

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

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

CANADA, ONT, OAKVILLE BEAVER

MARCH 26 2010.

GASOLINE LEAK MAY BE SOURCE OF BRONTE CREEK SPILL

David Lea

The Ministry of the Environment is investigating the possibility that a leaking gasoline pipeline may have led to the mysterious slick seen in Bronte Creek earlier this month.

The yellow substance, now identified as a mix of heavy and light petroleum products, was spotted on the surface of Bronte Creek on Thursday March 11, in the Speers and Bronte Roads vicinity. The discovery sparked an environmental clean up effort on the part of the Town, which was eventually turned over to Suncor, owner of the property where the spill was found.

At the time, the Town's Director of Roads and Works Dan Cozzi said the substance appeared to be oozing out of the east bank of the portion of Bronte Creek that flows through the Suncor property site, opposite the Petro Canada Refinery. On Tuesday, March 16, Trans-Northern Pipelines Inc. notified the Ministry of the Environment of a leak in one of its gasoline pipelines, which is buried only 350 metres north of where the Bronte Creek slick was seen. "There are two pipelines in the area and Trans-Northern decided to check them as a result of the spill in Bronte Creek and so they found that a 10-inch line was leaking gasoline," said Tina Dufresne, spokesperson for the Ministry of the Environment.

"The line was depressurized for repairs and they are cleaning up the contaminated soil. We are also requiring them to delineate (outline the extent of) the contamination and they have been co-operative."

Dufresne said the pipeline in question is used to carry gasoline to the Suncor facility in the area and was buried two metres underground. Trans-Northern is currently estimating it lost approximately 100 litres of gasoline as a result of the leak. Despite the close proximity of the leak to the location of the Bronte Creek slick, Dufresne said, it is too soon to say whether the two are related, especially when there are several important questions that still need answers. "It was heavier and lighter petroleum products in Bronte Creek.

Trans-Northern is telling us they only had gasoline in that pipeline and gasoline is a lighter petroleum product," said Dufresne. Trans-Northern has hired contractors and an environmental consultant to remove the contaminated soil from the site. "It has not been proven that it was Trans-Northern's oil (in Bronte Creek), but we are taking full responsibility for it," said Jane Shapiro, spokesperson for Trans-Northern. "The repair has now been completed, the National Energy Board has approved the return to service of the pipeline and we are now involved in defining a long-term plan to determine the exact extent of the (contamination) problem and what needs to be done to fix it."

Dufresne said it is too early to say whether Trans-Northern will face any fines as a result of the leak.

The spill in Bronte Creek was initially captured with special containment booms and then pumped into special recovery tanks.

Heavy rains allowed some of this spill to escape when the containment site was overrun with floodwater. It is unknown how much was able to flow down the creek and reach Lake Ontario.

<http://www.insidehalton.com/news/news/article/655262>

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FRANCE, CREPY-EN-VALOIS

APRIL 3 2010.

'WE'RE GOING TO BLOW THE PLANT UP': FRENCH WORKERS PRIME 5,000-LITRE GAS TANK TO EXPLODE IN ROW OVER REDUNDANCY PAY

Ian Sparks

Desperate French workers have threatened to blow up their factory in a row over redundancy pay.

Employees have primed a 5,000 litre gas tank to explode at the entrance to the Sodimatex car parts plant near Paris.

The men have warned they will 'raze the entire building to the ground' unless they receive £15,000 each in compensation.

Bosses told the 92 staff a year ago that the factory in Crepy-en-Valois, which makes car carpets and upholstery, was to close.

After the failure to reach a deal over pay-offs, employees blocked a road to the site on Thursday. When riot police arrived, workers retreated to the factory and barricaded themselves inside.

One employee told French RTL radio by phone: 'We have a 5,000 litre gas tank surrounded by wooden palettes, and I can guarantee you we'll blow it up.

'The whole building and everything around it will be flattened.'

Workers' spokesman Fabrice Bel said managers had offered them £700 for each year worked at the factory, while they were demanding at least double that.

Another worker told how he was offered to be re-located to the company's factory in Tunisia on a salary of £110 per month.

He added: 'I earn that in two days here. What kind of idiot do they take me for?'

Union lawyer Caroline Substelnly said: 'These workers fear that once they lose their jobs they will not be able to find another one.

'If the management does not take its responsibilities seriously, then workers will use all means at their disposal to get what they deserve.'

Executives from the Treves Group, which bought the factory 17 years ago, said they were urging workers to meet them for talks at the town later on Friday.

A spokesman said: 'Dialogue and not threats of violence is only way to resolve this situation.'

The tense stand-off comes a year after workers threatened to blow up the New Fabris car parts plant in Chatellerault, central France, in a row of redundancy pay.

That situation was defused when employees finally accepted a pay-off deal.

Workers at French factories have been taking increasingly radical action over the past two years in response to credit crunch lay-offs.

Staff at more than a dozen companies have taken their managers hostage demanding better pay and job security.

President Nicolas Sarkozy warned last year that he would not tolerate any kind of illegal militant action by irate employees.

He said: 'This trend of threats and hostage-taking by employees is totally unacceptable. What is this business of sequestering people?

'We can understand that people are angry, but this anger will subside with answers and results, not by aggravating matters with actions that are contrary to the law.

'I am insisting the police and courts arrest and prosecute those workers who take the law into their own hands in this way.'

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/worldnews/article-1263016/Were-going-blow-plant-French-workers-prime-5-000-litre-gastank-explode-row-redundancy-pay.html?ITO=1490>

USA, TX, MIDLAND CO, GARDENDALE

APRIL 3 2010.

