

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, NB, MCCOOK FEBRUARY 19 2014. TANK BATTERY FIRE

A battery of three tanks lays crumpled and scorched inside and outside a berm located north of McCook, Nebraska, south of Hugh Butler Lake and northeast of the old Army Air Base this morning. Neighbors reported an explosion and fire, and Red Willow Western Rural Fire Department firefighters responded about 8:30 p.m., Monday. RWW Fire Chief Bill Elliott said this morning that they suspect the cause of the fire to be a heater inside one of the tanks, which are owned by Jim Kenny. Elliott said fighting the fire, with foam, "was no trouble," but keeping it out was tough, having to deal with oil inside an upright tank that reignited. The tank was finally tipped over and drained, he said. The tank in the foreground was blown outside the berm. Elliott had no estimate of damages this morning. Southwest Nebraska and Northwest Kansas are under "red flag" warnings issued by the National Weather Service, meaning high winds and dry conditions increase the danger of grass fires.

<http://www.mccookgazette.com/story/2052620.html>

USA, VA, SUFFOLK FEBRUARY 21 2014. THIEVES SPILL 500 GALLONS OF OIL INTO SUFFOLK STREAM

Police and fire crews responded to a fuel spill at a Suffolk church Wednesday evening. An employee of Apostolic Assembly on Nansemond Parkway called Emergency Communications just after 6 p.m. and reported fuel leaking from a tank on the church property, according to Diana Klink with the City of Suffolk. When crews arrived about 10 minutes later, they determined the lines had been cut on two, 275-gallon, heating oil fuel tanks. A small amount of the fuel was stolen and the thieves spilled about 500 gallons of oil onto the ground, which ran into a nearby swamp and stream, which is a tributary to Bennett's Creek. "Firefighters were able to dyke the spill to keep it from spreading further, and the property owner has contacted a hazmat clean-up company to handle the spill," Klink said. The Virginia Department of Emergency Management also responded. The investigation into the incident is ongoing.

<http://wavy.com/2014/02/19/thieves-spill-500-gallons-of-oil-into-suffolk-stream/>

USA, CO, GREELEY FEBRUARY 26 2014. OIL AND GAS SPILL REPORT FOR FEB. 25

The following spills were reported to the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission in the past 1047, 1048, 1049, 1050, 1051, 1052, 1053, 1054, 1055, 1056

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two weeks.

Information is based on Form 19, which operators must fill out detailing the leakage/spill events. Any spill release which may impact waters of the state must be reported as soon as practical. Any spill of five barrels or more must be reported within 24 hours, and any spill of one barrel or more which occurs outside secondary containment, such as metal or earthen berms, must also be reported within 24 hours, according to COGCC rules. Spills and leaks are typically found during routine maintenance on existing wells, though some actual 'spills' do occur among the 19,000-plus wells in the county.

Mineral Resources, Inc., reported that on Sept. 13, a water tank floated when a tank battery near Greeley was inundated with floodwaters from the banks of the South Platte River. More than 50 barrels of water were spilt and none were recovered. The crew excavated the soil from within the berm for off-site disposal. The company reconstructed the berm, backfilled the excavation and replaced the water tank.

Kerr-McGee Oil and Gas Onshore LP, reported that on Jan. 28, due to equipment failure, approximately one barrel of oil was released at a production facility in Platteville. The spill was not recovered. The crew shut in and constructed an earthen berm to prevent any condensate from migrating off site with possible snowmelt. The company will reconstruct the battery and replace the production tank.

Kerr-McGee Oil and Gas Onshore LP, reported that on Jan. 30, due to a frozen dump line failure, 15 barrels of oil were released within the berm at a production facility in near Longmont. The crew recovered approximately 13 barrels of the spill with a vacuum truck and transported it to a production tank. The company will reconstruct the tank battery with a geosynthetic liner, poly dump lines, and a double walled fiberglass water tank.

Kerr-McGee Oil and Gas Onshore LP, reported that on Feb. 2, an oil dump separator did not keep up with the volume of oil production and two barrels of oil were released at a production facility in Fort Lupton. The crews shut it in and a vacuum truck was used to recover a barrel of the spill. The company will install new automation equipment to prevent problem from reoccurring.

Caerus WashCo LLC., reported that on Feb. 6, a release of 25 barrels of water occurred due to a leak in a valve at a tank battery in Briggsdale. The valve froze and separated the internal seal. The crew contained the release within the berm. The spill was not recovered. The company has replaced the faulty valve and will conduct more frequent inspections of the facility

Bonanza Creek Energy Operating Company LLC., reported that on Feb. 8, an employee proceeded to pump fresh water into the wrong tank causing a spill of two barrels of water at a well pad in Gill. The spill was not recovered. The crew used a vacuum truck to clean up the spill. The company will have water haulers confirm the loading and unloading tanks when on location.

Bonanza Creek Energy Operating Company LLC., reported that on Feb. 11, a dump line valve froze open on a separator at a production facility in Kersey. Forty barrels of oil were spilt and contained within the berm. It is unknown how much was recovered. The company shut in and a vacuum truck recovered the spill. The company is currently investigating the incident.

Noble Energy, Inc., reported that on Feb. 12, a water vault had been leaking at a tank battery in LaSalle. It is unknown how much water was spilt and none was recovered. The crew removed the tanks and shut in equipment. The company will continue to inspect water vaults.

