

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

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

USA, GA, ATHENS

JANUARY 1 2011.

SPILL DEVASTATES CREEK AND RAISES TROUBLING QUESTIONS

Lee Shearer

The chemicals that spilled after a fire at the J&J Chemical Co. plant off Olympic Drive wiped out aquatic life in a stretch of Trail Creek and cost two dozen people their jobs.

"One of the things that sticks with me still is that this is what it looks like on the ground when some of the very basics of the state government's role in our communities are eroded by budget cuts and staff reductions," said Ben Emanuel, Oconee River projects coordinator for the Altamaha Riverkeeper, one of the groups that banded together to gather information and post warning signs after the spill.

Emanuel believes budget cuts over the past few years at the state Environmental Protection Division, the lead state agency in environmental disasters like the Trail Creek spill, may be so deep that the agency may not be able to do its job of environmental protection any more.

EPD workers put in long hours trying to assess the spill and limit its effects, but an EPD emergency team took hours to respond as the fire launched exploding fireballs and sent towering plumes of black smoke into the Athens night sky. And like citizens and elected officials, both the EPD and local emergency response teams had a hard time at first finding out just what was in the chemical runoff that poured into a branch of Trail Creek as firefighters used 740,000 gallons of water to keep the fire from spreading.

The water flowing off the fire site at the building on Trans Tech Drive, in Northeast Clarke County, carried thousands of gallons of formaldehyde, glutaraldehyde, paradichlorobenzene and dozens of other chemicals downstream. Also in the mix were oily perfumes and a brilliant blue dye that made it easy to see the contamination as it flowed down Trail Creek and into the North Oconee River at Dudley Park.

But most people at first knew only that the water looked and smelled funny.

"The first few days was a real exercise in frustration," said District 9 Commissioner Kelly Girtz, one of many who struggled to get answers in the days following the fire about the runoff and whether it was dangerous to people or pets.

"I think I spent about 30 hours ... dealing with phone calls and messages," Girtz said. "I was getting the sense that there was incomplete information at best, and seemingly no one steering the ship."

In the end, it was not the RPD or the Athens-Clarke government but volunteers from a coalition of environmental groups Emanuel pulled together that posted warning signs along the stream telling people to avoid contact with the water - four days after runoff from the fire gushed downstream.

Commissioners like Girtz and Andy Herod got dozens of e-mails and calls from constituents, alarmed after noticing the water smelled like urinal cakes or seeing it flow toilet-bowl blue and wondering if they were safe.

Herod couldn't tell them anything at first because he couldn't find out anything, either, he said.

"I think there was a general failure to communicate," Herod said. "The elected officials were basically left in the dark as to what was going on."

Athens-Clarke government administrators vowed to do a better job of communicating to the public and to officials in future emergencies.

"One of the main things it reinforces for me is that we are a community that thrives on information. The better

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information we can share, the more confidence the community has in what we do," said Athens-Clarke Manager Alan Reddish.

EPD officials said the agency would communicate better in the future, both within the agency and to outsiders. But EPD emergency responders were hampered during the Trail Creek spill because they couldn't get information quickly from the chemical company or the cleanup company it hired about what chemicals were in the plant or about the unfolding crisis, according to an EPD report on the spill.

Emanuel wonders if the spill signals the beginning of an era of do-it-yourself environmental protection for the state.

"EPD has been gutted, and that hampered their ability to respond," he said.

Meanwhile, Emanuel and others are keeping a close eye on the stream, wondering how long it may take to recover.

Eventually, the blue water flowed on downstream, along with the toxic chemicals. Water samples taken in mid-November showed no detectable levels of paradichlorobenzene, the EPD announced early in December. The formaldehyde was gone by September, the agency said.

But life has been slow to return to the creek, said Jessica Sterling, a graduate student in ecology and a member of the Upper Oconee Watershed Network, which has for years monitored the health of Trail Creek and other Athens waterways.

UOWN volunteers last tested Trail Creek's waters Nov. 13, and will test again early next year.

Contamination remains at a small wetland off Olympic Drive, just downstream from J&J Chemical, Sterling said.

"We could still smell that perfume, and see that grayish-blue color," she said. "It makes you wonder what's still there."

But UOWN volunteers did find a few living creatures such as blood worms, which can survive in polluted water; in August, they found none.

Although Athens-Clarke officials have made progress in reducing pollution from everyday sources such as runoff from parking lots, Sterling wonders how much planning local officials have done to protect area waters from catastrophic chemical spills like the one that killed Trail Creek.

The county had another major spill just seven years ago, when gasoline wiped out life in Hunnicutt Creek, which flows into the Middle Oconee River at Ben Burton Park.

"It doesn't seem like we're prepared for that at all," she said. "What is the plan? Is there a plan?"

Life returned to Hunnicutt Creek in about a year, but neither environmental officials nor local water activists can say if Trail Creek will recover that quickly.

Gasoline, the major pollutant in the Hunnicutt Creek spill, is lighter than water, so most of the poison was flushed downstream quickly.

Sterling and other water activists suspect some of the toxic chemicals that poisoned Trail Creek may have sunk into stream sediments and will be slowly released into the creek's waters for a long time to come.

A company hired to clean up the land around the chemical factory is scheduled to finish its cleanup and issue a final report to EPD officials by Jan. 14; after that, officials in the environmental agency will decide whether the company will also have to undertake a second cleanup in Trail Creek itself.

http://onlineathens.com/stories/123110/new_763658698.shtml

USA, MN, CLAREMONT

JANUARY 5 2011.

CORN MASH TANK COLLAPSES AT CLAREMONT ETHANOL PLANT

A 270,000-gallon corn mash fermentation tank at the Al-Corn Clean Fuels in Claremont collapsed inside a building about 1:30 a.m. New Year's Day, draining nearly all the mash from the tank and another connected to it.

About 420,000 gallons of mash spilled and about 100,000 gallons got out of the building, but most stayed on Al-Corn land, said Randy Doyle, Al-Corn CEO. Most of the mash in the building was recovered and is being turned into ethanol, he said.

Mash is part of the process used to turn corn into ethanol.

"It kind of looks like Malt-O-Meal, maybe a little bit more liquidy," Doyle said.

The 100,000 gallons that leaked equates to about 10,000 bushels of corn, he said.

No one was hurt, though those inside were scared, he said. The collapse also knocked out a roof beam support, bowing out a wall, he said. The area is covered by a tarp, and the roof is being held up by a crane, Doyle said.

675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683

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He can't say how much damages will be.

Such collapses are "fairly unusual," he said. The tank was made of carbon steel, and the mash is corrosive to that, he said. There were four such tanks inside the building, which Al-Corn opened about 12 years ago. One tank failed and is lost; the other three are off line, he said. The plant relies on stainless steel outside tanks, he said.

The plant has expanded from making about 10 million gallons to 50 million gallons, mostly using those tanks.

