

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, GA, SAVANNAH

DECEMBER 30 2008.

DIESEL FUEL SPILL IN WHITAKER STREET GARAGE

Crews are working to clean up a fuel spill in the Whitaker Street garage. Firefighters were called to contain a fuel spill at the brand new underground parking garage on Whitaker Street. Officials say a generator being refueled to restore power to a nearby hotel, overflowed and that caused diesel fuel to spill over. Fortunately firefighters were in the area and able to respond quickly. "You know, obviously we're always there when we're called upon to be there and in this case it just happened to be to big events in a row, but we'll be there to answer the call every time," said Captain Kevin Tomko with Savannah Fire. Firefighters Hazmat are still working to get the fuel spill cleaned up. Officials do not yet know when the garage will reopen.

<http://www.wtoctv.com/Global/story.asp?S=9590324&nav=0qq6>

USA, NY, NEW YORK

DECEMBER 30 2008.

SUBURBAN PROPANE TAKES 8 MONTHS TO REMOVE TANKS: THE REAL DEAL

After 8 months, Suburban Propane has finally showed up to pick up Chuck Wart's tanks. The company arrived a week after his story aired on NewsChannel 9.

Chuck says he's happy to have the tanks gone but is watching the mail closely for his final statement. He's expecting a refund of around \$900 from Suburban for the unused propane that was inside.

Suburban Propane has settled a lawsuit with the State of Vermont over the tank removal fees they've been charging customers since 2004. The heating oil and propane supplier has changed the way they do business in that state but many New Yorkers are still seeing the fee. Suburban propane says it helps off-set their overhead costs, some of their customers say the fee and the time it takes Suburban to come get their tanks is more like punishment for taking their business elsewhere.

Chuck Wart owns two homes along Sandy Pond in Oswego County. He heats them both with propane and has had the same tanks for 25 years; they're owned by Suburban Propane. "Their prices kept going up and up and up and all my neighbors started switching to other companies and they're paying a dollar less a gallon than I was paying" Chuck says and when the company mentioned the possibility of a tank rental fee on top of that, he decided to take his business elsewhere. He called and cancelled his contract at the end of April, 8 months later, Suburban Propane still has not come to pick up their tanks, "I've been waiting and waiting and they never show up, they say they're going to show up and they never do" he says.

He's also waiting for about a \$900 check from the Suburban for the propane that's still inside both tanks.

You'd think Suburban, a company that just started charging some of their customers a tank rental fee, would be a little quicker about picking up what they call a "capital investment" from Chuck's homes but the clock is still ticking. When they finally do show up to retrieve their tanks Chuck will be paying close attention to his final statement.

The Attorney General in Vermont just went after Suburban for charging customers to take their tanks out. The AG says it was a hidden fee that was not disclosed in the company's contracts.

Suburban has agreed to waive the removal fee and reimburse anyone who was forced to pay it from 2004 until now but that agreement is only valid for Vermont Residents.

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The NYS Attorney General's office says they're looking into the settlement in Vermont but typically for them to take similar action they need a pattern of complaints from New Yorkers.

If you were charged this fee and it wasn't disclosed in your contract you can file a complaint with the AG's office by calling 448-4848.

We contacted Suburban Propane for comment on this story several times, our calls were not returned.
http://www.9wsyr.com/content/news/real_deal/story/Suburban-Propane-Takes-8-Months-to-Remove-Tanks/gjmF9-FgQkaJ_AmbQVsSMQ.csp

USA, CA, SANTA BARBARA

DECEMBER 30 2008.

WEEKEND OIL SPILLS FOR GREKA - THREE ACCIDENTS SO FAR LEAKED ESTIMATED 950 GALLONS SINCE CHRISTMAS

Chris Meagher

A December 26 spill at a Greka Oil Company facility in northern Santa Barbara County wasn't the last of the company's problems for the year, as between 630 and 840 gallons of crude oil was spilled at its Palmer Road Bell Lease facility Saturday, December 27, and another 100 or so gallons spilled Sunday, December 28. These accidents — combined with the at least 420-gallon spill that occurred on Friday — forced the Santa Barbara County Fire Department Fire Prevention Division to issue a stop work order for the facility, "due to unsafe acts and conditions," according to a press release from Capt. Eli Iskow. "Greka's permit to operate this facility has been revoked," he said. The Saturday spill also allegedly included between 6,300 and 8,400 gallons of produced water, a toxic byproduct of oil production. "Apparently, an operator error caused a relief valve to open and spill product down a ravine into a creek bed where the flow continued for approximately one-half mile down the creek," Iskow said. Sunday, three to four barrels of crude oil and an undetermined amount of produced water spilled out of a well as the result of a valve failure. It was the third spill in as many days. Representatives from the County Fire Hazardous Materials Unit and California Department of Fish & Game are investigating the matter. The stop work order will continue until the "failures have been investigated and corrected, and the facility is safe to operate," Iskow said. <http://www.independent.com/news/2008/dec/29/weekend-oil-spills-greka/>

UK, LONDON, HARLSDEN

DECEMBER 31 2008.

TRANSFORMER OILS FEED UK FIRE

George Gill

A large quantity of transformer oil blazed more than 10 hours at a power substation in Harlesden, a suburban town in the London borough of Brent, on Thursday. —It was a National Grid transformer, containing transformer oil, that was completely damaged by fire on Christmas Day,|| a London Fire Brigade spokeswoman told Lube Report yesterday. —It's still ongoing so we've still got machines down there, and we're monitoring it. The transformer has to cool down before it can be declared safe.|| She said the fire brigade initially sent six fire engine pumps to the fire and about 30 to 40 fire fighters. —It's quite a large fire if we send six pumps,|| the spokeswoman added. No injuries were reported, and the cause remains under investigation. According to a Dec. 29 report in the Harrow Observer newspaper, more than 120,000 liters (U.S. 31,700 gallons) of transformer oil went up in the flames, and it took more than 10 hours to bring it under control. Transformer oil is usually a highly-refined mineral oil that is stable at high temperatures and has excellent electrical insulating properties. International electricity and gas company National Grid owns the high-voltage electricity transmission network in England and Wales, and operates the system across Great Britain. http://www.imakenews.com/lng/e_article001303651.cfm?x=bdTTfqW,b5bfFfbp

USA, FLA, TAMPA

JANUARY 4 2009.