<http://goo.gl/g2WKV3>

USA, WYO, GILLETE

MARCH 2 2014.

OIL TANK EXPLODES NORTHWEST OF TOWN; NO ONE HURT

Daniel Brenner

No one was hurt when two oil tanks northwest of Gillette caught fire and blew up Thursday evening.

One partially full tank and one empty tank exploded between 5 and 6 p.m, but the cause is still unknown.

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The explosion shook buildings in Gillette, and a black plume of smoke rose over the site that was visible throughout town. A group of onlookers gathered at the site after the explosion.

Maxim Drilling and Exploration owns the well site and tank battery, but M&K Oil pumps and operates the well, said M&K corporate secretary and attorney Nathan McLeland.

"We're glad no one was hurt, and we are going to look into it," he said.

An M&K pumper was moving oil from a separator into the tank when it blew up, fire department Capt. Chris Beltz said. The pumper did not know what caused the explosion.

A separator is used to remove production materials from oil before storing it in a tank battery, which is a group of holding tanks for crude near the well site.

Beltz said lightning, welding or other work that creates a potential ignition source usually causes tank explosions, but none of those conditions apparently were present. The fire department is still investigating the cause.

The M&K pumper left the scene to get help after the explosion, and another pumper who was in the area helped the fire department in shutting in the well before the M&K pumper returned to the scene.

Jim McLeland, a partial owner of M&K and Maxim, also went to the site to help the fire department.

The fire department received several calls by 5:45 p.m. and contained the fire by 7:11 p.m.. Remaining oil continued to burn for several hours after the well feeding the tanks was shut in, but the fire was under control.

Damage was estimated at \$20,000 to \$25,000.

http://www.gillette-news-record.com/news/local/article_696b90ae-a020-11e3-97aa-0017a43b2370.html

USA, MI, AUBURN HILLS

MARCH 4 2014.

4,000 GALLONS OF DIESEL FUEL SPILL INTO STORM DRAIN IN AUBURN HILLS

Fire crews are on scene of a diesel fuel spill at an office building in Auburn Hills. 7 Actions News has learned that a backup generator with a diesel fuel tank leaked about 4,000 gallons of diesel fuel into the company's private storm drain that leads to a retention pond on their property. There is no evidence the fuel leaked into the public sanitary systems, and the threat of fire is reduced because of the frigid temperatures. The Oakland County Hazardous Materials team responded, along with representatives from the Department of Environmental Quality and the Oakland County Resources Commission. A private environmental clean up company has been contacted to clean up the spill. The leak happened over the weekend, and crews just found out about it now. The building is located at 2800 Taylor Road, near I-75 and Lapeer Road.

<http://www.wxyz.com/news/region/oakland-county/4000-gallons-of-diesel-fuel-spill-into-storm-drain-in-auburn-hills?autoplay=true>

NEW ZEALAND, CHRISTCHURCH

MARCH 6 2014.

FIRE SERVICE WORKS TO CLEAR A MILLION LITRES OF LEAKED FUEL

A massive fuel leak in Lyttelton will take a long time to clear, the Fire Service says.

Police evacuated 19 households in Cressy Terrace, Park Terrace and Brittan Terrace after a cliff collapsed causing damage to a fuel storage tank at the port.

The Fire Service says the landslide dislodged the valve of the tank, spilling fuel into a surrounding catchment area and leaving the strong smell of diesel wafting through the portside suburb.

The Fire Service's Steve Kennedy, who is at the site of the leak this morning, said the majority of the fuel has now been contained.

The assistant area commander said they were setting up operations this morning to transfer the leaked fuel into tanks.

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"The operation is going to take some time because we're looking in excess of probably a million litres of fuel that we need to transfer," he told TV ONE's Breakfast.

He said if people do smell fuel fumes in the area they should close their doors and windows.

Council engineers will be assessing the damage to the hillside and affected homes today.

Police say the evacuations were precautionary, and were in response to the possibility of further slips in the area.

The cliff collapse comes after Christchurch was battered with a heavy deluge of rain.

<http://tvnz.co.nz/national-news/fire-service-works-clear-million-litres-leaked-fuel-5858738>

NEW ZEALAND, LYTTLETON

MARCH 8 2014.

SPILLED FUEL ESCAPES INTO LYTTLETON HARBOUR

Nicole Mathewson

Firefighters are still pumping leaked jet fuel off the ground in Lyttelton, but about 1500 litres has already leaked into the harbour.

The Mobil jet fuel tank, containing 1.2 million litres of fuel, was severely damaged from a landslide next to the Lyttelton terminal about 2pm on Wednesday following heavy rainfall.

The leak was contained yesterday and a Fire Service spokesman said firefighters were working with Mobil to continue pumping spilled fuel into other tanks at the terminal today.

They hoped to complete the work today, he said.

Brittan Tce - the main link between Lyttelton and Governors Bay - remained closed, but Cressy Tce was open as a detour for light vehicles. A detour was also available via State Highway 75 and Gebbies Pass.

Eleven of the 19 households evacuated following the slip were still not allowed to go back to their homes on Cressy, Brittan and Park terraces last night.

An Environment Canterbury (ECan) spokeswoman said the stormwater system near the damaged fuel tanks had been sealed yesterday.

About 40,000 litres of jet fuel was removed from the stormwater system near the tank, but a small amount of fuel was still getting in.

A boom had been placed in Lyttelton Harbour around the stormwater outlet to capture any more jet fuel that spilled into the sea. It would then be removed with special equipment.

