, workers pumped an estimated 17-hundred gallons of oily water from the secondary containment area near the tank into 55-gallon drums.

Some additional gas was noticed outside the containment area in a nearby ditch and the DEC says Kake Tribal is investigating how that gas leaked out. The DEC says there have been no impacts to wildlife or gas leaked into the salt water at Keku Strait.

<http://www.ktoo.org/2014/12/15/900-gallon-fuel-spill-reported-kake/>

USA, N.Y, LYONSDALE

DECEMBER 17 2014.

FIRE CREWS RESPOND TO LYONSDALE FUEL TANK EXPLOSION

Multiple fire crews responded to a fuel tank explosion in Lyonsdale early Monday morning.

The explosion happened at Lyonsdale Biomass, LLC, located on Marmon Road, shortly before 3 a.m.

Fire officials say about 2,100 gallons of heating oil stored in a fuel tank outside the power plant exploded. Crews from Port Leyden and Lyons Falls along with the Lewis County Fire Coordinators responded.

No injuries were reported and there is no damage to the building. The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

<http://www.wktv.com/news/Fire-crews-respond-to-Lyonsdale-fuel-tank-explosion-285802411.html>

USA, WI, LACROSSE

DECEMBER 19 2014.

MALFUNCTIONING GAUGE LED TO TANK EXPLOSION

Kevin Millar

A malfunctioning gauge led to the explosion of a large storage tank last month at a northside business in November.

The La Crosse Fire Department and the head of the company that owns Midwest Industrial Asphalt released information Thursday on the cause of the blast.

Steve Mathy, president of ALM Holding Co., which acts as the parent company to Midwest Industrial Asphalt said the worker was following protocol when the explosion happened. "The operator checked the gauge inside the tank, which indicated there was two feet, two inches of product," he said. "He then proceeded to draw a sample, since the gauge indicated the sample port was submerged in the liquid."

When the worker attempted to draw a sample, nothing came out of the port. Mathy said the worker then lit a torch to unclog the port, which is proper protocol. Instead, the gauge was faulty and not submerged within the mix of asphalt and diesel fuel. Mathy said the torch ignited vapors which traveled through the port and into the tank where the explosion occurred.

Midwest Industrial Asphalt said it has torn down the destroyed 132,000 gallon tank and plans to rebuild.

Mathy also said the company is looking into newer and more advanced gauges as well as alternative heating sources, such as steam, for any potential clogs in the sample port.

La Crosse Fire Department Division Chief Craig Snyder said the training firefighters go through kept the situation from becoming much worse. Crews were able to quickly contain the fire following the

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

explosion from spreading to other tanks.

The La Crosse Fire Department plans to release the results of their investigation into the cause and origin of an explosion that destroyed a large industrial storage tank in November.

The 132,000 gallon tank, which contained around 7,000 gallons of a mix of asphalt and diesel fuel, exploded shortly before 7:00 a.m. on November 19 at Midwest Industrial Asphalt at 634 Sumner Street.

One person, a worker at the plant, suffered minor injuries in the blast.

Division Chief Craig Snyder and Steve Mathy, president of ALM Holding Company, will discuss the details of what happened in the explosion, which was heard all across the city. Firefighters were able to contain the resulting fire to the one tank.

WXOW will bring you the details as they become available.

<http://www.wxow.com/story/27654298/2014/12/17/la-crosse-fire-to-release-cause-of-northside-explosion>