OSHA INVESTIGATES DEATH

The investigation continues into the death of a Big Spring man killed Thursday in an oilfield accident about 1.5 miles south of Highway 158 on FM 1788 in Midland County.

William Ryan Locke, 35, was pronounced dead at 1:35 p.m. after a high-pressure pipe on a Robinson Drilling of Texas drilling rig broke loose, sending a high-pressure stream of water into Locke, Midland County Fire Marshal Dale

587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596

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Little said.

Little said that the body had been sent to Tarrant County to determine the cause of death, but he said that Locke had not fallen from the platform. Little said that he concluded his investigation Thursday and determined it was an accident.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration spokesman Michael Wald said that a team of compliance officers was sent from the Labor Department's Lubbock office and that their own investigation began Thursday afternoon. Wald said that by statute, they have up to six months to produce a final report, which will be public.

Wald said that the team would look for any violation of OSHA standards by the company, and if so, would assess civil money penalties.

Attempts to contact Big Spring-based Robinson Drilling were unsuccessful Thursday and Friday.

<http://www.oaoa.com/news/margin-45330-0in-font.html>

CHINA, SHAANXI PROVINCE, LUOCHUAN

APRIL 3 2010.

TONS OF OIL SPILLS INTO LUOHE RIVER

Some 1,000 tons of oil sludge spilled from a sewage treatment plant has contaminated Luohe River in Luochuan county of Northwest China's Shaanxi province, local officials said on Friday.

The Luohe River is a tributary of the Yellow River, referred to as the "Mother River" in China because it is the water source for millions of people.

Wang Xirong, deputy magistrate of Luochuan county, told China Daily that on Sunday morning, an oil sludge recycling pool at a sewage treatment plant in Yan'an city collapsed, sending some 1,000 tons of oil sludge flowing, with some going into the Luohe River.

The oil spill is the second river pollution incident to hit the province in three months, after the Yellow River was contaminated by a diesel fuel leak in early January.

Zhang Xun, deputy director of emergency office under the Ministry of Environmental Protection, who is leading a team to deal with the incident, has demanded the decontamination be finished within five days.

"We should try every way to stop the contamination source from going out of Yan'an," he said.

Vice-Premier Li Keqiang has instructed local authorities to ensure the safety of the drinking water downstream of the river.

More than 2,000 people were organized immediately after the incident to remove the contamination from the river. Eight floating dams were put in the river to stop the contamination from going downstream, Wang Xirong said.

Wang Hongli, an official in Jiaokouhe town where the sewage treatment plant is located, said the leaking sludge flowed to an apple orchard next to the plant and contaminated the farmland, and then flowed into the valley, which leads to the river.

"At present, the sludge in the river has been effectively controlled and we will make efforts to clean up the contamination in the farmland and valley. We will complete the work within three to five days," the town official said.

In Baishui, Luochuan's neighboring county, where the Luohe River also flows, more than 400 people are ready to intercept any polluting sludge coming from upstream.

Zhao Jingfeng, director of the Luochuan county environmental protection bureau, said results of the water quality test made at the junction of Luochuan and Baishui counties showed no contamination. The bureau will continue testing the water quality once every hour.

The preliminary investigation of the failure at the sewage plant showed that the accident was caused by ground collapse. The investigation is ongoing, Zhao said.

<http://news.asiaone.com/News/Latest%2BNews/Asia/Story/A1Story20100403-208221.html>

USA, VA, COLONIAL BEACH

APRIL 4 2010.

FUMES CAUSED DEADLY BLAST

COFFEE SHOP OWNER KILLED IN EXPLOSION SOUGHT HELP REMOVING OLD GAS TANKS, BUT FAILED TO GET CRUCIAL SAFETY ADVICE

Frank Delano

The old, underground gasoline tanks in Colonial Beach worried Jeffrey A. Malecha for six years.

They worried him before he and his wife, Julie, bought the former service station in 2004 and transformed it into The Espresso Station coffee shop. The tanks had been buried there for 30 or more years.

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The tanks worried him in 2008, when he exchanged e-mails with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality about ways the state might help defray the cost of removing the tanks and cleaning up any pollution. He found out that if state help was available, he might have to pay the first \$5,000.

This year, DEQ gave him the names of tank-removal contractors. Malecha talked to several and at least one of them visited the Colonial Beach site. But the contractor's estimate for removing the two, 6,000-gallon tanks "was quite a bit more expensive than what I could afford," Malecha said in a March 8 voice message to a DEQ employee.

"I have a contractor friend who has the equipment, so we have decided to do that. I hope to have everything well documented and be done with it," Malecha said in the message.

On March 23, Malecha, 46, was standing on top of a partially excavated tank. The water and most of the remaining gasoline in the tank had been sucked out that morning by a vacuum truck.

Malecha was cutting the tank's piping with a chop saw, said his contractor friend Chuck Adlon, who was seated in his loader at the edge of the pit.

The tank exploded and hurled Malecha 100 feet across Irving Avenue. He died later that day in a Richmond hospital.

"Jeff talked to all kinds of people," said Adlon, "but none of them gave him that one particular, most important piece of information: how to purge the tank of gasoline vapors. Three-hundred dollars' worth of dry ice would have saved his life."

LOOKING FOR ANSWERS

The Free Lance-Star obtained DEQ documents about the tanks under a Freedom of Information request. Those records, along with e-mails and interviews, show that Malecha contacted many regulators and experts and jumped through all the legal hoops in his six-year-long quest to remove the tanks, even though he did not own them and was not required by the law to take any action.