"Small amounts of a rainbow-coloured sheen of kerosene were observed in several locations which indicates that while kerosene is present, [it is] very thin and is dispersing naturally," the spokeswoman said.

ECan's marine oil spill team carried out a second on-water assessment yesterday afternoon focused on Quail Island, finding no signs of jet fuel near the island.

An earlier assessment from the water and the air found no sign of birds in distress, she said.

"The situation is continuing to be monitored and a full reassessment will be conducted [this morning]."

Mobil said its priority was to prevent any further release of fuel into the water.

"We apologise for any disruption or inconvenience that this is causing. Our concern continues to be the safety of our employees, contractors and the community," the company said in a statement.

An inspection of the Woolston pipeline yesterday found it did not suffer any damage in the storm and it was turned back on about 3pm.

Mobil has a community information line for any residents with questions or concerns, 0800 777 979.

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/9802271/Spilled-fuel-escapes-into-Lyttelton-harbour>

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USA, N.H, PORTSMOUTH

MARCH 8 2014.

OIL SPILL AT IRVING CONTAINED

Crystal A. Weyers

Three hundred gallons of heating oil were spilled at Irving Oil Corp. on Thursday night, but the spill occurred in a contained area designed to catch it. Fire Capt. Mike Hogan said a transfer motor malfunctioned while the oil was being transferred from one tank to another, causing a leak. "Approximately 300 gallons were spilled onto the ground," he said. "But the area was designed to catch spills and worked just as it should." The spill occurred at 9:06 p.m.

<http://www.seacoastonline.com/articles/20140307-NEWS-403070460>

CANADA, AB, PEACE RIVER

MARCH 8 2014.

SPILL AT BAYTEX CONTAINED, SAYS AER

Adam Dietrich

A recent spill at a Baytex Energy pumping station, which leaked about 60 barrels of oil and water, near Peace River, is no cause for alarm say both Baytex and the Alberta Energy Regulator.

The spill was reported to the AER by Baytex shortly after it occurred on March 2.

"A line on the pumping station, which carries the crude from the pump to a storage tank froze and broke," said Baytex Production Superintendent Len March. "It leaked about 14 cubic metres of emulsion [an oil and water mix]."

Darin Barter, a spokesperson with the AER, said that it wasn't considered an emergency because the leak was contained to the company's lease.

"In this instance the spill was contained to the lease and we had no complaints of foul odours," said Barter. "Typically we consider it an emergency if it overflows the lease, then we will go immediately to make sure the company is following procedure."

"We do have inspectors in the Peace River area," said Barter. "Because the spill was confined, we didn't send some immediately, but by now one of our inspectors has likely been there to see."

"Yes we have product that shouldn't be on the land," said Barter. "But it can be remediated."

March said the pumping stations have a berm, which helps contain spills. He said in this instance the spill didn't even reach the berm.

Clean-up efforts have so far been aided by the cold.

"Because the ground is so cold it's actually frozen and keeping the mixture from contaminating the soil too much," said Barter. The vacuum trucks are able to suck up most of the mix that's on the ground without much trouble."

Barter said that the AER records and makes public all spills, and that they respond to emergency situations as they crop up.

<http://www.prrcordgazette.com/2014/03/07/spill-at-baytex-contained-says-aer>

USA, PA, DERRY TWP

MARCH 10 2014.

LATROBE HOSPITAL SOURCE OF FUEL SPILL

The source of a fuel spill Saturday was traced to Excelsa Health Latrobe Hospital, where spokeswoman Robin Jennings said about 30 gallons of fuel leaked into Loyalhanna Creek. The spill stretched about two miles from Latrobe into Derry Township after the leak from a diesel fuel tank that feeds a generator near the hospital's emergency department was noticed, she said. Hospital officials are looking into the cause of the leak. Area firefighters, the county's HAZMAT team and officials from the state Department of Environmental Protection and Fish and Boat Commission responded to the scene. Jennings said the hospital enlisted the help of a mitigation company to assist on-site through Monday. The tank that

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leaked holds 150 gallons, she said.

<http://triblive.com/news/westmoreland/5734773-74/hospital-fuel-latrobe#axzz2vY7NZkRP>

USA, FLA, LEE CO

MARCH 06 2014.

LEE COUNTY TO PAY \$200K FOR OIL SPILL CLEANUP

Maryann Batlle

Lee County will pay more than \$200,000 for the clean-up and monitoring of a site where an emergency generator with a cracked filter bowl leaked about 600 gallons of diesel into the ground last August.

The leak happened at the Lee County Jail on Ortiz Avenue, and its effects have been mostly cleaned up. A small amount of diesel from the spill entered the groundwater, which led to the development of a one-year monitoring plan, but there seems to be no threat to the environment, according to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

DEP expects that diesel will be absorbed naturally by bacteria in the water, said Charles Masella, the department's environmental consultant for the waste clean-up.

What might be harder to absorb is the price tag.

Clean ups can involve scientists, excavations with heavy machines, contaminated dirt transport and disposal, multiple reports to the state -- the list goes on.

"It gets expensive," Masella said.

Tuesday, commissioners are expected to consider approval of \$216,554.13 meant to cover the costs of the diesel leak clean-up and to pay for test wells required by the state to make sure contamination does not spread, according to agenda documents for the public meeting.

Funding would come from the county's all hazard reserves, and Lee officials would pursue insurance reimbursement, agenda documents state.