EPC TAKES TAMPA TO TASK OVER FUEL STORAGE TANK

Christian M. Wade

A 4,000-gallon fuel tank inside the Tampa Convention Center is at the center of a dispute between the city and county over whether the tank poses an environmental hazard. Hillsborough's Environmental Protection Commission recently notified Tampa officials that the aboveground storage tank, which holds diesel for the convention center's backup generators, is in violation of about a dozen state and county regulations. The EPC wants the city to take the tank out of service until the violations are resolved. "They're out of compliance and need to address these violations," said Andrew Zodrow, the EPC's assistant general counsel. "Unfortunately, they're putting up a hard line." EPC officials say
461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469

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there's no public health or safety risk from the tank, but say the city must comply with the demands or face up to \$10,000 a day in fines for each violation. Over the summer, inspections of the tank found numerous violations including a possible fuel contamination from a leaking pipeline and failure to conduct regular inspections. Several of the violations have been resolved, including a demand that the city register the tank, pay about 20 years in registration back fees and begin monthly inspections. But the EPC said the inspections indicate the fuel pipe from the tank to generator is failing and must be replaced, a move that would require taking the tank out of service. City officials say that would cost too much money and create a major risk by leaving the convention center without a backup generator in the event of a hurricane or power outage. "There are significant safety concerns for the city with its sole emergency generator being out of service," Assistant City Attorney Cathy Ginster wrote to the EPC. Ginster and other city officials couldn't be reached Friday.

<http://www2.tbo.com/content/2009/jan/03/na-epc-takes-tampa-to-task-over-fuel-storage-tank/>

UK, WISBECH

JANUARY 6 2009.

OIL DRUM EXPLODED IN GARAGE OWNER'S FACE

A garage owner had a lucky escape after an oil drum he was cutting exploded in his face. John Claxton (51), owner of The Garage on Wisbech Road, March, was using an angle grinder to cut the top off a 45-gallon oil drum when the sparks from the grinder caused the drum to ignite. The explosion caused the angle grinder to fly up and hit Mr Claxton in the forehead, cutting his head and knocking out two of his bottom teeth. Mr Claxton, who lives in Terrington St Clement, said, "We use the drums to store scrap metal. I was cutting it at the front of the garage when it just exploded. My son said it was the loudest noise he had ever heard."

The force of the explosion cracked a window at the back of the garage and threw Mr Claxton 12 feet across the garage. It also sent the angle grinder flying around 12 feet into the air, where it hit the ceiling. He was taken to Peterborough District Hospital where he needed seven stitches in his forehead. Mr Claxton said he had been cutting oil drums his whole working life and this is the first time anything like this has happened. It has deterred him from doing it again though.

Andy Dunlop, Station Manager for Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue, said, "We would recommend that people don't try to cut containers which have been used to hold flammable substances, such as oil. This is because the cutting process creates sparks, which will ignite any remaining fluid inside and could easily cause an explosion, causing injury or even death. We would recommend residents don't try to use these containers, but if they do, please make sure that the container has been thoroughly cleaned out and well vented. A general rule of thumb is – if it still smells flammable, then it almost certainly is."

<http://www.fenlandcitizen.co.uk/news/Oil-drum-exploded-in-garage.4846591.jp>

USA, CT, BRIDGEPORT

JANUARY 9 2009.

FUEL SPILL CLEANED AT TROOP G BARRACKS

A crew from the state Department of Environmental Protection was called in Tuesday to clean up a diesel fuel spill at the State Police Troop G barracks, 149 Prospect St. Lt. Thomas Heinssen, the Troop G commander, said Wednesday the spill occurred because a pump that supplied diesel fuel to the barracks' emergency generator had malfunctioned. The amount of the spilled fuel could not be easily determined, but it was cleaned up by the DEP, Heinssen said. The state fire marshal also was on the scene to help supervise the cleanup. "All the precautions were followed," Heinssen said. Because of the broken pump, a temporary, 1,000-gallon, above-ground tank was installed to provide fuel, via gravity feed, to the generator. Heinssen said the spill was caused by the malfunctioning pump, and not by either the temporary above-ground tank or the below-ground tank, which has a capacity of several thousand gallons. "We were having problems with the pump, so we had to bring in the above-ground tank so we'd be ready for the ice storm Tuesday night," Heinssen said.

http://www.connpost.com/ci_11393887

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BAHRAIN, MANAMA

JANUARY 9 2009.

OIL SPILL MISERY

Aniqa Haider

Ground contamination at the Wendy's Old Fashioned Hamburgers site on West Sixth Avenue is not expected to be serious enough to warrant removing earth or other extreme measures, nor does standing surface water pose a health hazard from contamination at the former site of a Fina service station and garage.

Potential dangers of contamination have become an issue among some Emporians, who worry that the standing water on the unfenced property might be dangerous to the public.

Officials from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment talked about the situation Tuesday afternoon, from a standpoint of health and safety.

The lot has been empty for almost one year.

Sunset Equities of McPherson, which owns the Wendy's location at 701 W. Sixth Avenue, initially had intended to remodel the building that once occupied the corner lot.

Ted Morris of McPherson, a partner in Sunset Equities, said this morning that the company plans to build on the site as soon as possible. It has been waiting for a final report on the repeated soil testings, which is due on Jan. 21.

On Jan. 8, 2008, demolition began and the company announced it would build a new home for the restaurant, with technologically advanced equipment inside.

Preliminary dirt work was underway when the company discovered that the ground had been contaminated by the filling station, which had been torn down and replaced with the initial Wendy's restaurant.

In early March, Tod Eland, a spokesman for Sunset, said that the company would apply for assistance from the Superfund, established by Congress to help pay for cleaning up contaminated areas.

The KDHE spokespersons said this week that the contamination on the property does not reach the severity associated with Superfund sites.

"The terminology they're using is wrong," said Gary Blackburn, director of KDHE's bureau of environmental remediation. "... Superfund sites are some of the most hazardous, contaminated sites in the nation. This is not a Superfund site. ... What we've got is some contamination that we're looking at dealing with."