Al-Corn had been trying to get permits to get rid of the tank that failed and the one that drained, and replace them with a stainless steel tank outside, he said. Ironically, Al-Corn received the permit on Thursday, two days before the tank failed, he said. The new tank will cost about \$300,000, he said.

When Doyle got to the plant about 30 minutes after the tank failed, he expected it would take at least a week to get it back into operation. But everything was back up in half a day, he said. He credited local contractors and his staff for that. Doyle said he was "absolutely impressed with the effort our people put out."

None of the corn mash apparently got into surface water or ground water, said Cathy Rofshus, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency public information officer in Rochester. Workers there used snow and ice dams to block any mash from getting too far, she said.

If the mash gets into water, the ethanol and sugar can use up oxygen needed by plants or animals in the water, she said.

Two MPCA emergency response members were at the site Monday to help with cleanup, she said.

http://ww2.postbulletin.com/newsmanager/templates/localnews_story.asp?z=28&a=483991

UK, STAFFORDSHIRE

JANUARY 6 2011.

VILLAGE SHROUDED IN FUMES AFTER OIL SPILLED INTO RIVER

Animals have died after "thousands of litres" of oil leaked into the River Penk from a disused industrial estate.

Villagers say the streets of Penkridge reeked of fumes for days after the Christmas Eve spill emanating from the Lyne Hill Industrial Estate.

A heron and other birds are among the animals reported dead or injured after the spill.

An RSPCA spokesman said: "We were called to this oil spill on December 28 after a heron was discovered covered in oil.

"Two of our inspectors rescued the bird and took it to Stapeley Grange Wildlife Centre, where sadly it later died.

"It was covered in oil and it was also very thin, possibly because the freezing conditions may have made it hard for it to feed." The clean-up was concluded early this week after Environment Agency workers started the operation on Christmas Day.

They were joined by operatives from Wooldridge Demolition, the firm currently knocking down the site for its unidentified owners.

Company director Nick Anderson said he believed the leak was caused by thieves breaking into the site and smashing pipes in an attempt to steal diesel.

He said his firm has launched an investigation and are working with police who claim they have no record of any crime being reported.

Mr Anderson said: "The offenders were unable to steal the diesel as we'd locked all the fuel tanks, so they decided to smash the pipes.

"This filled an interceptor, which ran off and partly contaminated the river. We sent five operatives out on Christmas Day to work with the environment agency and minimise the damage.

"We installed booms and tanks to pump wasted fuel away, and that process has been going continuously.

"We've also contacted the police and are treating this as a very serious criminal offence." Parish councillor Bevan Craddock told the Newsletter how the cold weather caused the fumes to hang over the village.

He said: "It was particularly bad in the village centre, where the brook flows under the road, and people walking on the footpath from New Road to Wolgarston Way have also said it was very smelly over the festive period.

"We must thank all those who worked on Christmas Day to clean up and it's vital we find out who's responsible for this."

<http://www.staffordshirenewsletter.co.uk/News/Village-shrouded-in-fumes-after-oil-spilled-into-river.htm>

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USA, S.C, GREER

JANUARY 6 2011.

OFFICIALS: DIESEL SPILL DID NOT INJURE BEAVERS

A Greer spokesman said 1,000-1,500 gallons of diesel was spilled in the city just before Christmas. The spill – which originated from the basement of the former Allen Bennett Memorial Hospital -- was mostly confined to a nearby creek and beaver dam, but officials say the animals were not injured and no drinking water is known to have been contaminated. Cleanup efforts were completed shortly after the spill was discovered on Dec. 20. The spill originated from an emergency power generator.

<http://www2.wspa.com/news/2011/jan/04/officials-diesel-spill-did-not-injure-beavers-ar-1300001>

USA, LA, ST GABRIEL, JANUARY 13 2011. MECHANIC DIES, FOUND IN TANK

A mechanic was pronounced dead at a hospital after he was found unresponsive in a tanker trailer filled with nitrogen gas, police reported Tuesday. The St. Gabriel Police Department responded to a medical emergency at Quality Carriers trucking company Monday afternoon, Capt. Curtis Tatney said. The man, whose name was not made public pending the outcome of an investigation, was taken to Baton Rouge General Medical Center-Bluebonnet, where he was pronounced dead, Tatney said. Prior to filling the trailer with cargo, the company had pumped nitrogen gas into it to check for leaks, Tatney said.

<http://www.2theadvocate.com/news/113326684.html>

USA FLA, NAPLES

JANUARY 13 2011.

GAS EXPLOSION INJURES 3 AT FLA. CAFÉ

FIRE OFFICIALS SAY BLAST CAUSED BY A 'PERFECT STORM OF CONDITIONS'

Ryan Mills

A propane leak next to a running car proved to be an explosive combination Monday morning, sparking a flash fire that enveloped a Naples restaurant, knocking down walls, blowing out windows and sending three people to the hospital with serious burns.

"This is really a bomb that went off," Naples Fire Chief Steve McInerny said after an initial assessment of the damage.

Some people working near the Four Corners section of Fifth Avenue South said they initially thought the explosion, which shook nearby buildings, was an earthquake.

The explosion ignited around 9:15 a.m. behind Mangrove Cafe, 878 Fifth Ave. S.

Tom Smith, 41, an employee of Naples-based Bal Gas Propane, was delivering propane to a 500-gallon, underground tank behind the restaurant, McInerny said. At the same time, Donald Kingston, 32, a beer distributor, had left his 2007 Nissan Versa running in the parking lot, just a few feet from where the propane was being pumped.

McInerny said gas leaked from the tank, and seeped into the restaurant via an open door.

"In this particular case, the perfect storm of conditions came together," McInerny said in an e-mail. "We have the delivery of propane next to a running vehicle, low humidity, a propane leak and wind out of the southwest."

Jim Thompson, 53, of Golden Gate, was doing business at the UPS store behind the restaurant, when he noticed a cloud of white smoke or steam, which McInerny said is a sign of a propane leak. Thompson then saw flames and heard the explosion.

"It was a big 'woof,' " Thompson said. "It almost knocked me off my feet."

The explosion and flash fire charred much of Mangrove Cafe's kitchen, knocked down walls inside the business, ripped a door off a walk-in freezer, blew glass from the front windows into Fifth Avenue South and disconnected the roof from the walls.

"I saw the glass on the ground, smoke, and a man running toward me screaming 'Call 911. Call 911. I'm hurt. I'm burned,' " said Sandie Mathias, 54, an office manager at a real estate business a few doors down from the Mangrove Cafe.

Smith and Kingston were sent to the Tampa Bay Regional Burn Center via air ambulance. Smith remained in critical condition around 4:15 p.m., while Kingston was in fair condition.

William "Billy" McCauley, 51, a chef at the Mangrove Cafe, was sent to NCH Downtown Naples hospitals with less serious burns, officials said. McCauley has been something of a father figure to Angel Pena, 25, who is a cook at the restaurant.