"All of this was an unfortunate incident. We did everything that was supposed to be done," said Richard Beck, director of Facilities Management, which provides maintenance services for various county properties.

The generator, which Beck said is more than 25 years old, is housed in a concrete blockhouse right in the center of the jail compound and is used to feed power to the visitor center in emergencies.

The piece that broke on the generator -- a fuel and water separator -- costs about \$20 to \$30, according to Facilities Management.

The county discovered the issue Aug. 21, which Beck estimates was about five to seven days after it began.

"As soon as we found the leak, we secured it," he said.

SWS Environmental Services, based in Panama City, and Streamline Environmental Inc., with headquarters in Tampa, were contracted to clean up the mess and complete state-required reports and paperwork.

Workers dug out contaminated soil using both heavy equipment and manual labor from Aug. 22 to 27, according to a report submitted to the state by Streamline Environmental.

"We didn't stop digging until we got down to clean dirt," Beck said.

Crews went as deep as three feet below ground and excavated almost 112 tons of impacted soil, and transported it via roll-off boxes and dump trucks to Clean Earth of Southern Florida in Moore Haven, for thermal treatment the report states.

The clean-up process total expense was \$198,714.13. One-year of environmental monitoring services will cost an additional \$17,840, for a grand total of \$216,554.13.

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Beck, who has worked with Facilities Management for 12 years, said you can't always predict a spill but there's one thing he knows for certain.

"All machines break," he said.

[http://insurancenewsnet.com/oarticle/2014/03/14/lee-county-to-pay-\\$200k-for-oil-spill-cleanup-a-474700.html#.UyT6E8Zmim4](http://insurancenewsnet.com/oarticle/2014/03/14/lee-county-to-pay-$200k-for-oil-spill-cleanup-a-474700.html#.UyT6E8Zmim4)

USA, MI, COMSTOCK TWP

MARCH 19 2014.

INVESTIGATORS SAY FUEL TANK WAS VANDALIZED IN DIESEL SPILL

We now know the fuel storage tank at Klooster Greenhouse that caused 300 gallons of diesel fuel to spill into the Kalamazoo River was vandalized. Newschannel 3 has been on the story since it broke just before 10:00 p.m. Monday night. The Comstock Township Fire Chief tells Newschannel 3 that he doesn't know if the vandalism happened Monday or the day before. Crews were out Tuesday trying to clean up the spill. If anyone has any information into the vandalism, they are urged to call the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Department.

http://www.wwmt.com/shared/news/features/top-stories/stories/wwmt_investigators-say-fuel-tank-vandalized-diesel-spill-19257.shtml#.UyzJocZmim4

USA, S.C, SUMTER

MARCH 19 2014.

GAS STATION FIRE BURNS TANKER DRIVER DRIVER LIGHTS CIGARETTE.

Bristow Marchant

A flash fire at a Broad Street gas station burned a man standing at a fuel tank early Sunday. At 3:39 a.m., the driver of a tanker truck was reportedly pumping gas into an underground fuel tank at the El Cheapo gas station on Broad Street Extension when a spark apparently ignited the gas fumes in the air and burned the driver's face. The man then walked down Broad Street and made contact with medical personnel attending the scene of a shooting at Club Miami and was transported to Tuomey Regional Medical Center. A fire engine on stand-by at the nightclub responded to the gas station upon seeing the flames and extinguished the fire coming out of the tank opening using a fire extinguisher. No damage was assessed to either the gas station or the truck. A Sumter Fire Department report attributed the flash fire to the driver lighting a cigarette.

http://www.theitem.com/news/gas-station-fire-burns-tanker-driver/article_176d6e4b-e46c-5948-8b2f-afdbee5a9c2f.html

USA, TX, WEST

MARCH 19 2014.

FEW CLUES IN TEXAS FERTILIZER PLANT EXPLOSION THAT KILLED 14 WEST, TEXAS, MOURNS AS NEIGHBORHOODS BURN

Josh Levs and Jethro Mullen

The fertilizer plant that blew up in Texas last week warned state and local officials but not federal agencies that it had 270 tons of highly volatile ammonium nitrate on site, according to regulatory records.

The April 17 fire and explosion at West Fertilizer Co. killed 14 people and devastated the small town of West, Texas. Investigators have said they're not sure how much ammonium nitrate was actually on site at the time of the explosion, however, since plant records were destroyed in the blast.

The company sold as;ldkfj;lkajsd ammonium nitrate and anhydrous ammonia, both commonly used as fertilizers. It had notified state and local emergency management officials of its stock of both in its most recent declaration of hazardous chemicals, filed in February.

However, the risk management plan it filed with the federal Environmental Protection Agency in

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2011 mentioned only anhydrous ammonia, which produces suffocating fumes and can cause burns if mishandled. The plan listed as a worst-case scenario "the release of the total contents of a storage tank released as a gas over 10 minutes" and did not warn of the risks of explosion.

Federal law requires any operation that holds more than a ton of fertilizer-grade ammonium nitrate to report that stock to the Department of Homeland Security. Proposed new rules would cut that to 25 pounds. But Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano told a Senate subcommittee Tuesday that West Fertilizer doesn't appear to have reported its ammonium nitrate stock to federal officials, adding, "We're following up on that."

In a statement issued earlier this week, after the first lawsuit against it was filed in connection with the explosion, the company said its focus "remains on the fact finding."

