

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, TX, WHARTON

MARCH 7 2015.

STORAGE TANK EXPLODES AT ENERGY FACILITY IN WHARTON COUNTY

Andrew Horansky

A storage tank exploded and sent of black plume of smoke into the sky above Wharton County on Friday.

Around 9 a.m. Friday, the loud boom knocked Willie Green right out of bed.

"It scared me to death," he said. "And I ran to the window right here and looked out and I saw it burning."

A storage facility in Sandridge was on fire. It is about 9 miles outside Wharton and borders Green's home.

Operated by XTO Energy, a division of Exxon-Mobile, the facility stores waste water from oil drilling sites.

Officials say a driver had been unloading the contents of his truck into a tank when there was the blast and fire.

Green said police told him and his neighbors to get out right away.

"It was scary, real scary," he said. "I had a doctor's appointment. I had to call my doctor and tell him I wasn't coming 'cause I didn't know if my house was going to catch on fire."

Fortunately no one was hurt, not even that tanker driver.

But there is concern over the cleanup, since some of the waste water contains petroleum.

It took nearly three hours to put out the fire. The cause of it is still under investigation.

<http://www.khou.com/story/news/local/2015/03/06/gas-explosion-reported-in-wharton-county/24496343/>

USA, AKA, NORTH SLOPE

MARCH 8 2015.

NEARLY 4,000 GALLONS OF FLUID CLEANED UP AFTER SPILL FROM HOLE IN NORTH SLOPE PIPELINE

Alex Demarban

State and federal regulators were hurrying to the North Slope on Monday in an effort to determine why a relatively new pipeline at a field owned by Hilcorp and BP ruptured over the weekend, spilling an unknown amount of crude oil, water and other fluids at a site about 25 miles from Deadhorse.

Hilcorp, a North Slope newcomer that began operating the Milne Point field in November, discovered the spill in the 6-year-old line early Saturday morning.

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Initial cleanup efforts were stopped by what the state Department of Environmental Conservation called “severe blizzard-like conditions.” But by that afternoon responders had used a vacuum truck to recover an estimated 4,000 gallons that was a mixture of spilled liquids, snow and ice.

Hilcorp hopes to soon determine the cause of the leak, said Lori Nelson, external affairs manager with Hilcorp in Alaska.

“There was no field activity directly related with this pipe that would have caused this,” she said. “The breach occurred at some point when there was not any personnel or equipment operating in this area.”

The leak occurred in the bottom of the pipe, aimed “straight to ground,” said Nelson. Fluids pooled beneath the pipe and oily mist sprayed out in strong gusts. About 1 acre of gravel pad and tundra were affected.

Field staff had visually inspected the 10-inch pipe the evening before the leak, said Nelson. Hilcorp is hopeful the release did not occur for more than 12 hours, said Nelson.

After the discovery of the leak, the affected 15-foot section of pipe was isolated and sealed off with valves. Producing wells from that portion of the field were shut down. A wooden plug was inserted into the quarter-inch hole and the damaged pipe was wrapped to prevent further leaking, environmental regulators said.

Responders included teams from Hilcorp, Alaska Clean Seas and ConocoPhillips’ Kuparuk oil field.

By Sunday afternoon, Hilcorp had installed a bypass line to resume normal production flow and prevent freezing in other portions of the operation. The flow line carries about 4,200 barrels of oil each day from producing wells, part of the 20,000 barrels of daily production at the unit.

Getting flow back up quickly and safely with the bypass pipe was a “big win,” said Nelson.

Brad Dunker, environmental program specialist with the state, said that accomplishment is “huge.” If flow is stopped, “you can get into situation where you have an ice plug or something like that that can damage the pipe,” he said.

Temperatures in the area more than 600 miles north of Anchorage did not exceed zero on Sunday.

Because of strong gusts and snow, responders had to do what they could to keep the contamination in check, said Dunker. That included spraying the area with water to create an ice cap over the spill. The cap will not hurt recovery efforts, the state said.

Houston-based Hilcorp has become an important operator in the state’s oil and gas fields, after boosting production levels in Cook Inlet in Southcentral Alaska in recent years. It moved to the North Slope in November, acquiring half the assets at Milne Point as part of a \$1.5 billion deal with BP that also involved three other North Slope fields.