Blackburn said that the Wendy's site had been approved to receive reimbursement, if needed, from the State Underground Storage Tank Release Trust Fund.

The fund is financed by a penny-per-gallon charge on gasoline, and is used to clean up old service-station sites.

"There are just hundreds of these old service station sites across the state, and because of the due diligence laws and environmental laws, a lot of banks won't loan money on property if it's got contamination," Blackburn said.

Blackburn said that the likelihood of hazardous contamination is "relatively limited."

Petroleum evaporates when exposed to air, so dirt and water on the lot's surface should be relatively safe, though he cautioned against drinking or bathing in the puddles.

"There is some subsurface contamination," he said. "We're drilling some wells to test that and determine what all is there."

A final report on those tests is due at KDHE on Jan. 21.

"Most likely what we'll do next is set up periodic monitoring of the wells that have been drilled," said Randy Carlson, KDHE section chief for the storage tank sector.

The monitoring wells sit on a cement pad, with a metal cover for protection. The wells are drilled down to an adequate depth and, while narrow, are large enough to accommodate a bailer to drop down and pull up water samples.

"We'll go out and sample them, probably sample them four times the first year, then after that we usually sample them a couple of times a year until we see the contamination levels go down," Carlson said.

He estimated that process would take about 10 to 12 years.

Natural bacteria in the soil usually breaks down contamination over time.

"The construction project is not waiting on us," Blackburn said. "Work can be done regardless. We work real hard at staying out of the way of construction projects."

"The biggest thing that I guess I would say is that while we agree that there might need to be a fence around (the property), it's totally related to a construction hazard," Blackburn said. "We don't know of contamination that's there that poses a risk to the public, or we would be making them do something immediately."

Ted Morris said that the gas tanks at the old station had been removed before the first Wendy's building was constructed about 25 years ago.

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When the razing had been completed early last year and dirt work was beginning for the new building — set back farther than the first — contractors discovered an old 600-gallon oil tank.

"Once our excavators found that, they just stopped and said, 'Hey, we know the laws of the state of Kansas and so we need to call somebody to do that,'" Morris said.

The company did not choose to continue with construction, only to perhaps discover the soil would need additional remediation to comply with laws after the building was finished and in operation.

"I wanted to do it right," Morris said, "but I wanted to do it once."

Sunset now has given contractors notice that the report later this month could signal renewed work on the site, and has asked for updated bids on the project.

"We're ready to go back in, and that's our plan right now," Morris said.

Sunset Equities, which began with four restaurants in 2001 and now has 20, has opened two new Wendy's in 2008, Morris said. If the report is as favorable as state officials expect, construction of Emporia's new Wendy's can begin soon.

"I'm going to let the people who are experts in this field do their job," Morris said. "So we want to make sure that we are right up there and everything that we have done so far should give the general public the impression that we are following protocol of health safety standards first and foremost.

"Then once we do that, and ... there's no question in the government officials' minds that are hired to do this oversight, then we turn around and build a restaurant and sell Frostys and hamburgers."

Blackburn said that people who want more information about the site may call Maggie Thompson at KDHE, (785) 296-1500.

http://www.emporiagazette.com/news/2009/jan/08/not_dangerous/

USA, UT, VERNAL

JANUARY 9 2009.

PIPELINE RUPTURE SPILLS 59,000 GALLONS OF CRUDE OIL

Geoff Liesik

A pipeline has ruptured, spilling an estimated 59,000 gallons of crude oil on Bureau of Land Management land 33 miles south of here. Darrin Brown, director of environmental health for the TriCounty Health Department, said the pipeline ruptured Wednesday at about 11 p.m. The line is operated by Chevron Pipeline Co., Brown said. The break occurred about one mile west of Deseret Power's Bonanza Power Plant. Frigid temperatures in the Uinta Basin kept the spill from spreading too far. "(The oil) is in some washes where there's some snow, and if the snow melts, of course it'll run," Brown said Thursday. "But they should be able to get it all cleaned up before it runs anywhere." Crews with specialized trucks have worked since the spill to vacuum up "puddles" of oil, Brown said. "It's run under the snow, so it's hard to tell where it's gone," he said. "It's going to take a lot of excavation to clean this up." Brown has contacted the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which may send someone to the spill site Friday. Officials with Chevron Pipeline could not be reached for comment Thursday night. <http://www.deseretnews.com/article/1,5143,705276150,00.html>

USA, IL, WHITE CO

JANUARY 13 2009.

JURY FINDS OIL WELL DEATHS ACCIDENTAL

Braden Willis

A coroner's jury deliberated about 20 minutes Saturday at the White County Courthouse before finding the deaths of two men killed in an Oct. 29, 2008, oil well explosion and resulting fire accidental in nature.

Samuel L. "Sam" Fieber, 49, Grayville, died at the scene of the fire, along with Ronald J. Aldredge, 52, West Salem.

Fieber owned the lease where the accident occurred and operated French Creek Oil Co.

Aldredge was employed by Mason Well Services in Grayville and was at the well as part of a three-man crew from the company.

Aldredge's son, Kevin Aldredge, 31, Grayville, was among those injured in the accident and was part of that crew. He was the fourth witness called by Coroner Carl McVey during Saturday's inquest.

Aldredge told the jury he arrived at the site just west of Crossville around 7 a.m. Oct. 29 with the other members of the crew to pull pipe from the well so it could be filled in with concrete to "plug" it.

Aldredge said the pipe was pulled from the ground by around 10 a.m. and a concrete truck and water truck, along with their respective operators, had arrived to begin the process of plugging the well when something went

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wrong. Aldredge testified that Sam Fieber and Ronald Aldredge were at the wellhead and trying to keep oil from spewing from the hole. He also testified vaporized gas was leaking from the hole and could be seen lying low to the ground everywhere around the well.

Aldredge said he was some 30 feet away and had his back to the well when he heard Fieber yelling for someone to shut off the pump motor used to pump the cement and water into the well. Aldredge said he believed the pump motor backfired, igniting the gas and causing a massive explosion.

"There could have been ways to prevent it," he said from the stand.

The third member of the Mason crew that morning was Scott Funkhouser, 45, of Mt. Carmel. McVey read a deposition into the record at Saturday's inquest. McVey had interviewed Funkhouser at Funkhouser's home on Jan. 5.