In September 2004, when Malecha was contemplating buying the property, he sent a letter to DEQ seeking assurance "that responsibility for the tanks, or any related environmental issue resulting from the tanks, does not transfer to me."

Malecha apparently received that assurance. On Oct. 1 of that year, the Malechas formed a limited liability corporation named Shadymont Properties. Shadymont bought the property for \$198,000 on Oct. 28, 2004. The deed specified that the previous owner did not own the tanks and that Shadymont was not buying them.

In 2008, Malecha e-mailed DEQ to ask "if there is an available State program/process that we could pursue without accepting any of the owner's (who is unknown to us) responsibility, for taking any action to evaluate the circumstance and conduct any remediation?"

A DEQ employee replied that if Malecha found evidence of pollution from the tanks, "DEQ's State Lead program is available to fund the costs of cleaning up the contamination if the risk posed by the contamination warrants further action."

"This could mean that, depending upon the risk posed the site would be 'wait listed' for a time while other higher-priority sites are addressed," wrote Renee Hooper of DEQ. She added that another DEQ program that might have helped Malecha was unavailable due to funding cuts "and may not be for several years."

If Malecha was "interested in speeding up the cleanup," Hooper wrote that he "could step into the shoes of the unknown [responsible party], clean up the site and receive reimbursement from the Virginia Petroleum Storage Tank Fund."

But, she added, "You would be responsible for the first \$5,000 of cleanup costs."

Malecha was still pursuing financing for the job the week before the explosion when he called Lindsay Trittipoe of NatLUST, a Richmond firm that helps tank owners finance cleanup costs while waiting for state reimbursement.

In an e-mail to NatLUST clients made available to a reporter, Trittipoe said he gave Malecha "some names of consulting firms who deal with underground storage tanks [USTs] for a living."

"But Mr. Malecha basically said he had already obtained an excavator and was planning to do the work himself, and had lined up a junkyard to take the old UST, saying he could get [the] tank out for a lot less than the \$5,000 deductible," Trittipoe said.

Malecha also contacted Dave Haney, president of Advanced Environmental Inc. in Richmond. "I gave him a ballpark figure of \$5-10K to remove the tanks based on sketchy details provided. Never heard from him again. I got the impression he was going to go at this on his own," Haney wrote in an e-mail to Trittipoe.

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DANGER IN THE AIR

"When you're doing gas tanks, you want a professional to do it," said Glen Crombie of Old Dominion Environmental Inc. in Fredericksburg, who visited the site soon after the explosion.

"They didn't know what they were doing. If they had dumped some dry ice into the tank, [Malecha] would still be alive," Crombie said in a telephone interview.

In their gasoline tank removals, Crombie and Haney said pumping out residual liquids is not enough. "The fluids aren't what you have to worry about. It's the vapor," said Crombie.

Haney said in a telephone interview he ventilates vapors from an empty gas tank after all its fittings and piping are removed. Crombie said he also puts dry ice (solid carbon dioxide) into tanks to dispel oxygen that may contribute to an explosion.

Both experts said they also rely on explosion meters to monitor the lower explosive limit of the air inside the tank and make sure it is safe to cut and haul to a scrap yard.

Malecha was the only person hurt by the explosion. The windows of the coffee shop a few feet away were not broken.

Nevertheless, a Colonial Beach Town Council committee last week began a study of ways to prevent similar accidents.

At present, no permits are required by the town to remove tanks unless a large excavation is required, said Town Manager Val Foulds. Most other jurisdictions in the region, including Westmoreland County, where Colonial Beach is located, require permits to remove tanks, tank consultants said.

Adlon said this week that he poured dry ice into the other tank remaining in the excavation and safely cut holes in its ends before hauling it to the scrap yard. Adlon said he saw no indication that the tanks had leaked. He said he was waiting for the water to subside in the former tank pit before backfilling it.

He said the coffee shop may reopen in a couple of weeks.

<http://fredericksburg.com/News/FLS/2010/042010/04032010/538705>

USA, TX, UPSHUR CO, BUCKHANNON

APRIL 7 2010.

TANK EXPLOSION IN UPSHUR COUNTY

In Upshur County an Oil tank exploded Monday morning. A severe thunder storm came through Buckhannon, and lightning hit one of the oil tanks at Key Star Energy Plant. The tank was blown off the foundation and led to a Class B, oil fire. It began around 10:30am and the Buckhannon Fire Department was on the scene within minutes. Shortly after leaving the scene, crews from the energy plant were cleaning up and one of the tanks reignited. Fire officials closed Hall Road evacuated the area for about an hour. It left about half a million dollars worth of damage, and is being investigated by the state fire marshal.

<http://www.wdtv.com/index.php/home/local-news/1473-tank-explosion-in-upshur-county>

USA, KS, ROOKS CO

APRIL 2 2010.

FIREFIGHTERS HURT IN ROOKS COUNTY EXPLOSION

Six firefighters are hurt after an oil tank explosion in Rooks County. The fire happened Thursday night at the Berexco Company in Codell, which is east of Plainville.

Authorities believe lightning started the fire in a tank battery holding two loads of crude oil. Fire fighters from at least six departments fought to contain the fire until five in the morning.

During that time, six firefighters were hurt. Five were released from the Rooks County Health Center, the sixth was transported to a Wichita hospital. He's listed in fair condition. His family says he has second and third degree burns on his hands and neck.

The fire also destroyed a City of Plainville brush truck and a City of Stockton pick up truck. Fire crews are still on the scene because the fire is not completely out. Authorities say there is still a mess with crude oil spilled everywhere.