Among the dead was plant foreman Cody Drago, who was also a member of the town's volunteer fire department.

The explosion happened about 20 minutes after the first report of a fire there. It registered on seismographs as a magnitude 2.1 earthquake and could be felt 50 miles away.

Last week's explosion damaged numerous houses, a nursing home and the town's high school and middle school, all of which were built within a few hundred feet of the plant. That's raised concern about similar facilities in other towns, both in rural communities like West and major cities like Houston, the heart of the oil industry.

"I know there's hundreds of public schools on the fenceline or very close to these industrial plants," said Neil Carman, a former Texas Department of Environmental Quality inspector now working for the state Sierra Club. "I wouldn't be surprised if it's over 1,000."

Zoning restrictions are rare in the state, and Carman said there have been thousands of complaints from neighborhoods in areas like Houston, Beaumont and Corpus Christi, home to numerous oil refineries.

West Fertilizer had been twice cited by federal regulators twice since 2006.

In 2012, the Transportation Department's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration fined West Fertilizer \$5,250 for storing anhydrous ammonia in tanks that lacked the proper warning labels. The agency originally recommended a \$10,000 penalty, but it was reduced after the company took corrective action.

In 2006, the EPA fined it \$2,300 owners to correct problems that included a failure to file a risk management program plan on time. The TCEQ also investigated a complaint about the lingering smell of ammonia around the plant the same year.

<http://www.channel4000.com/Few-clues-in-Texas-fertilizer-plant-explosion-that-killed-14/25056596>

USA, CA, WILMINGTON

MARCH 20 2014.

PHILLIPS 66 OIL LINE IN WILMINGTON BLAMED FOR 1,200-GALLON SPILL

Jeff Gottlieb

Phillips 66 takes responsibility for the spill in a residential Wilmington neighborhood and promises to investigate why oil was left in the line, which was taken out of service in 1998.

Crews worked Tuesday to fix a fingertip-sized hole in an underground pipe that allowed about 1,200 gallons of crude oil to seep onto a quiet residential street in Wilmington.

Phillips 66, which earlier in the day said it was almost positive that it was not to blame for the leak, later took responsibility and put the blame on one of its out-of-service pipes.

Don Ellis, a hazardous-materials specialist with the Los Angeles County Fire Department, said that when an underground oil pipeline is withdrawn from use, it is supposed to be capped and the material inside vacuumed out.

Janet Grothe, a spokeswoman for Phillips 66, said the company would investigate why oil remained in the pipe, which she said was taken out of service before Phillips 66 acquired it.

Los Angeles Councilman Joe Buscaino, who was touring the area, said the pipe had been withdrawn

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from service in 1998.

Rep. Janice Hahn (D-Los Angeles), a member of the House subcommittee on railroads, pipelines and hazardous materials, said she may hold a hearing on pipeline safety.

"I'm wondering where's the oversight to make sure these pipes were being regularly inspected and what happens when there is a weak spot or corrosion, who's responsible for seeing they're repaired," she said.

Hahn, who lives in nearby San Pedro, visited the spill about 7:30 a.m., when oil was still spilling into the street.

"Clearly there was a noxious smell in the area," she said. "It actually made me a little sick to my stomach."

Despite complaints about the smell from Hahn and residents in the 1200 block of North Neptune Avenue, authorities said they received no medical calls and that tests showed no health hazards.

Wilmington is home to three oil refineries, and probably has more oil pipelines than any other area in Southern California, Buscaino said.

"Some of these pipes are so old," said Mario Benjamin, a Fire Department hazardous-materials specialist.

Residents said the oil, which began leaking Monday afternoon, was bubbling up through cracks in the street. Crews continued working through the night to find the cause.

Natalie Aleman, 19, who lives in one of the homes that line the street, said she was awakened by jackhammers about 4 a.m.

"It smelled like the La Brea Tar Pits," she said.

By Tuesday afternoon, the street was filled with trucks and work crews spreading material to absorb the oil, along with workers from state and local agencies.

Although Phillips initially thought the pipe didn't belong to the firm, the company was involved in the cleanup early on "as a good neighbor," Grothe said.

She said that Phillips' crews would steam clean the street and that repairs would be completed in a week.

<http://www.latimes.com/local/la-me-0319-crude-oil-20140319,0,5512772.story#ixzz2x5jqvHlB>

USA, N.D, BISMARCK

MARCH 22 2014.

HILAND CRUDE PIPELINE SPILLS OIL NEAR ALEXANDER, ND

James MacPherson

Cleanup workers have contained about 34,000 gallons of crude that spewed from a broken oil pipeline in northwestern North Dakota, a state health official said Friday.

North Dakota Water Quality Director Dennis Fewless said the breach occurred Thursday morning on Hiland Crude LLC's pipeline about 6 miles northeast of Alexander. A gasket on the above-ground pipeline appears to have failed near a compressor station, spewing about 800 barrels of crude, Fewless said. A barrel holds 42 gallons.

Fewless said about half the oil migrated off the site but has been contained and no water sources are threatened. Hiland gave a lower estimate than state inspectors did for how much oil escaped the site, saying in a statement that "approximately 100 barrels of crude left the location, with an undetermined amount contained on location."

The Enid, Okla.-based company said the environmental impact "is limited to contaminated soil, which is being removed from the site."

Fewless said the cleanup likely will continue for a few days. The McKenzie County Sheriff's Department said a road to the spill site has been closed until the work is completed.