Funkhouser told McVey during the interview he recalled seeing Fieber and Ron Aldredge at the wellhead trying to prevent oil from spraying everywhere and that Fieber was yelling for someone to shut down the pump motor.

"They were both covered in oil. I can remember seeing oil running off Sam's face, and Ron was right there," Funkhouser said.

"Gas had permeated the area probably 35 feet around the well, and when it went up, I was standing in the outer circle. Kevin yelled out - drop and roll," Funkhouser also told McVey. "I left my feet and rolled on the ground trying to put the fire out, and I got most of the fire out except for my shin, which was still burning. The pain in my hand and everywhere kept me from being able to reach my shins. Kevin got a jacket from somewhere and put the fire out on my legs."

Funkhouser said he had a later conversation with Glen Iles, 41, of Browns, about the incident. Iles was at the scene as a tank truck driver for Barry Haggard Tank Truck Services in Mt. Carmel and the two men were hospitalized together following the incident.

Funkhouser said Iles told him he shut the fuel off on the water pump as requested by Fieber but the engine continued to run.

"To the best of my recollection, he says he gets a wrench and he tries to short it out and when he did, the pump backfired and when it backfired, the well exploded," Funkhouser's deposition said.

Both Iles and Bradley Cunningham, 53, of Grayville, who was at the scene as a well inspector for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, declined to testify at Saturday's inquest.

Iles, who walked with assistance with a cane and was obviously still recovering from burns to his face and head, took the stand and read from a prepared statement that on advice from his legal counsel, he was declining to testify.

Cunningham, who had bandages on his hands and scarring on his face, also told the jury he would not testify on advice from his legal counsel.

Carmi resident Bruce "Roe" Cartmill, who was at the scene as a concrete truck operator for Barnett Ready-Mix and escaped uninjured, testified Saturday, but his recollection, he said, was not very good about the incident. He previously told The Times during an interview in the days after the incident he recalled the pump motor revving up, as if some of the vaporized gas was reaching the motor and causing it to run on its own.

"They knew there was a problem because the pump motor started to rev," Cartmill said in that interview.

Roe explained that when natural gas enters a carbureted motor, it is like when one would spray ether into a carbureted engine on a car in the days before fuel-injected engines became prevalent. The engine gets a boost, not unlike a shot of nitrous oxide used in racing applications.

Phil Kittinger, a safety director at White County Coal, provided testimony that he and a co-worker saw the smoke from the fire from the coal mine southeast of Carmi Oct. 29 and responded to the scene immediately because he knew something bad had happened because of the size of the plume smoke billowing into the air.

Kittinger testified that he assisted the fire departments in acquiring some specialized fire fighting equipment from the mine to help extinguish the blaze and that he provided what medical care he could to the injured when he arrived.

McVey told the jury in summary that autopsies conducted by Dr. E. Allen Griggs of Indiana, a forensic pathologist, revealed both decedents died from soot and super-heated air entering their lungs and that both men were identified by dental and other medical records.

<http://www.carmitimes.com/archive/x743981189/Jury-finds-oil-well-deaths-accidental>

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USA, UT, DAVIS CO, WOODS CROSS

JANUARY 13 2009.

REFINERY FIRE INJURES 4

Ben Winslow and Jacob Hancock

Firefighters began a "blitz" approach late Monday in an attempt to suffocate a blaze that erupted at the Silver Eagle Refinery here following a 5:30 p.m. explosion that seriously injured four refinery workers.

Crews began pumping foam into vents on the 42,000-gallon gasoline tank about 9:30 p.m. in an effort to snuff out the fire burning inside by eliminating its oxygen source, said South Davis Metro Deputy Fire Chief Jeff Bassett. If successful, the blaze could be out by about midnight.

Bassett said that would effectively end the need for any evacuation of the surrounding homes as the threat to three nearby smaller tanks would be eliminated.

Police ended the mandatory evacuation order for neighborhoods in a half-mile radius surrounding the refinery about 8:30 p.m. but urged residents to stay away voluntarily.

"It is a voluntary evacuation at this time, but we strongly suggest you stay (at the evacuation center)," Woods Cross Police Sgt. Ekolu Delos Santos told about 100 evacuees gathered at the Woods Cross High gymnasium.

Police assured those at the gym that neighborhoods were being heavily patrolled in their absence.

Flames were seen shooting up into the sky above one of the 42,000-gallon gasoline tanks shortly after the explosion at the refinery at 2355 S. 1100 West, as fire crews from several nearby cities poured water on it. Firefighters early on said they were able to keep the fire from spreading, but were worried about the seams of the tank — and if oxygen should seep in.

"We have the tank surrounded," Bassett said at that time. "We have a large amount of water on it and we're holding it right there. There's no degradation and we don't see tank failure happening."

Four men, ages 30 to 50, at the refinery were injured when the explosion occurred, authorities said, being pulled to safety by co-workers. Two were flown by medical helicopter and the other two were taken by ambulance.

"We have treated four patients on scene," Bassett told the Deseret News. "They have now been transported to the burn unit at University Hospital."

The injuries were described as burns to the faces, necks, arms and hands of the workers. One also suffered lung damage from inhaling the searing heat.

Hospital spokesman Chris Nelson said one man was listed in critical condition, two were serious and one was in fair condition. Their names were not immediately released.

A Red Cross spokeswoman said shortly after the mandatory evacuation order was lifted that its volunteers would remain on scene to provide those fighting the fire with food, water and other assistance as needed. She said they expected to be working through the night.

A half-mile radius surrounding the refinery was evacuated with police going door-to-door telling residents east of the refinery to leave. Residents along 800 West between 2100 South and 2600 South were ordered to leave their homes, Bassett said.

Jason and Jana Pace were told to evacuate with their children. They packed up their SUV with car seats, their dog and a blanket headed toward the evacuation center at Woods Cross High School.

"We don't think it will be very bad. We expect to be back home in about an hour or so," Jason Pace said at the time.

But authorities expected the fire to burn well into the night.

The Paces' 7-year-old daughter, Madeline, appeared nervous as they left their neighborhood. "I'm scared," she said, "because fire is scary."