"It's scary," said Pena, who was scheduled to work at 10 a.m. "You don't know. You're cooking, you have a

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passion for cooking, and all of a sudden it explodes. That's not right."

McCauley's wife, Rosey, answered the phone in his hospital room Monday afternoon.

"He's doing OK," she said.

Two Naples police officers were also transported to NCH Downtown for smoke inhalation, Naples Police Chief Tom Weschler said. Police roped off a section of road between U.S. 41 and Eighth Street South into Monday afternoon.

Doug Amaral, the owner of the Mangrove Cafe, started working at the restaurant in 1990 upon moving to Florida. He said he bought the business a little over a year later, and grew it. He said he was in shock on Monday afternoon.

"It's devastating," Amaral said. "The irony is, my restaurants in Punta Gorda got blown away by (Hurricane) Charley. This is not my first disaster."

The Mangrove Cafe is one of the oldest restaurants on Fifth Avenue South. Fire officials said they suspected the building was a complete loss. But when asked if he planned to re-open the restaurant after it has been repaired, Amaral said, "without question."

Several Mangrove Cafe employees gathered across the street as Naples police and fire officials worked.

"I haven't gotten to talk to most of them," Amaral said of his employees. "My suggestion is to go to the unemployment office."

A woman who answered the phone at Bal Gas Propane office in Naples declined comment.

Monday's explosion was similar to a propane explosion outside the old Dixie Moon Cafe in Bonita Springs in 2007. That explosion ignited as a distributor refueled gas tanks behind the restaurant. One person was severely burned in the Dixie Moon explosion.

Although three people were badly burned in Monday morning's explosion, police and fire officials said it could have been much worse had more people been in the area.

"If somebody had been walking in front of there, it would have been ugly," Weschler said.

Propane can be delivered at any time, McInerny said, adding that Monday's explosion could have been deadly had it occurred during lunch or dinner.

"I think we would have had the potential for a serious loss of life," he said. "Just alone, the glass could have cut people down. The three people involved are very, very lucky to be alive."

<http://www.firerescue1.com/fire-attack/articles/931671-Gas-explosion-injures-3-at-Fla-cafe/>

USA, PA, CHESWICK

JANUARY 13 2011.

FINES LEVIED IN INDIANA TOWNSHIP EXPLOSION THAT KILLED 2

Rossilynne Skena

The U.S. Department of Labor announced Tuesday that it has fined two companies involved in an oil tank explosion that killed two workers at an Indiana Township natural gas well in July.

For workplace safety violations, Northeast Energy Management Inc. has been ordered to pay a \$159,390 penalty, and Huntley & Huntley Inc. has been ordered to pay a \$70,000 penalty, according to a Department of Labor news release.

The Labor Department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) began its investigation in July after being notified that a tank containing flammable materials had exploded, killing two Northeast Energy welders.

Kevin Gormly, an attorney who represents Northeast Energy, said the company will set up a conference with OSHA to go over the fines. The company can either reach a settlement with OSHA, contest the fine or pay the fine.

Gormly said he couldn't comment on the substance of the findings.

A statement from Keith Mangini, president of Huntley & Huntley, states that the incident has allowed the company to "reevaluate all operations and procedures to continually improve in all areas of our business."

Huntley & Huntley does not agree with OSHA's findings and plans to have further dialogue with OSHA to understand the assessment, according to the statement.

The explosion July 23 ignited a gas well fire that burned for 10 hours before being extinguished. The blast was in a remote, wooded area off Rich Hill Road, shaking houses in the vicinity.

Huntley & Huntley, the Monroeville-based company that owns the well, contracted Northeast Energy to repair a leaking barrel tank at the well site. The Labor Department determined that Huntley & Huntley was responsible for ensuring that Northeast Energy properly trained its workers on a safe welding procedures.

Northeast Energy, of Indiana, Pa., is involved in drill site preparation and reclamation. Huntley & Huntley develops oil and gas wells.

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"These companies did not ensure that proper welding procedures were followed, resulting in this tragic loss of life," said Robert Szymanski, director of OSHA's Pittsburgh office, according to the news release. "OSHA remains committed to holding employers legally responsible when they fail to adhere to federal law and compromise the safety of workers."

As a result of the investigation, Northeast Energy was cited for two "willful violations" involving:

- Failure to ensure workers were welding on a thoroughly cleaned tank that did not contain flammable materials.
- Failure to determine whether flammable/combustible or other hazardous materials were present.

Investigators found that oil had never been drained below a valve about a foot above ground. This summer's intense heat likely turned some of the 200 gallons of oil inside into explosive fumes.

The two welders, sent to seal pinhole-sized leaks in the tank, essentially pumped fire into the tank with their welding rods, investigators said.

Huntley & Huntley also received a citation for one "willful violation":

- Failure to ensure Northeast Energy suitably trained welders and supervisors in the safe operation of welding equipment.

A "willful violation" exists when an employer has demonstrated either an intentional disregard for the requirements of the law or plain indifference to employee safety and health, according to the Labor Department

Northeast Energy was also cited for "serious violations":

- Failure to provide workers with flame retardant clothing protection while welding.
- Failure to ensure that supervision determined the welder secured approval before beginning welding operations.
- Failure to train employees in the specific procedures needed to protect themselves from hazardous chemicals.

OSHA issues a "serious citation" when there is substantial probability that death or serious physical harm could result from a hazard the employer knew or should have known about.

Fines were assessed Thursday. The two companies have 15 business days from receipt of the citations to comply, request an information conference with OSHA's local director or contest the findings.

http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/valleynewsdispatch/s_717794.html

USA, MI, REDFORD

JANUARY 14 2011.

WORKERS 'LUCKY TO GET OUT' OF TANK THAT EXPLODED

Pat Murphy

Luck played an important role in the explosion of a Redford Township company that provides tank lining services to industries where corrosion and abrasion problems exist.

Two workers were lucky to escape without serious injury, according to Fire Chief James Gomulka, and early air sampling indicated no toxic fumes were emitted when a tank exploded at the DuraTech Systems headquarters, 12546 Beech Daly, about 9:25 a.m. Tuesday.

The workers heard a whistling or hissing sound as they were cleaning a large tank, the chief said, and they got out. "I can't say it was in the nick of time," he said, "but it was fortuitous they got out when they did."

The tank was a large, mobile structure, the chief said, the kind that is usually transported by rail.

Gomulka said company officials told him the sound was an indication that pressure was building, and the workers recognized something was wrong. Later in the day he was told the workers were "fit to go," the chief said.

The force of the blast, however, was felt or heard some distance away. Workers at the Leo Snage Public Services Building, 12200 Beech Daly, reported feeling the shock wave. And the supervisor's office reported receiving calls about the blast from as far away as Inkster and Five Mile roads.

Supervisor Tracey Schultz Kobylarz quoted a consultant for the Environmental Protection Agency as saying air samples indicated "trace" amounts of pollution in the immediate area of the blast but no measurable contamination of the company premises.