The spill occurred about 5 a.m. Thursday and Hiland notified North Dakota regulators about six hours later, Fewless said. State health inspectors have been on the scene since Thursday.

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Hiland's statement said its workers "immediately began emergency response activities" after detecting the spill. It said specialized cleanup contractors were at the site before 6:30 a.m. Thursday, and the flow of crude oil was "substantially controlled" at that time.

"They called in all the necessary forces to get it cleaned up," Fewless said Friday. "They worked all night, got the leak stopped and got it contained. They are in cleanup mode right now."

Fewless said oil migrated into a dry drainage that has been "diked off, contained and boomed." But he said if a heavy spring rain hit during cleanup, oil could leach from the site.

"If we were to get a rainstorm, you would have potential for oil to make it to water," Fewless said.

Hiland Partners LP, which owns Hiland Crude, has reported two other incidents to North Dakota regulators in recent months.

In November, the company reported a 500-barrel crude oil spill near Trenton at a rail transfer facility. Last month, an above-ground natural gas pipeline owned by the company caught fire in rural Williams County, touching off explosions that could be felt miles away.

Hiland Crude began courting oil producers this week to reserve space on a new oil pipeline that would run from Dore and Sydney, Mont., to an oil storage facility in Guernsey, Wyo. The company said it expects to transport up to 100,000 barrels per day of crude on the pipeline later this year.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/03/21/hiland-crude-pipeline-spill_n_5008405.html?utm_hp_ref=green

USA, N.D, WILLISTON

MARCH 22 2014.

EPA TO INSPECT OIL SPILL

The federal Environmental Protection Agency will inspect the site of an oil spill into the Missouri and Yellowstone river confluence area near Williston today.

The Denver-based EPA onsite emergency response coordinator will look at how the 33-barrel spill, equivalent to 1,400 gallons, has affected the waters and possibly land owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and nearby wildlife management areas.

Kris Roberts, environmental geologist for the state Health Department, said he isn't sure of the inspection's scope, but said he and the EPA representative will meet with the cleanup crew and look at any residual impact from the spill.

The oil spill was reported March 14 when rising water caused by ice jams flooded at least 16 oil wells in the confluence lowlands.

An unanchored oil storage tank owned by Colorado-based Zavanna LLC broke open and oil flowed out of a breach in the protective dike around the well.

The oil was mostly trapped in containment booms, but some coated brush and grass, Roberts said.

Roberts said EPA inspections are most often triggered when oil spills into waters owned by the United States, in this case Lake Sakakawea and its tributary rivers.

He said he'll learn more about the EPA's concerns during the inspection.

http://bismarcktribune.com/bakken/epa-to-inspect-oil-spill/article_ea9f1370-b0a7-11e3-ab06-001a4bcf887a.html

USA, ALA, REDSTONE ARSENAL

MARCH 23 2014.

DEADLY CHEMICAL WEAPONS, BURIED AND LOST, LURK UNDER U.S. SOIL

David Zucchini

Cleaning up an Alabama site, one of hundreds where toxic munitions were dumped after World War II, is expected to take decades. It's not even known what exactly is there.

Yanking aside a tree branch, Jason Watson peered into a waterlogged trench. He pointed out discolored metal drums sunk halfway in the water.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

"Blister agents, choking agents, blood agents," Watson said, listing the array of chemical weapons inside thousands of metal containers that were buried on this 38,000-acre base after World War II.

Watson is part of a team charged with finding, identifying and eventually cleaning up 17 long trenches that snake for six miles, crammed with World War II chemical agents and munitions. Watson, 37, figures he'll be long retired by the time the job is finished.

"Even if we tried to do this as fast as anybody could ever get it done, we're talking decades and decades," Watson said. "The sheer mass of this stuff is overwhelming."

Even as the United States pushes Syria to surrender its chemical weapons for destruction in a matter of months, this country has struggled for decades with its own deadly stockpiles.

Redstone Arsenal, in the swampy lowlands of northern Alabama, is the largest of the 249 sites in 40 states and territories where chemical weapons remain buried and await cleanup at a cost of billions of dollars. Just outside the Redstone gates is Huntsville, a city of nearly 200,000 residents.

As World War II ended, the United States military collected chemical weapons from Nazi Germany and Japan, as well as from British and American stockpiles. A million chemical weapon munitions marked for storage or disposal were shipped to Redstone, where the U.S. had produced blister agents and other chemical weapons during the war.

Some of the material was burned or blown up. Some was stored in stockpiles. What remained was stacked in trenches and buried.

Today a toxic stew of some of the most lethal weapons ever devised rests beneath the surface: Nazi mustard, a liquid blister agent. Lewisite, another blister agent. Adamsite, a vomiting agent. And possibly Nazi tabun, a nerve agent. Also buried are containers of white phosphorus, chlorine, smoke bombs, tear gas and incendiary bombs.

"This stuff is very dangerous to dig up," Watson said. "It'll hurt you. It will blister you up. If you get that nerve agent on you, it will kill you."

Redstone administrators have been trying since the 1970s to figure out just where all the weapons are buried. In 2010, the base began a state-mandated effort to map its buried chemical weapons sites and eventually dispose of the material.

In a 2012 report, the National Research Council called Redstone "the largest and most challenging" of the buried chemical weapons sites. Communities nationwide are home to these often-little-known repositories.