Dean Erickson, 52, has lived near the refinery for years. He watched the fire for about 30 minutes before police knocked on his door and told his family to leave.

Erickson said he has seen fires at nearby refineries before, but this is the first time he has ever been evacuated.

"We finished up dinner real quick — had to have that — and grabbed some clothes and then left," he said.

Bassett said residents will be evacuated "though the night."

The Utah Transit Authority also halted its commuter rail service, which passes right by the Silver Eagle Refinery. UTA set up a bus bridge transporting commuters between the Salt Lake City Central station and Woods Cross, authority spokeswoman Carrie Bohnsack-Ware said.

This is not the first fire at the Silver Eagle refinery. In 2007, a fire sent a heavy plume of black smoke into the air. In that blaze, authorities shut off a fuel supply valve and let the blaze burn itself out.

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Bassett said firefighters in the area receive specialized training in College Station, Texas, to learn how to battle a refinery fire. The refineries themselves pay for the training, he said.
<http://deseretnews.com/article/1,5143,705277254,00.html>

USA, UT, DAVIS CO, WOODS CROSS

JANUARY 14 2009.

FUMES ESCAPING FROM TANK'S VENTS POSSIBLE CAUSE OF REFINERY FIRE

Paul Foy

An explosion at a Woods Cross refinery that left four men with serious burns appears to have been caused by fumes escaping from a storage tank's vents, the company said Tuesday.

Fire investigators were at Silver Eagle Refining Inc., Utah's smallest refinery, looking at that as a possible cause for a fire that burned for nearly 11 hours before it was extinguished early Tuesday.

Because the fumes venting from the top of the 13,500-barrel tank were heavier than air, they spread along the ground and across a parking lot, where a furnace inside a small building is believed to have ignited the vapor, Krege Christensen, vice president of finance and legal affairs, told The Associated Press on Tuesday.

The flames traveled back to the tank, burning off gasoline vapor from the vents. Eventually, firefighters were able to inject foam down the same vents, putting the fire out.

Before the explosion, workers had purged some of the lines connecting the tank, which holds partly refined gasoline. That work is believed to have forced vapors to escape from the tank's vents, Christensen said.

The vapors could have been concentrated enough to catch fire once ignited, he said.

That is the most likely cause of the explosion and fire, said Christensen. A definitive conclusion awaits a full investigation that could take a week to complete, he said.

South Davis Metro Fire Agency Deputy Chief Jeff Bassett said his investigators were at the refinery on Tuesday to reconstruct the accident.

The explosion alarmed the FBI's regional headquarters in Salt Lake City. Agents feared it might be an act of terrorism. The FBI called to offer help and inquire about the nature of the disaster, but was satisfied it was "definitely an industrial accident," agency spokesman Juan T. Becerra said Tuesday.

The accident sent two Silver Eagle employees and two insulation contractors to the burn unit of University of Utah Hospital, where they were being treated for second- and third-degree burns, company officials and a hospital spokesman said.

Silver Eagle employees Alex Bloomfield and Phillip McSwain were in serious condition, University Hospital spokesman Chris Nelson said.

McSwain, who runs Silver Eagle's refining lab, is a brother of company president Dave McSwain, according to Christensen.

Timothy Harter, of Elite Insulation, remains in critical condition. His colleague, Rob Benoit, was in serious condition, according to the hospital.

All four men were standing outside the door of a small building where a furnace is believed to have sparked the explosion, according to Christensen.

Christensen said the tank was partly filled with light naphtha, the "first cut" that separates gasoline from crude oil at temperatures of more than 600 degrees. The gasoline at this stage is partly refined, he said.

It wasn't immediately clear how full the tank was. It has a floating roof that rises and falls as the tank fills and empties.

"That gasoline — the nice thing about it is it burned clean," Bassett said. "We didn't have any air pollution issues."

Silver Eagle also makes diesel fuel, asphalt and waxes for Duraflame logs, chewing gum and Crayola Crayons, according to Christensen.

<http://www.kutv.com/content/news/local/story/Fumes-escaping-from-tanks-vents-possible-causeof/Qi7vWpVoO0qmm3ZDssvBjQ.csp>

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

USA, LA, COVINGTON

JANUARY 15 2009.

TANK EXPLOSION SCARES ABITA BREWERY'S NEIGHBORS. BUT NO ONE INJURED AFTER ABITA ACCIDENT

Jeff Adelson

James Herring awoke to a tremendous boom early Tuesday morning, as pictures crashed from the walls of his home in a trailer park east of Covington.

Thinking a car had smashed into his home or a burglar was trying to break in, Herring grabbed his gun and rushed outside. As he scanned the area he found other startled residents of his neighborhood -- in the shadow of the Abita brewery on Louisiana 36 near Abita Springs -- rushing through the streets.

"It scared the fire out of us," Herring said.

After daybreak, residents discovered the explosion had come from the brewery, which stands just a few dozen feet from some of the trailers at Covington Manor mobile home park. A 30-foot hole, surrounded by jagged metal, was torn through the roof of one building, and debris was scattered through the neighborhood.

The 1:30 a.m. blast, which could be heard from Harrison Avenue several miles away, came from a beer-aging tank being cleaned in a nearby building, officials said. As part of their regular cleaning procedure, workers filled the 180-barrel tank with carbon dioxide, company spokesman Beth Harris said.

But normal safety features, which would have released gas when the tank became too pressurized, failed and the tank exploded, said Harris, who works for Abita Springs company Innovative Advertising.

No one was injured in the explosion, and the blast did not start a fire, said Capt. Matt Huddleston, of St. Tammany Parish's 12th Fire Protection District.

Workers loaded kegs onto trucks Tuesday morning as the brewery resumed partial operation, though the company said it would not restart its brewing operations until today, Harris said.

"We just feel blessed that no one was injured," Harris said. None of the tanks used for brewing was damaged, and "no beer was spilled," she said.

Firefighters satisfied themselves that the building was structurally sound before they left Tuesday.

"None of the other equipment seems to be damaged, but there is a large hole in the building," Huddleston said.

There were several safety features that should have prevented this kind of explosion, and the Abita Brewing Co. plans to examine the accident fully to determine exactly what went wrong, Harris said.