<http://www.kwch.com/Global/story.asp?S=12248215>

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USA, KS, ROOKS CO

APRIL 7 2010.

PLAINVILLE FIREFIGHTER TALKS ABOUT SURVIVING OIL TANK FIRE

Joe Ballard

Ryan Cellmer is recovering in the Burn Center at Via Christi Hospital on North St. Francis. His doctors say he's recovering well, but he almost lost his life fighting an oil tank fire.

The fire happened Thursday, April 1 in Rooks county near the town of Codell. Cellmer is a volunteer firefighter in Plainville. He was one of dozens of firefighters from several different towns trying to contain a large oil tank fire. They fought it late into the night.

Cellmer says "I heard what sounded like a giant toilet flush, and I knew instantly what it was. It was the tank had let go." One of the tanks had erupted. But at that point he was ok. He noticed a department pick up was close to the flames so he jumped in to move it to safety.

Cellmer says within about 10 seconds the truck was surrounded by flames and Cellmer was trapped inside. He could see the flames on both sides. Another tank had erupted and shot flames all around his truck.

He says "the cab started filling up with smoke and I told myself I got to get the hell out of here." As he got out of the truck he caught fire. He was in his firefighter gear but he could feel the fire burning on the back of his head and neck. His hand was on fire too.

Cellmer dropped to the ground and rolled to put himself out. He knew he was hurt and told his chief to take him to the hospital. From the Hays hospital he was air lifted to Via Christi Hospital in Wichita.

"I'm real lucky to be alive. It could have been worse than what it is." He has large 3rd degree burns on his left hand and smaller ones on his face and back of his head. Even after this experience Cellmer doesn't plan to stop doing what he loves.

He says his sons asked him if he was going to still be a fireman? Cellmer said yes. His sons asked "but what if you get hurt?" Cellmer replied "this is what we do, not to get hurt, but hopefully we'll learn from this and be better prepared in the future. It's what we volunteer for."

Five other firefighters were hurt and the truck was destroyed. None of the other injuries were serious. Authorities say lightning started the fire.

<http://www.kwch.com/Global/story.asp?S=12259521>

USA, MI, SAGINAW

APRIL 8 2010.

STORAGE TANK CATCHES FIRE AT FORMER GM PLANT

FIRE OFFICIALS INVESTIGATING CAUSE OF BLAZE

Fire officials have not released the cause of a Tuesday night fire at the former General Motors Powertrain plant in Saginaw. It happened just after 9 p.m. on West Center Street when an underground storage tank caught fire. An on-site security guard said firefighters were at the plant for about a half hour. No injuries were reported.

<http://www.wnem.com/news/23075488/detail.html>

USA, ORE, REEDSPORT

APRIL 8 2010.

SAND BLASTING BREAKS TANK

SCHOOL DISTRICT WILL PAY FROM BOND FUNDS TO REPLACE OLD FUEL STORAGE

Alex Powers

The Reedsport School District will pay to replace a fuel tank and test soil at Highland Elementary. A contractor knocked a hole in the tank last month while trying to restore the tank.

Crews sandblasted underground fuel oil tanks at Reedsport Community Charter School and the elementary school during spring break. They removed rust and sludge in an attempt to restore the tanks.

When crews finished knocking rust off the 8,000-gallon tank at the elementary school, they made a hole.

District Superintendent Ike Launstein said the tanks had not been conditioned in about 60 years.

"It was the cleaning process that knocked the last chunk of rust off," he said.

It was during this process that the district discovered that the tank at Highland had nearly rusted through in places.

"It's amazing we didn't have a problem before this," Launstein said.

Launstein said the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality directed the district to test soil around the

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tank for fuel leaks. A contractor will test the soil and find if fuel oil entered groundwater at the site.

As of last week, Launstein said, the tank is empty and clean. There were about three inches of standing water that had leaked into the tank from the surrounding soil.

Launstein believes that no fuel leaked from the tank and that the metal held together until it was sandblasted.

He said restoration work extended the life of a tank at the charter school by 20 years.

Last week, a contractor moved an extra, above-ground tank from the charter school to Highland. The tank is being used to store fuel until a permanent replacement tank is installed.

Launstein said the district will pay to replace the tank from bond money raised in 2008 for construction and renovation at Reedsport schools.

"Some other things we would have liked to have done, won't be done. But we have to have good fuel tanks," Launstein said.

The district probably will buy an above-ground tank, he said. A contractor will price options this week and report his findings to the school board.

http://www.theumpquapost.com/articles/2010/04/07/local_news/doc4b8bb83960c91313915787.txt

USA, AZ, PHOENIX

APRIL 9 2010.

ARIZONA COURT OF APPEALS UPHOLDS CONVICTION OF FAR WEST CO

TWO MEN DIED IN AN UNDERGROUND SEWAGE TANK AFTER THEY WERE OVERCOME BY HYDROGEN SULFIDE GAS.

Chris McDaniel

After nearly five years of court proceedings, the Arizona Court of Appeals has upheld the conviction and sentences of the Far West Water and Sewer Company in the death of two men in 2001.

The original conviction was made by a jury in the summer of 2006, but was appealed.

The charges arose from an incident that occurred on October 24, 2001 at a sewage collection and treatment facility owned and operated by Far West. At that time, Santec Corporation was a subcontractor of Far West.

A Far West employee, James Gamble, and a Santec employee, Gary Lanser, died in an underground sewage tank after they were overcome by hydrogen sulfide gas. Another Far West employee, Nathan Garrett, suffered severe injuries when he attempted to rescue Gamble from the tank.