Several miles southeast of Huntsville at the former Camp Sibert, wide fields used for hunting and cattle grazing cover at least 13 stockpiles of deadly mustard and phosgene gas — directly adjacent to several business and industrial sites.

In the elegant Spring Valley neighborhood of Washington, not far from the White House, teams have dug into the earth in a \$230-million effort to clean up World War I chemical weapons dumped there. No records were kept, but experts have searched for mustard, arsenic and other chemicals buried and forgotten almost a century ago.

The cleanup team at Redstone is scheduled to start work in the trenches next year, but it won't actually start digging up the material until about 2019. Disposal is due to be completed in 2042, and that's a conservative target. Experts estimate that only about six munitions a day can be safely removed.

The team expects to pull out roughly 388,000 munitions or partial munitions from the trenches. Of that, an estimated 20,000 to 25,000 buried chemical weapons are still intact. They are relatively stable in the ground, but volatile once disturbed. An estimated 600,000 nonlethal munitions containers also could be buried here.

In 1946, burying chemical weapons for what was thought to be safe long-term storage seemed like a good idea, especially in rural, sparsely populated northern Alabama.

"At the time, it was the accepted process for getting rid of this stuff safely," said Terry de la Paz, chief of the installation restoration branch at Redstone, who has been wrestling with toxic cleanup since 1995.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

"They thought putting it in wet areas was a grand thing to do because it was so soggy and nasty, nobody would go in there," De la Paz said.

Few residents of Huntsville are aware that tons of chemical weapons are buried underground nearby, Watson said. De la Paz said that when they are told, "the first question people ask is, 'Is it near my house?' When the answer is no, they lose interest."

No chemical agents have been detected in groundwater at Redstone so far. However, solvents associated with production and demilitarization of chemical weapons have been found, and they pose a risk to humans, De la Paz said. The Army has imposed tight restrictions on public use of groundwater, she said, and is formulating plans for cleanup.

These days, Redstone is a sprawling, busy Army installation where NASA also carries out rocket testing at the George C. Marshall Space Flight Center. The base is surrounded by residential areas home to soldiers, officers, scientists and engineers, as well as schools, churches and shopping centers.

Compared with the complicated chemical weapons quagmire at Redstone, removing 1,300 tons of intact chemical weapons secured in military hands in Syria seems as simple as trucking the weapons to ships and sailing away for destruction at sea.

"In Syria, you know where the weapons are and what they are, and they can move them with a forklift," Watson said, stomping through the woods past a sunken patch of earth that held a weapons trench. "Here, we don't know. We have to go out there and dig them out of the ground, not knowing exactly what's in there or where it is."

President Nixon declared a moratorium on new production of chemical weapons in 1969. In 1985, the U.S. declared its chemical weapons stockpiles obsolete and said they should be destroyed.

By the time the U.S. in 1997 signed the Chemical Weapons Convention, an international treaty outlawing production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and their precursors, the country was stuck not only with buried weapons at sites such as Redstone, but also with stockpiles totaling 31,500 tons of chemicals in mortar and artillery shells, rockets and other lethal weapons. Most contained mustard or the nerve agents sarin and VX.

In 1990, the process of incinerating those weapons began at eight sites in the U.S. and on Johnston Atoll in the Pacific. Nearly 90% of the job was completed by April 2012, leaving only two chemical weapons stockpiles, in Pueblo, Colo., and Blue Grass, Ky.

Disposal by incineration was halted because of environmental concerns, and the remaining 10% is now set to be destroyed by a chemical process. The rough target dates for completion are 2017 for the Colorado stockpile and 2021 to 2023 for the one in Kentucky.

"It's a very expensive and time-consuming process," said Karen Jolley of the Army's Joint Project Manager for Elimination agency. "Our grandkids will be working on this."

The U.S. has rid itself of some chemical weapons by burying them at sea. There were about 72 separate disposals in the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans and Mediterranean Sea. Dumping chemical weapons at sea was banned by Congress in 1972, but there is no plan to clean up the underwater sites. Congress has authorized two studies to explore ways to dispose of those chemicals.

At Redstone, meanwhile, the disposal team pores over old mapping photos, land maps and shipping records to try to determine exactly what chemical weapons were buried where.

Recently, Watson and De la Paz, 51, hiked down a gravel road to reach an old limestone quarry in a remote wooded section of the Redstone base. Embedded in packed dirt along the quarry's stone walls are rusted gas-mask cartridges and containers, dumped decades ago.

In the quarry's clear, blue-green waters, dark shadows are detectable along the shoreline — rusting metal drums like the ones buried in the trenches. The drums could contain chemical weapons residue, dumped there along with mortar rounds and old Navy mines.

"They buried stuff everywhere," Watson said, staring down into the water.

At some point, perhaps before retirement, members of the team will try to clean up that mess too.
<http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-chemical-weapons-20140322,0,2033901.story#ixzz2x5kfwAHA>

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

CANADA, ONT, TECUMSEH

MARCH 23 2014.