The blast showered Covington Manor with debris, left trailers with broken windows and picture frames, and worried residents, who didn't know whether they had been awoken by a gunshot, an exploding transformer or a bomb.

"My daughter, she came running, 'Mama! What was that? What was that?'" said Stacy Bickham, who lives with her 9-year-old daughter, Latisha Penn, on the road behind the brewery.

Others said the blast didn't disturb them.

"I didn't even wake up," said Michael Lambert, who slept through the noise after working the late shift at a Rouses Supermarket.

Leslie Wolf, whose trailer is just behind the site of the explosion, came out of her trailer Tuesday morning to find the metal siding of her home had buckled and her bedroom window shattered.

Residents said a company representative had come through the neighborhood Tuesday morning and promised to repair any damage caused by the explosion.

Residents had mixed feelings after the accident, and some said they now feared another explosion.

"I'm frightened something else might blow up," Bickham said.

<http://www.nola.com/news/?/base/news-1/1231914246231780.xml&coll=1>

USA, MT, BILLINGS

JANUARY 14 2009.

CLYDE PARK EXPLOSION

Park County fire officials say it was a miracle no one was seriously hurt after a gas tank explosion and fire on a ranch north of Livingston. It happened just after 3 p.m. Monday afternoon near Clyde Park on Fiddle Creek Road. Park County Rural Fire District One Assistant Fire Chief Dann Babcox says a fuel tanker was filling a 2,500 gallon diesel tank on a ranch when it exploded. The explosion triggered a fire at a nearby shop, destroyed a truck, started a grass fire and ignited a 1,500 gallon gas tank on fire. A large grain bin was also destroyed, but firefighters saved 95% of the grain inside. Firefighters were able to save the shop and two nearby houses. One person suffered a second-degree hand burn, but no one suffered serious injuries. It took 25 firefighters from Wilsall, Clyde Park and Park County Rural fire

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Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

departments just over two hours to get the blaze under control. The cause of the explosion is still under investigation, but officials say static electricity may have been a factor.

<http://www.kulr8.com/news/local/37545359.html>

USA, CO, WELD CO, WEST GREELEY

JANUARY 15 2009.

3 WORKERS HURT IN EXPLOSION, FIRE AT OIL WELL

Mike Hooker

Authorities say a pickup truck's hot catalytic converter ignited vapors from a flat tank at an oil well, sparking an explosion that sent two workers to a Greeley hospital. Weld County Undersheriff Margie Martinez says the blast occurred about 7:30 a.m. Wednesday at a site west of Greeley. Martinez says two employees suffered facial burns and were taken to North Colorado Medical Center. A third worker was treated at the scene for minor burns. "They were talking and conscious at the time when they left," Martinez said. Union Colony Fire Chief Dale Lyman says the open-topped tank contained a petroleum product mixture whose vapors hovered close to the ground due to cold temperatures. The vapors ignited in a flash fire when the pickup carrying workers arrived at the site. "Those fumes get into contact with, most likely, the trucks catalytic converter, which causes a flash fire," Lyman said. Lyman said the flames quickly travelled to the tank. "I don't know exactly the process per se, but to the best of my knowledge there are always fumes like that present, which normally are dissipated into the atmosphere," Lyman said. "If you look around here, this is a low lying area. It's quite possible there was an inversion effect where those fumes were just being held close to the ground." The names of the workers have not been released. They are from Greeley and Fort Lupton.

<http://cbs4denver.com/local/weld.oil.explosion.2.908126.html>

USA, CO, GREELEY

JANUARY 17 2009.

TANK EXPLOSION'S DAMAGE TALLY: \$1,500

While the two men injured in Wednesday's gas storage tank explosion are being treated for burns to their faces, federal investigators are looking into the causes of the blast and fire.

The incident occurred about 7:30 a.m. Wednesday at a petroleum storage tank near 83rd Avenue and the Poudre River Road west of Greeley. Three men were injured, and two remain in the hospital.

At North Colorado Medical Center, Ismael Estrada, 30, of Greeley was reported in fair condition, while Derrek Majors, 26, of Platteville was in good condition. Both men received second- and third-degree burns to their faces, heads and hands. A third man, Emilio Torrez, 36, of Longmont was treated for minor burns and released.

The explosion rattled homes for miles around, and flames and smoke could be seen in the area for about 30 minutes before firefighters stopped the blaze.

Despite the loud explosion and fiery scene Wednesday, fire officials estimated damage at only \$1,500. "Mostly due to the scorched tank and melted rubber hoses," said Union Colony fire spokesman Dale Lyman.

Fire investigators from the Windsor-Severance Fire Department and the Union Colony Fire Protection District in Greeley blamed the explosion on an accumulation of waste gas that was held in place by the cold air surrounding the tanks Wednesday.

There are several theories as to how the gas ignited, including a catalytic converter on a workers' truck, static electricity and a nearby electric fence.

Investigators from the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration were at the scene Wednesday, talking to officials from Eastern Colorado Well Services, the Fort Lupton company that owns the tanks.

On Thursday, officials from the company said they would not comment about the explosion because it's still under investigation.

At OSHA, investigator Herb Gibson said Thursday they are still trying to determine why the gas collected in such a substantial amount, and what was the ignition source of the explosion. "It will probably take about a month for the investigation to be completed," Gibson said.

[http://www.greeleytribune.com/article/20090116/NEWS/901169958/1002/NONE&parentprofile=1001&title=Tank%20explosion%92s%20damage%20tally:%20\\$1,500](http://www.greeleytribune.com/article/20090116/NEWS/901169958/1002/NONE&parentprofile=1001&title=Tank%20explosion%92s%20damage%20tally:%20$1,500)

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

NEW ZEALAND, INVERCARGILL

JANUARY 21 2009.