Far West, the company as a whole, was found guilty for one count of negligent homicide, one count of aggravated assault, two counts of endangerment and one count of violating a safety standard or regulation that caused the death of Gamble.

The court placed Far West on four years' probation for negligent homicide, five years' probation for aggravated assault and three years' probation for each count of endangerment and for violating a safety standard or regulation that caused the death of an employee. It also imposed fines and penalties totaling \$1,770,000.

Far West's lawyers appealed the conviction based on the argument that the company was not a "person" for purposes of imposing criminal liability for manslaughter. The lawyers also claimed the dismissal of a juror during proceedings was grounds for dismissal, court documents reveal.

After intense scrutiny, Judges Sheldon Weisberg, Donn Kessler and Lawrence Winthrop affirmed Far West's Convictions.

Gamble's step-father, Ed Thrasher, is glad the Arizona Court of Appeals has upheld the convictions.

"They killed him — it was cut and dry," he said, but added he doesn't believe in closure. "When I hear that word, it is a misnomer. You never have closure. Seriously, honest to God, Jimmy is out there in the Foothills buried, and I go out and clean his gravestone once a month."

According to court documents, prior to the incident, Far West acquired the Mesa Del Oro Plant and hired Santec to renovate equipment in a 3,000 gallon underground sewage tank called the Mesa Del Oro Tank, which was nine feet underground.

The interior of the Tank could only be accessed by descending down a ladder into a manhole approximately four feet wide. Two sewer lines fed into the Tank. The gravity line carried sewage downhill by gravitational force. The force main line carried sewage by way of force main pumps from another tank or lift station, approximately one mile away.

On October 24, 2001, Far West and Santec began work on the tank. The Far West crew included Gamble and Garrett with Connie Charles supervising. The Santec crew included Lanser and two other employees. After the force main pumps at the lift station were shut off, Gamble and Garrett pumped out the sewage from the surface and cleaned out the remaining sewage from inside the tank.

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As part of this process, Gamble inserted a plug into the gravity line to stop the flow of sewage. Normally, the crew would pull the gravity line plug and exit the tank before turning on the force main pump. On this occasion, however, Charles drove to the lift station, turned on the pumps and sewage began flowing into the Tank.

When the tank was about half full of sewage, Gamble climbed inside to unplug the gravity line. When the lower part of his body was in the tank, he passed out and fell into the sewage. Garrett saw Gamble floating facedown in the Tank, and in an effort to rescue him, Garrett tied a rope around his waist and climbed down a ladder into almost waist-deep sewage.

Not able to get Gamble out of the Tank, Garrett tried to climb up the ladder but passed out before he reached the top. Lanser then climbed down the manhole in an attempt to rescue both Gamble and Garrett, passed out and fell into the Tank.

Charles rushed back to the tank and entered it in an effort to rescue Gamble, Garrett and Lanser. She, too, passed out, but eventually regained consciousness.

Emergency personnel arrived at the scene and found Charles near the top of the ladder, but unable to get out. With assistance, he pulled her to the surface. Garrett was tied to the ladder below Charles and unable to move.

The paramedic put on a self-contained breathing apparatus, climbed into the tank, and with the help of others, pulled Garrett out. The Yuma Fire Department later recovered the bodies of Gamble and Lanser.

The Yuma County medical examiner concluded that both were overcome by inhalation of sewage gas but the immediate cause of death was asphyxia due to drowning. Although Garrett survived, he suffered life-threatening respiratory distress syndrome and aspiration pneumonia and sustained injuries to his lungs and eyes.

Court documents reveal Far West's employees were not even generally informed about the hazards caused by gases found in tanks and the potential life-threatening dangers involved in entering tanks. Far West superintendent Rex Noll indicated that Far West's policy was that employees should "train themselves" and "learn to be safe on their own."

Shortly before the incident, Garrett, Gamble and Charles took an examination for certification as wastewater operators, documents said.

Far West did not provide any training or classes to assist them but gave them books and told them to study on their own time. Although they all failed the exam, Far West allowed them to continue working without proper training. <http://www.yumasun.com/news/west-57574-court-count.html>

USA, N.C, GREENSBORO

APRIL 10 2010.

THIEVES CAUSE FOUR OIL SPILLS IN HIGH POINT

Four spills of home heating oil have occurred in High Point this year because of stolen oil tanks and lines, the Guilford County Department of Public Health said today.

The thieves may be stealing the tanks for the oil left inside and stealing the lines to sell the copper, according to a news release.

During the thefts, heating oil is being spilled on the ground, which could lead to major environmental contamination of the soil, surface water or ground water. Contaminated ground water endangers our drinking water supply.

The liability and cost of the environmental clean-up when an oil spill occurs falls to the property owner. The costs of clean-up could amount to thousands of dollars, which most homeowners' insurance policies will not cover.

The health department offered some suggestions to prevent oil spills from heating oil tanks:

- If your home heating system includes an above-ground heating oil tank, regularly check the tank (including the legs that support the tank) for leaks and rust. Rust will cause the legs to collapse and the tank to fall or leak. This check should be done yearly, before the tank is used for the season. Some heating oil companies will do this tank check for an additional fee.
- If you have converted to a different heating system and no longer use the above-ground oil tank, have the oil pumped out and dispose of the tank properly. The oil company may buy back the remaining oil or will properly and safely dispose of the oil for you. The tank can be disposed of at a local scrap metal dealer, or you can find a company that will haul the tank away and dispose of it.
- If you no longer live on the property but still have an above-ground heating oil tank, it is imperative that you properly empty and dispose of the tank. These properties are the most easily targeted by vandals and thieves. Property owners are financially responsible for any costs if the tank is damaged or stolen. If the tank is damaged or stolen and the oil leaks on the ground or runs into a stream or other water source,

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clean-up costs will amount to several thousand dollars.