Hilcorp suffered another setback in October in Cook Inlet when a fire erupted on the half-century-old Baker platform. The fire stemmed from a malfunctioning wall heater that had been recently inspected, Nelson said. No one was injured and nothing was spilled.

As for Milne Point, state and federal regulators are expected to arrive Monday evening, now that weather conditions have improved and the road to the site has been cleared of snow, Dunker said.

Hilcorp hopes to better delineate the contaminated area and estimate how much fuel and other liquid spilled, Nelson said.

After regulators arrive, the damaged pipe will be removed for analysis. “We’re anxious to get that section of pipe and figure out the nature of the failure,” she said.

Nelson said Hilcorp will learn from the spill.

“We definitely take the investigation seriously and will take the lessons learned moving forward, working with regulators to ensure it doesn’t happen again,” she said. “We certainly want to be a responsible producer in the state.”

<http://www.adn.com/article/20150302/nearly-4000-gallons-fluid-cleaned-after-spill-hole-north-slope-pipeline>

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USA, N.D, ALEXANDER

MARCH 8 2015.

EXPLOSION AT OIL AND GAS WASTE DISPOSAL SITE CONTAINED

Lauren Donovan

An explosion and fire at an oil and gas waste disposal site north of Alexander burned through the very early morning hours Saturday and was contained at about 9 a.m. McKenzie County Emergency Manager Karolin Rockvov said responders from Alexander and Williston were called out at about 3:30 a.m., but the explosion and fire was so large that they pulled back to a safe perimeter rather than attempt to engage the blaze. She said five employees were at the site, including one who jumped away from the equipment just in time. No one was injured. The treatment, recovery and disposal facility was recently acquired by Republic Services from Tervita. Rockvov said the damage was contained within a berm surrounding the waste location.

<http://www.stalbertgazette.com/article/20150307/SAG0804/303079979/1039>

USA, NORTH DAKOTA

MARCH 9 2015.

UPDATE ON TWO ND OIL SITE EXPLOSIONS

Amy Unrau

South of Williston, ND and near Killdeer, ND Crews are investigating the causes of two oil site explosions Saturday morning. One happened at an oil disposal site just south of Williston. Crews had to watch the structure burn because it was so large. The site was completely destroyed and no one was hurt. Emergency Management expects to know the cause within a week. The other explosion happened about five miles north of Killdeer where three oil tanks exploded. People nearby could feel the impact that knocked some off their feet. The fire reignited around 5:00 Saturday night but was quickly put out. No one was injured.

<http://www.wdaz.com/news/3695434-update-two-nd-oil-site-explosions>

USA, N.D, KILLDEER

MARCH 9 2015.

TANKS EXPLODE NEAR KILLDEER

Katherine Lynn

Three oil tanks exploded at about 9 a.m. Saturday morning, causing a boom felt by houses in Killdeer, all the way from the oil well location 5 miles north. The cause of the explosion and subsequent fire hasn't been determined, said Denise Brew, emergency manager for Dunn County. An official with the North Dakota Department of Health told her Saturday the same thing happened to a tank Friday night, raising the question of if the events are related to the temperature change. Nobody was on-site at the time of the explosion and no injuries have been reported. Marathon Oil operates the well. "It did blow the tops off of the three tanks," Brew said. "It was pretty powerful." Fire fighters were paged back out to the site about 5 p.m. because a treater had re-ignited. They were still on site as of 7 p.m.

<http://www.thedickinsonpress.com/energy/bakken/3695180-tanks-explode-near-killdeer>

USA, CA, BAKERSFIELD

MARCH 11 2015.

GASOLINE TANKS CATCH FIRE AT BAKERSFIELD FACILITY

A pair of gasoline tanks caught fire Tuesday morning. Kern County firefighters were called to the incident shortly after 7 a.m. on the 300 block of Mt. Vernon Avenue. The tanks had been drained, but there was residual gasoline in them, the fire department said, citing information from workers at the facility. The facility manager said a forklift operated near the tanks might have ignited a gas vapor cloud, according to the fire department. Damage was estimated at about \$10,000. The fire department didn't name the

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company were this incident occurred.

<http://www.bakersfieldnow.com/news/local/Gasoline-tanks-catch-fire-at-Bakersfield-facility-295780761.html>