EXPLOSION KILLS MIDWEST FARMERS WAVERLY CO-OP WORKER

Jonathan Edwards

An agricultural worker died Thursday night after tanks holding anhydrous ammonia exploded in Tecumseh, the Johnson County attorney said. The explosion happened about 6 p.m. Thursday at the Midwest Farmers Cooperative elevator, attorney Julie Smith said. Tecumseh Fire and Rescue crews took two co-op workers to the hospital, and one of them died at 10:45 p.m. from breathing too much ammonia, Smith said. Co-op employees said the man who died was John Bennet. "There's no doubt in my mind we're gonna miss him," said Denny Lane, manager at the Tecumseh branch. "He always had a kind word. John was a part of our family. Our whole company runs as a family. "It's a tragedy. It's a tragedy on everyone." Bennet drove a truck for the cooperative, President Dale Piper said, declining to comment further until investigators know more. Two others, including a Johnson County Sheriff's deputy, were treated for non-life-threatening injuries not related to anhydrous ammonia exposure, Smith said. Anhydrous ammonia is a clear, colorless and odorless gas that farmers use as a fertilizer, according to the Centers for Disease Control website. It is explosive, corrodes tissue on contact and can kill. Breathing mild to moderate amounts of the gas causes nausea, vomiting, stomach pain and burns to the mouth, throat and stomach, according to the website.

http://journalstar.com/news/local/911/explosion-kills-midwest-farmers-waverly-co-op-worker/article_5b3937c8-65b8-5fd9-a747-3a652f1924ec.html

ARGENTINA, MENDOZA

MARCH 23 2014.

FIRE, EXPLOSION AT ARGENTINE OIL PLANT AFFECTS OUTPUT, NO VICTIMS

An oil tank exploded at a treatment plant run by state energy company YPF on Saturday, affecting more than 3 percent of the firm's total output of crude but leaving no fatalities, the company said. YPF said its nearby Lujan de Cuyo refinery, which produces 106,000 barrels of oil per day, was drawing on oil from back-up deposits and operating normally. Local TV broadcast images of a large oil tank ablaze at the Cerro Divisadero treatment plant in the province of Mendoza, around 1,400 kilometers (870 miles) southwest of Buenos Aires. The company said the fire and explosion affected the entire treatment complex, forcing the closure of ten deposits that produce 1,460 cubic meters (51,559 cubic feet) of crude per day. The ten tanks make up 3.8 percent of YPF's total output. "The fire started midday on Friday in one of the plant's oil tanks," YPF said in a statement. "The company activated its contingency plan and told provincial and national authorities and is at this time working with them to control the situation."

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/03/22/argentina-ypf-fire-idUSL2N0MJ0MN20140322>

USA, N.Y, QUEENSBURY

MARCH 28 2014.

OIL SPILLS IN TOWN PLAZA

Amanda May Metzger

A crew is cleaning up a spill of hundreds of gallons of oil from a utility transformer that was improperly moved on the new Hobby Lobby craft store site in Northway Plaza.

The spill was located behind the building and won't affect the store's opening.

Work on the interior of the building and the exterior, with the new vestibule, are progressing and the store is on track for a mid-May opening.

On March 20, National Grid sent a crew to the site for other work when workers noticed an old padmount transformer — which looks like a green box mounted on the ground — had been moved, resulting in a 242-gallon transformer oil spill.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

Initially, there were fears the spill could contain toxic PCB oil, but the conductor oil in the transformer is more like a mineral oil, said National Grid spokesman Patrick Stella.

The oil spilled over the hill to the parking lot in front of Per Se Technologies.

Queensbury Supervisor John Strough said the oil may have flowed into a special rotary cyclical drain that “swirls the water and cascades it to a holding area of sand, sediment and any floatables,” he explained.

“It does have tablets that are supposed to absorb any hydrocarbon contaminate, but in any event, they (property owners) have to keep that maintained and we frequently ask for their maintenance records on that,” Strough said.

He said the drain leads to springs that rise into a wetland area and feed the pond at Pine View Cemetery. That water is a tributary to Halfway Brook, which feeds Hovey Pond and the pond at Crandall Park and empties into Wood Creek.

“Upon hearing (about the spill) I was very angry because something like this did not have to happen and it should not happen,” Strough said.

It wasn’t known Wednesday whether any oil had seeped into the drain.

Stella said an environmental team is checking to see if oil soaked onto the ground.

“We haven’t found any evidence of that, mainly because the ground is so frozen. They have absorbent material they put out when they find the oil, and it absorbs it like a sponge,” Stella said.

Stella said the remains of the old transformer were found in a dumpster. There’s a new transformer there now.

Stella said National Grid cut service off to the old transformer in early March. If it had been active, Stella said, the situation could have been much worse.

“We didn’t know it had been moved, and we were there doing other work and saw it in the dumpster” on March 20, Stella said.

National Grid reported the spill to DEC when the workers found it, and DEC listed it on the Spill Incidents Database online as a “transformer oil” spill. The resource affected is listed as “unknown” and the cause is listed as “human error.” The record is not yet closed. An inquiry for more information from DEC had not been answered as of Wednesday.

Stella said National Grid has a contractor crew on the site that is about 90 percent done with the cleanup. He said they plan to finish next week.

Stella said the cleanup’s cost hasn’t been determined because the work isn’t finished. The results of the investigation will help National Grid determine who will pay for it.

About 10 contractors are doing work at the large site, Stella said, and the investigation should reveal why the transformer was moved. National Grid should have been called to move it, he said.

The Hobby Lobby website last month showed an April estimated opening date for the Queensbury store, but now the date listed is May 9.

A spokesman for the Oklahoma-City-based craft store chain said all of his paperwork has shown a mid-May opening date.

http://poststar.com/news/local/oil-spills-in-town-plaza/article_654b87d2-b53c-11e3-b938-001a4bcf887a.html