As they did previously, company officials Wednesday declined to comment except to acknowledge the company has about 20 employees.

<http://www.hometownlife.com/article/20110113/NEWS10/101130616/1027/Workers'+lucky+to+get+out++of+tank+that+exploded>

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USA, WA, KENNEWICK

JANUARY 14 2011.

KENNEWICK MAN'S CLOTHES IGNITE IN CAR

A Kennewick man is being treated at Harborview Medical Center in Seattle after his shirt caught on fire while he was driving. K.J. Glenn, 52, spilled a small amount of gasoline on his shirt when he filled his vehicle at 3:44 p.m. Wednesday at the SunMart on 27th Avenue in Kennewick, according to Kennewick police reports. As he drove off, he lit a cigarette, which ignited the gasoline on his shirt, according to police. Glenn and two men riding in the vehicle climbed out of it while it still was moving, according to police. The driverless vehicle hit another car and then a flagpole in the SunMart parking lot, according to police. Glenn, who was the only one injured, had first- and second-degree burns. <http://www.tri-cityherald.com/2011/01/13/1325186/kennewick-mans-clothes-ignite.html>

USA, CA, LANSING, DELTA TWP

JANUARY 14 2011.

SPILL OF 4,000 GALLONS OF FUEL OIL BEING CLEANED UP IN DELTA TOWNSHIP

Approximately 4,000 gallons of fuel oil spilled at the Lansing Board of Water and Light's Erickson Power Plant in Delta Township on Monday night. The cause, according to a BWL official, was human error. Misaligned valves on a storage tank caused it to overflow as the fuel oil was being pumped in. The oil was cleared from the site by an environmental cleanup firm on Tuesday and Wednesday, said BWL spokesman Mark Nixon. Utility officials had not spoken publicly about the spill before today but did notify state environmental officials along with local fire and emergency management agencies. "There was no risk to public health at any time," Nixon said. The spill occurred entirely on BWL property and did not migrate away from the site, he said, and "there is no lake, river, pond or other ground-level water source nearby." While BWL officials do not believe much of the oil seeped into the frozen ground, it has hired a contractor to excavate more than a foot of soil from the 2,500- square-foot area of the spill. That work is expected to be complete next week.

<http://www.battlecreekenquirer.com/article/20110113/NEWS01/301130014/Spill+of+4+000+gallons+of+fuel+oil+being+cleaned+up+in+Delta+Township>

LEBANON, JBEIL

JANUARY 14 2011.

CLEANUP OF JBEIL AFTER 2006 OIL SPILL DECLARED A SUCCESS

Patrick Galey

In its 8,000 year history, the town of Jbeil has been pillaged by Amorite tribesmen, ransacked by Crusaders and bombarded by British Navy cannon fire. But the battle against the greatest modern threat to the town's World Heritage status was declared won Tuesday, as international efforts to protect Byblos's archeological treasures from a four-year-old oil slick were deemed successful.

Israel's 2006 bombing of Jiyeh power station sent millions of gallons of oil gushing into the eastern Mediterranean – a slick which threatened to seriously damage Jbeil's coastal archeological site, which comprises Phoenician, Roman and Crusader ruins and is one of Lebanon's principal tourist attractions.

Only emergency intervention from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco), supervised by the Culture Ministry and funded by the Japanese Embassy, succeeded in cleaning ancient edifices of polluted waste and debris, a process completed Tuesday under the supervision of Culture Minister Salim Warde.

"This is a very important project. The works were done by professionals under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture. We have achieved the elimination of the oil spill done by the attacks of 2006," Warde said. "This site represents thousands of years of history."

As conservationists began the meticulous task of cleaning Jbeil castle's coastal stonework, it was discovered that urgent reinforcement work was required on the town's northern medieval port tower as well as on the foundations of the site's Bronze Age temple tower.

Koichi Kawakami, the Japanese ambassador, said that his mission not providing financial assistance to Jbeil's clean up operation was unthinkable.

"[Jbeil] is not only a jewel of Lebanon, but also a treasure of humanity across all borders," Kawakami told reporters at the town's castle. "[The archeological site] was in danger from pollution and it was not an option for us not to help our Lebanese friends."

Abdel Moneim Osman, Unesco Beirut director, said that the organization's most senior antiquities experts

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were employed in a bid to limit damage sustained to castle promontories.

"We began cleaning the oil spill and reconstructing the castle and today we're celebrating the reopening of the castle with the help of the Japanese government, Ministry of Culture, and Directorate General of Antiquities," he said. "We're very happy to celebrate the end of this work and the reopening of the castle."

Lebanon is home to five Unesco World Heritage sites as well as several others on the organization's "tentative" list. Last year it emerged that Unesco was considering downgrading the status of the Qadisha Valley, due to illegal construction and waste dumping.

Although the funding for Byblos' recuperation came from Japan, Warde assured the public that the government was doing enough to ensure the upkeep of the country's cultural artifacts.

"The Lebanese government does have funding for other jobs and has funding for the site of Jbeil and other sites," he added.

http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_id=1&categ_id=1&article_id=123543#axzz1B0WMZwOh

USA, PA, DELAWARE CO, EDDYSTONE

JANUARY 14 2011.

EXELON REPORTS DIESEL FUEL SPILL IN EDDYSTONE

Timothy Logue

Exelon officials are still investigating an early Saturday morning diesel fuel spill at the Eddystone Generating Station, but say they are satisfied with the emergency response and containment effort.

"Basically, the process worked," said Exelon spokesman Bob Judge.

A broken pressure gauge on a sensing line caused the 8,000-gallon discharge of No. 2 diesel oil, which was discovered at about 1 a.m. by a worker during a routine inspection. Judge said most of the oil was captured by a trench and sump recovery system.

"A small amount — estimated at a gallon — made its way to the adjoining Delaware River leaving a thin sheen near the plant bulkhead," the company stated in a press release.

Judge said Exelon notified the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection of the ground spill at 6:52 a.m. When a plant protection officer noticed what appeared to be oil sheen on the river at 2:45 p.m., a second call was placed to DEP and Coast Guard and borough officials were also notified.

A DEP spokeswoman said a small amount of oil made its way into the plant's sump containment system and leaked into the river through a submerged discharge pipe.

Petty Officer 3rd Class Jonathan Lindberg said U.S Coast Guard pollution investigators took samples from the river and found no contamination in the water. "That was our concern," he said. "The incident occurred about 300 yards inland, which isn't too far from the water."

A member of the DEP emergency response team also surveyed the area Sunday at low tide and found no evidence of oil in the area.

Judge said absorbent booms will remain in place until next Friday as a precaution. He added there has been no evidence of environmental damage or impact on fish or wildlife.

DEP spokeswoman Lynda Rebarchak said Exelon will be keeping its stormwater system plugged until it is determined how the oil "migrated into it from the sump pump collection system."