SIX INJURED IN EXPLOSION AT NEW ZEALAND SOUTHLAND DAIRY FACTORY

An explosion and chemical leak occurred at the New Zealand dairy giant Fonterra's Edendale factory in Southland on Monday, leaving six people injured. Six people were taken to Southland Hospital in the southern city of Invercargill with minor injuries, Radio New Zealand reported. A contractor who poured chemicals into the wrong tank caused the explosion at Fonterra's Edendale factory, said Invercargill's Fire Service. Invercargill Fire Service officer said the chlorine-based chemical sanitiser Reflux S800 was poured into the wrong tank, blowing off its lid and sending a chemical cloud through the factory. The accident happened just before 10:30 a.m. local time (21:30 GMT Sunday). The area was evacuated and fire crews from Wyndham, Edendale and Invercargill were called to the dairy co-operative's factory. A Fonterra spokesperson said normal operations had resumed and an investigation into the cause of the accident was under way. The factory was just north of the Edendale township and about 40 km northeast of Invercargill.

<http://www.firefightingnews.com/article-NZ.cfm?articleID=60726>

USA, FLA, MIAMI

JANUARY 22 2009.

ETHANOL LAWSUIT MOVES FORWARD AGAINST OIL COMPANIES – SUIT CLAIMS THAT COMPANIES AT FAULT FOR NOT WARNING BOAT OWNERS THAT GAS CAN DAMAGE ENGINES, FUEL TANKS

Liz Freeman

A Florida lawsuit against five oil companies for negligence by failing to warn boat owners of potential harm from ethanol-blended gasoline has survived a motion to dismiss from the defendants, according to an order by the U.S. District Court judge in Miami presiding over the case.

The next step is pursuing certification to become a class-action lawsuit, said plaintiff attorney Jeffrey Ostrow in Fort Lauderdale.

The intent is to represent all Florida boat owners who have used ethanol-blended fuel and those whose boats have been damaged by ethanol added in fuel, Ostrow said. He filed the lawsuit in August 2008 on behalf of three plaintiffs.

“We are alive and kicking here,” he said. “I think it paves the way for the same type of case in other states.”

A similar lawsuit filed in April 2008 in California, nevertheless, was dismissed last October. Ostrow believes it was the only other lawsuit filed against manufacturers of ethanol-blended gasoline.

Defendants in the Florida lawsuit are Chevron, Exxon, BP, Shell Oil and ConocoPhillips. A sixth defendant is Tower Energy Corporation, a California-based independent petroleum wholesaler.

The lawsuit says the oil companies have been negligent by not providing warnings to boat owners that ethanol additive can corrode fiberglass fuel tanks and require the tanks to be replaced, and secondly, that phased separation of ethanol from gasoline can cause engine damage.

The goal with a class-action lawsuit is reimbursement to boat owners for repairs and to require a warning label on fuel pumps alerting boaters not to use ethanol-blended gasoline or consult with a boat mechanic, Ostrow said.

U.S. District Court Judge Cecilia M. Altonaga issued an order Tuesday allowing the complaint to move forward on one count of negligence that the oil manufacturers have failed to warn boat owners of the potential harm of ethanol-blended gasoline. During earlier proceedings, the plaintiff's attorney agreed to drop two other counts that the oil companies intentionally concealed potential harm of ethanol in gasoline and that such violated Florida's deceptive and unfair trade law.

Defense attorneys for the five companies could not be reached for comment. Scott Dean, a spokesman for BP in Chicago, declined comment because the lawsuit is pending.

At issue is a state law adopted in spring 2008 that all gasoline sold in the state contain 10 percent ethanol, called E10, by the end of 2010 as part of conservation measures. Two exemptions were included allowing ethanol-free gas to be sold for airplanes and boats. About a half dozen other states require ethanol additives in gasoline.

Shortly after Florida's law was passed, some boat owners around the state began experiencing engine failure and other problems after fueling up with gas purchased at gas stations or with fuel bought at marinas. Some marinas were unable initially to get ethanol-free gasoline from suppliers.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

Boat mechanics also saw an upsurge in repairs, blamed on ethanol corroding resins in fiberglass fuel tanks. Another problem arises when boats sit for a while and the ethanol separates from the gas in the tank which can lead to engine troubles.

<http://www.naplesnews.com/news/2009/jan/21/ethanol-lawsuit-moves-forward-against-oil-companie/>

CANADA, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, UNIONVALE

JANUARY 24 2009.

HUMAN ERROR IDENTIFIED AS CAUSE OF GAS SPILL

Eric McCarthy

Fuel containment measures at an Ultramar bulk storage facility in Unionvale were tested this week and passed. The dyke surrounding the storage tanks prevented gasoline from an overfill accident from causing any environmental harm, a company official said Wednesday. —It was basically human error,|| said Ultramar's distribution manager, said Norman Cormier, in explaining the cause of the accident. —The driver offloaded more than the tank would hold.|| The accident occurred Tuesday night while an Island Petroleum trucker was filling one of the tanks in the compound. All of the gasoline that spilled out, said Cormier, was contained in a dyke around the tank, which has an impermeable liner. A vacuum truck arrived Wednesday afternoon to collect the spilled fuel. Tom Gain, who lives next door to the storage facility, said fumes were strong Tuesday night. —You could hardly breathe,|| he said. The smell was strong again during the Wednesday afternoon recovery operation, Gain noted. Officials won't know how much fuel spilled until they've checked records for the truck and the bulk tank, but Cormier said it could be upwards of 3,000 litres. Personnel remained on the scene from the time of the accident to await the arrival of a vacuum truck that had to come from Nova Scotia because the P.E.I. equipment was inoperable. Island Petroleum manager Mike Hennessey said it's the first time such an accident occurred at the Unionvale facility. However that facility's fuel containment measures passed a previous test, when fuel had leaked out after someone had stolen fuel from the tank.

<http://www.journalpioneer.com/index.cfm?sid=213645&sc=118>

USA, OH, TOLEDO

JANUARY 24 2009.