If you have questions about home heating oil tanks, oil spills or environmental issues caused by oil contamination, call John Nantz of the Guilford County Department of Public Health at 641-3771.
http://www.news-record.com/content/2010/04/09/article/thieves_target_heating_oil_tanks_in_high_point

USA, R.I, BLOCK ISLAND

APRIL 12 2010.

WORST OF THE OIL SPILL CONTAINED

Dan West

Efforts to clean up the oil spill caused by last week's flooding were in full swing this week as crews from Environmental Services Inc. confronted the contaminated soil and water.

The spill was caused when part of a foundation collapsed at a Connecticut Avenue home, severing a line to a tank filled with home heating oil. The oil spilled and was carried into the marsh behind the home, which eventually drains into the Great Salt Pond's inner ponds.

Town Manager Nancy Dodge said that the town's quick response to contain the spill with booms and absorbent pads before it reached the ponds helped limit the extent of the damage. Clean Harbors was on the site evaluating the damage almost immediately.

Clean Harbors determined that the spill had been contained and the town reopened the ponds for shellfishing. However, the clean-up of the marshland and the contaminated soil is continuing and may take some time. After ESI has completed its mitigation of the contaminated water and soil it will continue to inspect the site weekly.

"It's been devastating," said Pippa Jack, owner of the property. "I am really grateful for all the professionals out there dealing with the clean-up in the marshes."

Dodge explained that the higher-than-normal water level may have helped limit the impact of the spill since it did not immediately get absorbed into the ground. According to Jack, the Department of Environmental Management is satisfied with the scope of the clean-up and will eventually inspect the site to make sure all contamination has been removed.

While removing the contaminated soil, ESI workers discovered transformer fluid, which they traced to a broken transformer owned by the Block Island Power Company.

BIPCo has replaced the transformer and will conduct tests to make sure no harmful chemicals were released into the soil. According to BIPCo Chief Operating Officer Cliff McGinnes Sr., the leaking transformer was a newer model that uses vegetable oil. Some of the older models use a type of oil that contains PCBs, which are toxic, he said.

The transformer had been damaged during the ice storm in February, which caused the leak. McGinnes said that leaks from transformers are rare and usually are caused by extreme heat, which boils the oil and forces it through the gaskets.

Cormorant Cove remains closed to shellfishing due to septic systems that remain under water. The town conducted water tests Wednesday and will make a decision about opening the area early next week. Call the Harbors Department, 466-3204, for more information.

http://www.blockislandtimes.com/view/full_story/7020192/article-Worst-of-the-oil-spillcontained?instance=home_news_2nd_left

USA, OH, WELEETKA

APRIL 23 2010.

CIGARETTE SPARKED FATAL WELEETKA TANK EXPLOSION, UNDERSHERIFF SAYS

Johnny Johnson

A fatal oil tank explosion last week was caused by a man opening a hatch on the tank while smoking a cigarette, an Okfuskee County undersheriff said Thursday.

Zachary Pangle, 21, of Weleetka, died in a Tulsa hospital's burn unit two days after the April 14 explosion from what the state medical examiner described as "thermal injuries."

"Mr. Pangle was smoking," Undersheriff Darrell Summers said. "There was a hatch on top of one of the tanks and he opened it. He was burned everywhere.

"There was not too much that wasn't burned."

Investigators said about a half-dozen people had gathered for a party on private property before the tank exploded.

"We talked to everyone and their stories were all the same," Summers said.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

Pangle, along with 25-year-old Jonathan Pruitt, had ventured over to the nearby tank battery, and they were climbing on a walkway that connected two tanks, Summers said.

Pruitt suffered first-, second- and third-degree burns on his arms. He was taken to a local hospital for treatment and was released six hours later.

Pangle died April 16.

None of those present owned the property, and the tank battery was marked clearly with warning signs, Summers said. The district attorney's office decided no charges would be filed against the trespassers.

The U.S. Chemical Safety Board, which is investigating the fatal explosion, has scheduled a news conference about the accident and other oil tank explosions for 8:30 a.m. today at Embassy Suites hotel in Oklahoma City.

http://www.newsok.com/cigarette-sparked-fatal-weleetka-tank-explosion-undersheriffsays/article/3456116?custom_click=pod_headline_crime#ixzz0neCpGbLY

USA, OK, WELEETKA

APRIL 22 2010.

CSB EXAMINING FATAL OIL SITE EXPLOSION IN WELEETKA, OKLAHOMA; PROBE FOLLOWS RECENT RELEASE OF SAFETY VIDEO & BOARD CALL FOR GREATER PROTECTIONS AT OIL & GAS SITES

The U.S. Chemical Safety Board (CSB) announced today it has sent investigators to a fatal explosion which occurred April 14, 2010, at an oil site in Weleetka, Oklahoma. The CSB team is headed by Investigations Supervisor Don Holmstrom who leads the CSB's regional office in Denver, Colorado.

A 21-year-old member of the public died of burns sustained in the explosion and fire. CSB Board Member William Wark said, —The CSB is very concerned about oil site explosions which continue to tragically take the lives of young people in rural areas of oil-producing states. Only last week, I met the families of two teenagers killed last October in an oil site explosion in Mississippi. In that accident and others across the country, the victims have had easy access to storage tanks, catwalks, and hatches and do not appear to have been aware of the serious explosion hazard from highly flammable vapor that is inside or near the tanks.