The company will also be required to install additional float alarms that alert the facility of any pump station or sump pump collection system malfunctions, she added.

As of Thursday afternoon, it was still unclear why the pressure gauge failed. "The root cause is still under investigation and should be done in a couple days," Judge said.

Though she has heard no resident complaints about spill, Eddystone Councilwoman Despo Tatasiore said Exelon should have contacted borough officials as soon as it a leak was discovered.

"I do think we should have heard about it sooner," said Tatasiore, who chairs the borough's emergency management committee. "Even if it's self-contained, I think we should be notified immediately whenever something happens. We shouldn't have to wait until our residents see it or smell it."

<http://delcotimes.com/articles/2011/01/14/news/doc4d2fd720a2109132506358.txt?viewmode=fullstory>

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

USA, W.V, INSTITUTE

JANUARY 21 2011.

CSB ISSUES REPORT ON 2008 BAYER CROPSCIENCE EXPLOSION: FINDS MULTIPLE DEFICIENCIES LED TO RUNAWAY CHEMICAL REACTION; RECOMMENDS STATE CREATE CHEMICAL PLANT OVERSIGHT REGULATION

The U.S. Chemical Safety Board (CSB) today released its final report on the August 28, 2008, Bayer CropScience pesticide manufacturing unit explosion that killed two workers and injured eight others. In a report scheduled for Board consideration at a public meeting this evening in Institute, the CSB found multiple deficiencies during a lengthy startup process that resulted in a runaway chemical reaction inside a residue treater pressure vessel. The vessel ultimately overpressurized and exploded. The vessel careened into the methomyl pesticide manufacturing unit leaving a huge fireball in its wake.

The report found that had the trajectory of the exploding vessel taken it in a different direction, pieces of it could have impinged upon and possibly caused a release from piping at the top of a tank of highly toxic methyl isocyanate (MIC).

The accident occurred during the startup of the methomyl unit, following a lengthy period of maintenance. The CSB found the startup was begun prematurely, a result of pressures to resume production of the pesticides methomyl and Larvin, and took place before valve lineups, equipment checkouts, a pre-startup safety review, and computer calibration were complete. CSB investigators also found the company failed to perform a thorough Process Hazard Analysis, or PHA, as required by regulation.

This resulted in numerous critical omissions, including an overly complex Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) that was not reviewed and approved, incomplete operator training on a new computer control system, and inadequate control of process safeguards. A principal cause of the accident, the report states, was the intentional overriding of an interlock system that was designed to prevent adding methomyl process residue into the residue treater vessel before filling the vessel with clean solvent and heating it to the minimum safe operating temperature.

Furthermore, the investigation found that critical operating equipment and instruments were not installed before the restart, and were discovered to be missing after the startup began. Bayer's Methomyl-Larvin unit MIC gas monitoring system was not in service as the startup ensued, yet Bayer emergency personnel presumed it was functioning and claimed no MIC was released during the incident.

CSB Chairperson Dr. Rafael Moure-Eraso said, "The deaths of the workers as a result of this accident were all the more tragic because it could have been prevented had Bayer CropScience provided adequate training, and required a comprehensive pre-startup equipment checkout and strict conformance with appropriate startup procedures. This would have revealed multiple dangerous conditions and procedures that were occurring at a time when the company wanted to restart production of a key pesticide product. Startups are always a potentially hazardous operation, but to begin with computer control systems that have not been checked, while bypassing safety interlocks, is unacceptable."

The investigation report makes recommendations to the company and its Institute plant, to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and several West Virginia agencies. Citing a highly successful county program to ensure refinery and chemical plant safety in Contra Costa County, California, the CSB report recommends the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources establish a "Hazardous Chemical Release Prevention Program" that would have the authority to inspect and regulate such plants, and make public its ongoing findings.

Dr. Moure-Eraso said, "I believe a state and county-run program like this would go a long way to making chemical operations safer in places like the Kanawha Valley. OSHA and EPA, have limited resources and cannot be everywhere at once. However, local jurisdictions can put together highly effective and targeted inspection and enforcement programs, funded by levies on the plants themselves. The accident rate in Contra Costa County has dropped dramatically, and last year in fact they had no significant accidents, thanks, in my view, to this program."

CSB Investigations Manager John Vorderbrueggen noted that a major contributing factor to the accident was a series of equipment malfunctions that continually distracted operators. "Human factors played a big part in this accident, and the absence of enforced, workable standard operating procedures and adequate safety systems meant that mistakes could prove fatal. For example, operators were troubleshooting several equipment problems and during the startup, inadvertently failed to prefill the residue treater vessel with solvent. A safety interlock was designed to stop workers from introducing highly-reactive methomyl, but it was bypassed as had been done in previous operations with managers' knowledge. Once the chemical reaction of the highly concentrated methomyl started, it could not be stopped, and the temperature and pressure inside rose rapidly, finally causing an explosion."

Board Member John Bresland, who was CSB chairman at the time of the Bayer accident, noted the confusion that resulted in the community's emergency response following the explosion at 10:33 p.m. "The Bayer fire brigade was

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at the scene in minutes, but Bayer management withheld information from the county emergency response agencies that were desperate for information about what happened, what chemicals were possibly involved," Mr. Bresland said. "The Bayer incident commander, inside the plant, recommended a shelter in place; but this was never communicated to 911 operators. After an hour of being refused critical information, local authorities ordered a shelter-in-place, as a precaution."

"Proper communication between companies and emergency responders during an accident is critical," said Mr. Bresland, adding, "The community deserved better, especially considering the amounts of hazardous chemicals, in use and being stored at various chemical facilities in the Kanawha River valley."

The CSB report notes that two workers and four volunteer firefighters required examination for possible exposure to toxic chemicals.

The investigation examined the potential consequences of a hypothetical trajectory of the careening residue treater vessel that would result in its hitting the heavy steel mesh ballistic shield surrounding the above-ground MIC tank. The analysis – using blast pressure and impact energy calculations – concluded that the shield would have protected the MIC tank from a residue treater vessel hit. However, the CSB found, had the residue treater struck the shield structure near the top of the frame, the displaced frame could have contacted an MIC pipe, which might have resulted in an MIC release into the atmosphere.

Chairperson Moure-Eraso said, "Any significant MIC release into the atmosphere along the Kanawha valley could have proven deadly, and that concern has been legitimately expressed for decades in the community. This potential was reduced when Bayer announced last year it would no longer store MIC above ground; it will be reduced to zero in approximately 18 months when the company has announced it will end MIC production and use at the Institute facility – the only place in the country still storing large quantities of MIC."

Dr. Moure-Eraso continued, "Bayer's decision to end pesticide production using MIC was, I understand, done for its own business reasons. But for whatever reasons, the eventual elimination of this chemical will enhance safety in the Kanawha Valley, for workers and residents alike, and is a positive development in my view."