GAS DELIVERY SPILLED UNDER BLADE FACILITY

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency said yesterday it responded to a spill of 4,000 gallons of gasoline into a monitoring well under The Blade's parking lot. The state agency identified Monroe-based C. Barron & Sons Inc. as the responsible party. According to Linda Oros, Ohio EPA spokesman, C. Barron was to fill the newspaper's underground gasoline storage tank at 541 North Superior St. but instead pumped the gasoline down the nearby monitoring well. The Ohio EPA was contacted by Blade employees at 11:47 a.m. yesterday after they discovered the underground storage tank was empty. The spill appears to be confined to Blade property, Ms. Oros said. About 700 of the missing 4,000 gallons were recovered yesterday. Crews will be attempting to recover more of the missing fuel today, according to Ms. Oros. "Our employees discovered that the recent gasoline delivery wasn't showing in the storage tank, and took quick steps to see that the problem was reported, investigated, and controlled," said Luann Sharp, a Blade spokesman. In addition to the Ohio EPA, the spill was investigated by two companies hired by C. Barron, Marine Pollution Control and Superior Environmental, as well as the city of Toledo's environmental services department and the city's sewer division. None found any evidence of off-site seepage, according to Ms. Oros.

<http://toledoblade.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20090123/NEWS16/901230368>

USA, FLA, JACKSONVILLE

JANUARY 31 2009. C

AUSE UNKNOWN IN TANK EXPLOSION - THE FLAMES WERE PUT OUT QUICKLY AND NO ONE WAS SERIOUSLY INJURED.

Matt Coleman

A storage tank housing a chemical used to produce ink exploded Friday behind a Jacksonville industrial plant, authorities said. No one was seriously injured. The 18-foot-tall tank, which housed about 1,500 gallons of hydrocarbon resin, ignited about 8:30 a.m. behind the US Ink plant in the 5200 block of Shawland Road. Investigators are still trying to determine how the blaze started. The hazardous materials team waited for the tank to cool before using a foam spray to suppress the flames, said John Brace, spokesman for the Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department. The blaze was extinguished in a couple of minutes with the help of about 70 firefighters. The top of the tank was breached, but none of the resin spilled to the ground. No neighboring businesses were evacuated. "Any environmental impact was

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Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

contained to the area directly surrounding the tank," Bracey said. About 25 employees were inside the plant during the explosion. One woman requested to go to the hospital and was taken to St. Vincent's Medical Center, Bracey said. Eldon Fink, director of environmental health and safety for Sun Chemical Corp., US Ink's parent company, said the resin is a lubricating oil used in the production of ink for newspapers and pamphlets.

http://www.jacksonville.com/news/metro/crime/2009-01-31/story/cause_unknown_in_tank_explosion

USA, WASHINGTON DC

JANUARY 31 2009.

STATEMENT OF CSB INVESTIGATIONS SUPERVISOR DON HOLMSTROM UPDATING THE PUBLIC ON THE INVESTIGATION OF THE SILVER EAGLE REFINERY FIRE IN WOODS CROSS, UTAH

Good morning, and welcome to the Chemical Safety Board's - the CSB's - news conference. The CSB is an independent federal agency charged with investigating chemical accidents at fixed facilities. We are modeled after the National Transportation Safety Board, and our offices are located in Washington, D.C. We have a professional staff of engineers and other specialists with industry and government experience.

My name is Don Holmstrom, Investigations Supervisor for the CSB. This morning we will be providing you with an update on our investigation into the January 12 fire at the Silver Eagle Refinery in Woods Cross, Utah.

As most of you know, two refinery operators and two contractors were engulfed by the flame front and suffered serious burns. All four were hospitalized and are now recovering.

Since arriving in Utah the investigation team has conducted over 40 interviews, gathered process samples, collected hundreds of pages of refinery records and extensively examined the accident scene.

To date, our investigation has found that on the evening of January 12, 2009 at approximately 5:20 pm a large vapor cloud was released from an atmospheric storage tank, known as tank 105, which contained an estimated 440,000 gallons of light naphtha.

Witness interviews state that vapor was seen escaping from atmospheric vents on the west side of the tank.

Through an examination of the damage to the area surrounding the tank the CSB has determined that the vapor cloud found an ignition source - for example a utility room with a gas heater or an electrical outlet connected to a conventional refrigerator - and the ensuing flash fire spread up to 230 feet west of the tank farm.

Two structures were damaged as a result of this fire, a shed and a lab facility located approximately 140 feet and 160 feet respectively, from the site of the release.

On the day of the incident, tank 105 was receiving up to three different streams of hydrocarbon liquids from the refinery, including 'light' or low-boiling substances. The primary feed into tank 105 had been sent from the #1 crude unit pre-flash accumulator for approximately three weeks prior to the incident. Feeding tank 105 directly from this unit was a recent process change and the feed from this unit had undergone a different form of processing. Workers were also purging equipment with nitrogen to remove flammable liquid, with the intent to pressure the liquid into tank 105.

We have established sampling protocols, taken samples from storage tanks and from process vessels, and will be instituting the appropriate testing procedures.

The CSB is investigating reports from plant personnel indicating a history of vapor leaks from tank 105 both prior to and following tank repairs.

The CSB will be investigating if the floating roof on tank 105 was equipped with the appropriate seal for use in the storage of light hydrocarbons of the type sent to the tank. Our investigation will examine possible failures within tank 105 such as gaps between the seal and the inner tank wall, the integrity of the seal, and the design and structural integrity of the tank.

Currently the CSB has identified two additional issues that are of particular interest to our ongoing investigation. The first is an examination of changes to the process unit sending liquid to tank 105 and possible effects that these changes had on the incident.

We will also review facility siting issues relating to this release and fire. Specifically, the occupied lab was affected by the flash fire. This structure is located in close proximity to operating process units.

The CSB's investigation into the March 2005 explosion and fire at BP Texas City examined facility siting of portable work trailers. All of the fifteen contract workers killed in that incident had been working in or near portable trailers located near hazardous process equipment.

As a result of our findings, the CSB issued an urgent recommendation to the American Petroleum Institute to update their guidelines for portable work buildings such as trailers.

Today, the CSB investigative team is returning to Washington, D.C. to brief agency officials and analyze the information we have gathered during our visit to the site. Depending on the course of the investigation, we expect to

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

return periodically to Woods Cross to gather more information.

The CSB's investigations seek to identify the root cause of an accident. As new information becomes available, we will keep the community, public officials and the industry informed. We do all this, of course, in an effort to prevent serious chemical and refinery accidents that cause injuries, destroy property, and jeopardize public safety.

Our ultimate product will be safety recommendations designed to prevent a recurrence of this type of accident, here or at refineries located in cities across the country.

Thank you for attending today, and we will be happy to answer your questions.

www.csb.gov