On April 13, 2010, the CSB released a safety video aimed at educating young people on the hazards of socializing at oil sites, a common phenomenon in rural areas, the CSB found.

Entitled —No Place to Hang Out the video tells the story of the tragic deaths of 18-year-old Wade White and 16-year-old Devon Byrd, killed October 31, 2009, when an oil tank, located in a clearing in the woods near the home of one of the boys in the rural town of Carnes, suddenly exploded.

www.csb.gov

USA, MS, HATTIESBURG

APRIL 14 2010.

CSB RELEASES VIDEO “NO PLACE TO HANG OUT” FOCUSING ON DEATHS OF TEENAGERS IN OIL SITE EXPLOSIONS; BOARD CALLS FOR SECURING THE SITES, WARNING SIGNS

The video begins with the earnest voice of a teenager, reading her own words: “My name is Shawn-Ashlee Davis. I'm a senior at Forrest County Agricultural High School in Mississippi. And on October 31, 2009, two people who were very close to me, and the ones I loved, died in an instant. Was it a car crash? No. It was an oil tank explosion.”

Told through the eyes and voices of grieving and concerned parents, friends, and local officials, the newest CSB safety video, [“No Place to Hang Out: The Danger of Oil Sites,”](#) tells the story of the tragic deaths of 18-year-old Wade White and 16-year-old Devon Byrd, killed October 31, 2009, when an oil tank, located in a clearing in the woods near the home of one of the boys in the rural town of Carnes, suddenly exploded.

The 11-minute video is available on CSB.gov and YouTube and will be released on free DVD's, which can be requested from the CSB's online Video Room.

In the video, Ms. Davis speaks for other teenagers searching for ways to prevent these recurring accidents. She asks: “Why? How? We wanted answers. We wanted the truth. And now we want to make a difference.”

Teenagers and adults who were interviewed say it is a common practice in rural areas for young people to hang out and socialize at oil production sites. “It's like our own little sanctuary where we can just be away from everybody,” said Cody Hunt, 18, one of the teens featured in the video. Mr. Hunt goes on to warn other teens, “It's not worth going out and losing your life over it.”

Teenagers and parents stated they were unaware of the danger of getting close to oil tanks, whose flammable contents can ignite causing powerful explosions. The oil site where the fatal blast occurred had no fences, barriers,

587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596

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gates, warning signs, or other security measures and was normally unattended. Although some states and localities require fencing and securing oil sites, the CSB could not identify any federal, state, or local requirement or specific industry guidance for securing the oil site in Carnes.

A CSB review of published news accounts indicates that 36 teenagers and six young adults have perished in similar explosions at oil sites resulting from the ignition of flammable vapor since 1983. Recent multiple-fatality accidents include a 2003 explosion in Long Lake, Texas, that killed four teenagers; a 2005 explosion that killed 19- and 20-year old men in Ripley, Oklahoma; a 2007 explosion in Mercedes, Texas, that killed three teenagers; and a 2007 explosion in Routt National Forest, Colorado, that killed two teenagers. Often, a modest ignition source like a match, cigarette, or lighter was all that it took to ignite a devastating tank explosion.

Speaking for the three-member Chemical Safety Board, Board Member William B. Wark said, "The Board urges oil and gas production companies, state legislatures, and regulators to ensure that oil and gas tank sites are properly secured and have appropriate warning signs to discourage entry. We also urge parents and teachers to educate teens about the potentially deadly risk from these sites."

The video was set for a community showing at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Thad Cochran Center (Grand Ballroom) at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. Following the showing, the CSB will host a panel discussion on the issues. The panel members will include students, parents of the victims, and local officials. The event is free and open to the public and community participation is encouraged.

The CSB's Vidisha Parasram, who worked with community members and educators to develop a high school lesson plan on the hazard, said, "This video was produced on location with and for the teenagers with one message in mind: 'Stay away from oil sites.' We hope that when young people see the video and review the lessons about the potentially deadly dangers of oil sites that it will prevent future tragedies like the one that took the lives of Devon Byrd and Wade White." The CSB plans to work with state and local educators to distribute the video and lesson plan throughout oil-producing regions of the country.

The CSB concurrently released a four-minute [Safety Message](#) by CSB Chairman John Bresland to alert oil and gas companies to the hazard, available on CSB.gov. Mr. Bresland said a CSB task force would continue to examine the safety issues over the next few months to see if additional, specific safety recommendations are needed.

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.

For more information, contact Director of Public Affairs Dr. Daniel Horowitz, 202-261-7613, cell 202-441-6074; Sandy Gilmour, 202-261-7614, cell 202-251-5496, or Hillary Cohen, 202-267-3601, cell 202-446-8094. www.csb.gov

USA, OK, OKLAHOMA CITY

APRIL 24 2010.

CSB INVESTIGATORS DETERMINE THAT OKLAHOMA OIL SITE WHERE AN EXPLOSION KILLED A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC WAS UNSECURED, UNFENCED, AND LIKELY LACKED EXPLOSION WARNING SIGNS

A fiery explosion that took the life of a 21-year-old member of the public in Weleetka, Oklahoma, on April 14 occurred at an unattended oil and gas production site that was unsecured and likely lacked fire or explosion warning signs, CSB investigators have determined following a four-day field assessment. Investigators arrived in Weleetka on Sunday evening and have been examining the site, conducting witness interviews, and gathering other information throughout the week.