The CSB public meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. this evening at the West Virginia State University, Sullivan Hall, Wilson University Union, Multipurpose Room 103, in Institute. The Board will hear a full report on the investigation, and then will invite seven panelists including industry experts, community activists, and county government representatives to testify. Following a public comment period, the Board will vote on the report conclusions and recommendations.

The CSB is an independent federal agency charged with investigating industrial chemical accidents. The agency's board members are appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate. CSB investigations look into all aspects of chemical accidents, including physical causes such as equipment failure as well as inadequacies in regulations, industry standards, and safety management systems.

The Board does not issue citations or fines but does make safety recommendations to plants, industry organizations, labor groups, and regulatory agencies such as OSHA and EPA. Visit our website, www.csb.gov

USA, OH, BOWLING GREEN

JANUARY 21 2011.

CANNON HAD ROLE IN OIL TANK FIREFIGHTING

Jan Larson

Some marveled at the oil industry's varied attempts to seal the surging oil leak in the Gulf of Mexico last year. But it appears unorthodox attempts to divert disaster are nothing new in the industry.

An example of a creative solution to a crude problem - a cannon to stop oil tank fires - was recently donated to the Wood County Historical Center.

"It's such an interesting thing," said Kelli Kling, who is in charge of marketing, public relations and special events at the historical center. "When I first heard about it, I was skeptical. What would an oil company do with a cannon?"

As it turns out, the cannon was used when a storage tank for oil caught on fire, often when touched off by lightning or by sparks from passing steam engines. The fires were often impossible to extinguish and raged on until all the oil burned. So, the cannon was used to shoot gaping holes in the side of the tanks for the oil to drain out.

"It's so interesting that a cannon would be used as a firefighting tool. But there's nothing they could do but let it burn out. We've come a long way, but we're still making it up as we go along," Randy Brown, curator of the historical center, said referring to the unusual attempts to cap the Gulf oil leak last year.

The cannon was donated to the museum by the Buckeye Pipeline Co., in Northwood. The cannon, which

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weighs about 500 pounds, was cast in North Baltimore and was used during the 1920s in the Cygnet oil fields. The large wooden tank structures, with metal roofs and highly combustible oil, were very vulnerable to lightning, Kling explained.

"You've got these giant tanks, full of oil. It wouldn't take much," Brown said. "It's not like today, with all the safety equipment. This was a guy with a cannon."

The historical center's oil boom exhibit tells of the dangers involved in the industry which hit its peak in Wood County in 1886. Old black and white photographs show tank fires with black smoke billowing all around. Stories tell of one tank fire that burned for three days, and of the inherent risks involved with the oil boom. The display talks of workers using nitroglycerin to explode wells. If the volatile chemical exploded prematurely, the remains of the oil workers would often fit in a cigar box, the stories explain.

"It was dangerous work," Brown said.

In addition to the display inside the museum, the historical center also has an oil derrick area outside. Though an interesting part of the county's oil boom history, Brown said the likelihood is very slim that the old oil rig cannon will ever become a part of a working display. Firing the aging cannon would just be too risky.

"That would be exciting, but I can't imagine we would," he said.

More information about Northwest Ohio's oil and gas boom can be found in the documentary "Ohio Crude" or in the exhibit "Wood County in Motion" at the museum at 13660 County Home Road, Bowling Green.

<http://www.sent-trib.com/front-page/cannon-had-role-in-oil-tank-firefighting>

USA, CA, SANTYA YNEZ

JANUARY 21 2011.

HANDS-FREE PUMPING REMAINS ON HOLD

Saralloyd Truax

The mechanism that allows for hands-free filling of your gas tank has been removed from some area gas stations, by order of the State Fire Marshal citing a potential fire hazard posed by the devices.

"We believe it is an overreaction that will cause significant economic harm to numerous stations owners and operators," said Jay McKeeman of the California Independent Oil Marketers Association (CIOMA).

"The last time I pumped gas, I thought I got a broken one," said Suzanne Jakkola who admitted she trades at a station where they pump the gas for her because she doesn't like standing over the tank.

The concern is that some nozzles produced by Vapor Systems Technologies, Inc. (VST) allow "gasoline to be unexpectedly sprayed before the nozzle is inserted into the vehicle. These events occur when the hold-open latch does not disengage following the prior refueling," an Aug. 23, 2010, letter from Tonya Hoover, Office State Fire Marshal (OFSM), warned gas station owners. The mandate involves about one-third of all nozzles in California, and only those made by VST.

According to McKeeman, the malfunction occurs after a customer uses the latch and fills their tank with a fixed dollar amount. When the dispensing is complete, the clip should release, but sometimes does not. The next customer who uses the hose may experience the automatic discharge before getting the nozzle into the tank.

According to Daniel Berlant of OSFM, each nozzle has two shut-off valves. One is on the trigger, which is operated by a person pumping and which is by-passed by the hold-open latch.

The second valve is on that portion of the nozzle that is put into the car's tank. It should open only if the nozzle is snug deep into the tank. It is the second valve that failed. Gas should not pump, even if the hold-open latch is engaged, unless the nozzle is in the car's tank.

To avoid the potential hazard, motorists need only be sure the nozzle is in the filler tube before selecting the grade of gasoline they desire, says McKeeman. He warns consumers not to use any device or means to keep the nozzle open – except the hold-open latch provided by the manufacturer, though that is a solution some customers are opting for.

Bridgette Lacerte-Beras found the change undesirable. "It was just so much more convenient before. I could check my phone and do a hundred of other things," she said of the hands-free pumps.

The nozzles in question were ordered to be installed by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) no later than April 1, 2009, as part of an Enhanced Vapor Recovery (EVR) program.

According to CIOMA, more than half of stations had to secure an extension of that deadline. But by Oct. 15, 2010, the same stations were ordered to alter or remove the newly installed nozzles. Other manufacturers have not experienced the same problems according to Dimitri Stanich, Public Information Officer for CARB.

The first report of a problem came in May, 2010. A total of 13 instances of the failures were reported, seven of which resulted in consumers being sprayed with gasoline. According to Terry Dressler, director of the Santa Barbara

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County Air Pollution Control District, there were no known instances of the problem here.

Dressler said the state suspended enforcement of Health and Safety code section 41960.6, which requires hold-open latches on nozzles pending the repair of what he described as “a design flaw in the VST nozzles.” Local fire authorities are permitted to establish fire-safety provisions for their area of responsibility.

The legislative note attached to the code states there “are noteworthy health benefits to be gained from the use of hold-open latches.” Benzene, a potent carcinogen, has been identified as a contaminant found at pumps, even those equipped with vapor recovery systems. “The state board estimates that personal exposure to benzene can be additionally reduced by an average of 75%, if hold-open latches are installed, maintained and used on gasoline nozzles.”

But Stanich said that “the spillage problems were not an air quality concern, but a fire concern.” Their records show that 40% of stations required to remove the latches have reported that the process is complete. He denies “the removal of the latch increases the danger to the public or the person pumping the fuel.” The EVR is designed to capture evaporative emissions and keep them from escaping into the environment.

McKeeman said he believes the industry is running up against a technology issue, where fueling stations are being required to use nozzles that won’t hold up with normal use. “We are in an ever-tightening noose.”

But Stanich said that “without a doubt, technology is up to the task,” pointing out there are other manufacturers that are not experiencing the problems that VST has. He is confident all nozzles approved for use in the state have undergone testing by Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. (UL).

John Drengenberg, Consumer Safety Director for UL, confirmed that the VST nozzle was tested and that test results are posted within hours or days of completion. The proper function of the hold-open latch was included in that testing. The UL website shows a report date for that product of June 25, 2010.

“Every so often, something crops up where there is supposedly a problem with a product.” Drengenberg said when that happens, UL does a thorough investigation, which more often than not, turns up a manufacturing problem that arose after testing was complete. Whether that was the case here, Drengenberg was unable to say. He did, however, confirm that UL was aware of the issue and was in the process of investigating. The results and status of that inquiry is confidential.

Drengenberg could not say how the investigation was initiated. “Your grandmother could call up and say there was a problem and we’d look into it.” He said that the laboratory “will go to whatever lengths it needs to get our hands on the material we need to fully complete our testing.”

Berlant of OSFM confirmed that all components need to be tested by independent labs before use in California, but he was not sure which lab did the testing or when. He said there are several “fixes” on the market available through VST and other companies, but does not know when or if the hold-open code will be back in force.

McKeeman lamented that CIOMA was not contacted early in the process. It was not until June 24 that CIOMA became involved. “Increased coordination and communication between CARB, and OSFM and the regulated community would have resulted in a smoother, more effective response to the issue,” said McKeeman in a July 12 letter in which he outlined eight recommendations, none of which were implemented.

As it stands now, stations that fail to remove the VST hold-open latches face enforcement action by the local fire authority, which includes the possibility of shutting down the pumps or stations involved.

Numerous attempts were made by the Journal to contact VST at their headquarters in Ohio and their spokesperson in California. No response was received prior to press deadline.

It is unclear what the time table is for replacing all of the nozzles at issue.

Chronology of events

April 1, 2009 California gas stations were required to have in place an enhanced vapor recovery system.

May, 2010 The first reports of problems were received by authorities in California, involving only VST nozzles.

May 28 CARB-issued advisory 418 citing health and safety risks associated with the nozzles and requiring enhanced but simple daily inspection of the nozzles.

June 18 Joint letter from CARB and OSFM advising stations VST would be visiting all stations to inspect the nozzles.

June 21 Letter from VST saying stations have failed to inspect the nozzles, and that they are therefore removing all hold-open clips.

June 24 The trade organization met with authorizes to discuss the problem.

June 25 UL, Inc. posts VST-EVR-NB certification online.

Sometime in June, six more reports of nozzle failure are made.

July 12 CIOMA drafts letter and makes eight recommendations, none of which were adopted.

August 23 Letter from Fire Marshal orders all stations to remove hold-open clips by Oct. 15. CIOMA also issues an explanatory letter.

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September 22 CARB approves VST's new SRM nozzle.

September 29 VST offers to buy back nozzles for \$105 and sell new SRM nozzles for just under \$400. The offer ends Jan. 31.

Who's who and what's what

VST: Vapor Systems Technologies, Inc.

Nozzles: VST's VST-EVR-NB nozzle, and only these nozzles, unless otherwise specified.

CARB: California Air Resources Board

CIOMA: California Independent Oil Marketers Association

EVR: Enhanced Vapor Recovery

OSFM: Office of State Fire Marshal

UL: Underwriters Laboratory, Inc.

<http://www.santaynezvalleyjournal.com/archive/9/3/7772/>

USA, CA, LOS ANGELES, ATWATER VILLAGE AREA

JANUARY 22 2011.

1 DEAD, 2 IN SERIOUS CONDITION AFTER FUMES OVERCOME CLEANERS AT LA BLOOD STORAGE TANK

Men cleaning a blood storage tank at a biotechnology plant were overcome by toxic fumes early Friday, killing one and leaving the others in critical condition, authorities said.

Firefighters called to the Baxter International Inc. plant in Atwater Village shortly before 4 a.m. found a man lying near a large cylindrical tank. He wasn't breathing and had no pulse, but cardiopulmonary resuscitation restored his heartbeat, Fire Department spokesman Brian Humphrey said.

Two other men were pulled unconscious from the 4-foot-tall, 5-foot-wide tank, Humphrey said. They apparently climbed in through a 2-foot-diameter opening in the top, he said.

All three men were taken to hospitals in critical condition and one later died, Humphrey said. He did not immediately know whether it was the man who had been revived.

The men were cleaning the tank, which is used to store blood, with a detergent when they were overcome by fumes from ethanol that is used to separate the blood plasma, fire Capt. Jaime Moore told KTLA-TV.

The worker who was found outside the tank had called 911 and tried to rescue his co-workers before he was overcome, Moore told the Los Angeles Times.

Humphrey said he could not confirm those details but he said firefighters did detect the presence of ethanol. A hazardous material team was sent to the scene, he said.

Investigators from the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health, known as Cal-OSHA, were sent to determine whether the plant was complying with health and safety laws, Humphrey said.

A call to a Baxter spokeswoman seeking comment was not immediately returned.

Baxter, based in Deerfield, Ill., is a global bioscience corporation that makes everything from vaccines to dialysis materials. Its plasma-derived products include clotting factor for hemophiliacs and treatments for immune system deficiencies, burns and shock, according to its website.

The Atwater Village plant generally has a good safety record, with only a single \$185 fine for a minor violation in 2005, said Krisann Chasarik, a spokeswoman for Cal-OSHA.

Two other Baxter-owned facilities in California did report injury accidents in the past decade, however. Chasarik said one occurred in 2005 at a plant in Thousand Oaks, but she did not have details.

In 2002, a woman was scalded at a laboratory in Hayward, Calif., when a hose on top of a large tank she was cleaning came loose and splashed her with hot water. She was treated at a hospital, Chasarik said.

"We found no health or safety violations," Chasarik said.

<http://abcnews.go.com/Business/wireStory?id=12731881>

USA, WA, ANACORTES

JANUARY 22 2011.

RECORD FINES IN DEADLY EXPLOSION

The Washington Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) cited a Tesoro Corporation refinery in Anacortes with 39 willful and 5 serious violations of state job safety and health rules in connection with a deadly explosion last April. The agency, which runs the state OSHA program, issued fines of \$2.3 million, the largest in L&I's history.

According to L&I, a heat exchange at the refinery ruptured releasing hydrocarbon vapor, which almost immediately ignited. Seven workers died as a result. The state calls it the worst industrial disaster in the 37 years that

675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683

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L&I has been enforcing workplace safety law.

“The loss of seven lives is a tragedy not just for their loved ones but for our entire state,” said Governor Chris Gregoire. “What makes the loss of these lives all the more painful is that these deaths could have been prevented.”

Inspectors found that Tesoro:

- Disregarded a variety of job safety regulations,
- Continued to operate failing equipment for years,
- Postponed maintenance,
- Inadequately tested for potentially catastrophic damage, *and*
- Failed to adequately protect workers from significant risk of injury and death.

Reportedly, Tesoro failed to test the heat exchanger that exploded by methods that would have revealed the problem cracks.

<http://enviro.blr.com/environmental-news/EHS-management/EPA-and-state-environmental-compliance-enforcement/Record-Fines-in-Deadly-Explosion/>

USA, MA, BERKLEY

JANUARY 23 2011.

CASE OF NEGLIGENCE LEADS TO HEAVY FINE FOR BERKLEY GAS STATION

Owners Elizabeth and John Jackson of Common Crossing gas station on North Main Street now realize the costly penalty of neglect.

The Jacksons have been handed a civil fine of \$10,000 for ignoring several Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection cleanup orders and for violating the state Oil and Hazardous Material Release Prevention and Response Act, state officials said last week. The case was filed in Suffolk Superior Court.

Joe Ferson of the DEP said Tuesday that the contamination resulted from an underground gasoline storage tank on the Common Crossing property, located on the Berkley Green between Town Hall and the middle school.

The contamination was first reported to the DEP in March 2006. Shortly after a notice of responsibility was sent out to inform the Jacksons of state cleanup laws, Ferson said.

Ferson said the Jacksons did not acknowledge the notice, and so a notice of non-compliance was sent out in August 2007.

“A number of actions were specified and deadlines were given,” Ferson said, “but the second notice was also disregarded by the property owner.”

In March 2008 a notice of enforcement conference was sent, which was meant to sort out all obstacles preventing the start of the cleanup. Yet again, the Jacksons ignored correspondence with the DEP.

“Because the level of non-compliance was so high, a penalty assessment was issued and sent to them in April of 2008,” Ferson said. “They didn’t respond again, and the case was referred to the attorney general’s office.”

The case is the first of “multiple cases in a pilot program” where the DEP and attorney general’s office combined action against violators who ignored the law and failed to clean up their sites, DEP Commissioner Kenneth L. Kimmell said in a press release.

Owner John Jackson said Wednesday that he had thought Cyn Environmental of Stoughton was handling the cleanup orders, citing a lack of communication on his part with the company.

“They were doing all the testing so I assumed they were getting the same paperwork as me,” Jackson said.

Tara Vieira, of Berkley, is the closest residential neighbor of Common Crossings. Despite her land’s proximity to the gasoline contamination, Vieira said she is not concerned.

“Our water was tested a while ago and everything came back fine,” Vieira said.

In addition to the monetary penalty, the Jacksons are obligated to follow a DEP timeline and complete a cleanup of the property by May 10, 2015.

“They still need to remove the contamination from the soil, and the cleanup assessment will actually determine whether it’s contaminating other lands,” Ferson said.

Jackson said the spill that contaminated the land was “minute” and after the cleanup, installation of new tanks and a self service station, his “slate will be clean,” he said.

<http://www.tauntongazette.com/topstories/x512675402/Case-of-neglect-leads-to-heavy-fine-for-Berkley-gas-station>

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USA, IL, HARDIN

JANUARY 25 2011.

HARDIN RESIDENTS FED UP WITH POST OFFICE CLOSURE, BECAUSE OF GASOLINE LEAKS

Mayor Phil Gress said village residents have suffered a major inconvenience since the Hardin Post Office was closed Jan. 4 because of gasoline leaks.

"It has become a terrible hardship for our residents to have to drive to the Kampsville Post Office to get their mail," Gress said Thursday. "We have already had one local woman injured in a car wreck trying to get to Kampsville to get her mail after that last snowstorm."

The Hardin Post Office was closed because of gas fumes from a suspected overflow at the Hardin Ayerco Gas Station. Calhoun County Emergency Services and Disaster Agency Coordinator Gene Breden issued a news release Jan. 3 stating that gasoline odors had been noticed by village residents and that the odors were emanating from the service station.

At the time, Breden said the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Region 8, the Illinois State Fire Marshal's Office, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Ayerco gas station owners and village officials had investigated the odors and found that the vapors were not explosive in nature at levels current when investigated.

Gateway Postal Service decided for the safety of its employees and customer mail to close the Hardin Post Office and move services to Kampsville, at the northern end of Calhoun County.

"We have offered the U.S. Postal Service alternate sites in Hardin available for rent, and several people have offered rent-free space if they would just move it back here," Gress said.

"The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency told me that the U.S. Postal Service could move the Hardin Postal Service back to Hardin, but the Postal Service keeps saying they are waiting for a report from their safety inspector," Breden said.

Valerie Hughes, a spokeswoman for the Postal Service's Gateway District in St. Louis, said Thursday that she has fielded multiple telephone calls from Hardin residents, and she has told them that the Postal Service is waiting for test results from EPA.

"We will not go to the expense of moving equipment to another facility until we learn from the EPA that it is safe to do so," Hughes said. "There was no cost in moving personnel to the Kampsville Post Office, and that is where Hardin mail will go until we get the results of the EPA testing."

IEPA spokeswoman Maggie Carson said Thursday that she spoke with the EPA's project site manager after being contacted by The Telegraph regarding the EPA test results.

"He told me that the EPA has not placed any restrictions on reopening the Hardin Post Office," Carson said. "He said he would contact the regional inspector in Tampa (Fla.) and have that inspector contact the Gateway District and inform them of the fact that there are no restrictions on reopening the Hardin Post Office."

Breden and Gress both said they hope that will be enough to get the postal service back in Hardin.

"It has really become a hassle for not just older residents having to try to get to Kampsville to get their mail, but people that work out of town," Gress said.

He said many of those people leave for work before the Kampsville Post Office opens and don't get back before it closes, so they can't get their mail unless they sign for someone else to pick it up for them.

"And that has created long lines at the Kampsville Post Office, as some Hardin residents are going there to pick up mail for 20 people, and that takes time for postal employees to find," Gress said. "Enough is enough, and they need to reopen the Hardin Post Office."

Hughes, called again regarding the EPA's comment to The Telegraph, said she had just received two e-mails - one from the Illinois Emergency Management Agency stating they had no restrictions against reopening the Hardin Post Office, and a second e-mail from the EPA's Tampa office.

"The second e-mail said they wanted Gateway to send our inspector that had originally tested the site and found the air compatible for combustive air and recommended removing our Hardin Post Office employees, to return to the Hardin Post Office and retest the site," Hughes said. "I have no idea how quickly our inspector can get back to Hardin, but hopefully, within the next couple days. After we get those results, we will be able to make a decision."

<http://www.thetelegraph.com/news/hardin-49749-office-post.html>