The accident occurred at approximately 9:00 p.m., while six individuals aged 18 to 32 were socializing at the rural site, which was normally unmanned. The site, which had four petroleum storage tanks and two brine storage tanks, was operated on private land by two production firms, Three MG Family Inc. and Enterprise Energy, who leased the mineral rights. A third company, ScissorTail Energy, operated a gas metering and collection system connected to the production equipment.

The blast occurred about 10 minutes after the group arrived at the site. Witnesses stated that they were drawn to the site when they saw the open gate while driving along a public roadway. Witnesses further stated that oil sites were a common gathering place for local residents and that they were largely unfamiliar with the hazards.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

Based on witness interviews, CSB investigators determined that a lit cigarette or lighter was the likely ignition source for the explosion, which happened as the 21-year-old male who later died was peering into the hatch on top of one of the tanks. That tank contained what was later described as approximately 160 barrels of light crude oil. The resulting explosion and fire engulfed the victim and caused a second explosion in an interconnected tank. The victim suffered third-degree burns over 85% of his body. He was able to describe the accident to emergency response and ambulance personnel, but died the following morning at a Tulsa burn unit. Another individual suffered second-degree burns. A fire burned for more than three hours at the site until it could be extinguished by several responding fire departments using foam.

“The catwalk leading to the top of the tank was unsecured and readily accessible,” said CSB Investigator Vidisha Parasram. “The tank hatches had no mechanism which would permit them to be secured or locked. No fire or explosion warning signs or other warning signage was visible anywhere on the site following the accident.” Ms. Parasram said the CSB would continue to study whether any signage could have been destroyed in the fire, but that even the undamaged portions of the facility and the entrance gates had no posted warnings. Eyewitnesses said they saw no signs on the night of the accident or during previous visits to the site.

The site entrance was protected only by an unmarked gate which multiple witnesses described as being wide open on the night of April 14, and generally open and unlocked at other times. Apart from the gate the site had no fencing or other protective measures that would keep members of the public safe from hazards on the site.

“Following this accident, our investigative team was able to observe a number of other oil and gas production sites in the area. The vast majority were unsecured and had no warning signs,” said CSB Investigations Supervisor Don Holmstrom, who leads the CSB regional office in Denver. “Oil and gas sites that lack security measures and warning signs are an accident waiting to happen.” State officials told the CSB that Oklahoma has approximately 257,000 active and unplugged oil and gas production sites; Oklahoma requires fencing and warning signs only at sites that have toxic hydrogen sulfide gas hazards, according to state officials.

The deadly blast occurred one day after the release of a new CSB safety video at a public meeting in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. The safety video, [“No Place to Hang Out.”](#) is aimed at educating young people on the hazards of socializing at oil sites, a common practice in rural areas, the CSB found. The video tells the story of the tragic deaths of 18-year-old Wade White and 16-year-old Devon Byrd, killed October 31, 2009, when an oil tank, located in a clearing in the woods near the home of one of the boys in the rural town of Carnes, suddenly exploded while the two were hanging out at the site.

A CSB preliminary analysis released on April 13 showed that 24 similar explosions and fires occurred at oil and gas production sites between 1983 and 2009. Those accidents resulted in 42 fatalities and a number of injuries; all the fatalities occurred among teenagers and young adults under the age of 25. In most cases, the explosions were ignited by a cigarette, match, or lighter. The CSB found no specific federal standards or industry guidance for security or public protection measures at oil and gas production sites. Certain states including Ohio and Colorado require fencing and other public safety measures at sites in urban areas. Ohio requires tank hatches to be sealed and locked at unattended oil sites.

Counting the accident on April 14, the CSB has thus far identified a total of seven oil site explosions and fires in Oklahoma since 1990 that killed or injured members of the public, the highest total for any state. Four of these accidents caused multiple fatalities.

CSB Board Member William Wark said, “The CSB is concerned about these ongoing accidents across the country that are needlessly taking the lives of young people. To me, it is self-evident that hazardous oil and gas sites should be secured against unauthorized entry and posted with extensive and specific warning signs. And we need to educate teenagers and young adults to stay away from these sites – they are dangerous.” Mr. Wark said the CSB team received outstanding cooperation from local law enforcement and fire officials during the investigation.

The day prior to the explosion in Weleetka, the CSB Board issued a statement “urging oil and gas production companies to ensure that they provide adequate security and warning signage around sites that have tank fire or explosion hazards; and further urging state legislatures, local governments, and regulators to review rules governing oil and gas tank sites to ensure they require adequate barriers, security measures, and warning signs.” Mr. Wark said a CSB task group will be working over the next several months to develop additional specific safety recommendations, incorporating the findings from the recent accidents in Mississippi and Oklahoma.

The CSB is an independent federal agency charged with investigating serious 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.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

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.

www.csb.gov

CANADA, ONT, SHAKESPEARE

APRIL 21 2010.

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?

MAN INJURED AFTER USING PROPANE TANK FOR TARGET PRACTICE

Police say a southwestern Ontario man was injured by shrapnel after the propane tank he was using for rifle target practice exploded. The man from Shakespeare, Ont., east of Stratford, was injured Monday night. Police say two young men were shooting at the tank when a rifle shot found its mark and caused an explosion. Pieces of the cylinder flew back at the men, injuring one of them. He was taken to Stratford General Hospital and has since been treated for his injuries and released. No word yet if any charges will be laid.

<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/canada/breakingnews/what-were-you-thinking-man-injured-after-using-propane-tank-for-target-practice-91600694.html>

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

USA, LA, NEW ORLEANS

APRIL 22 2010.

A LOOK AT DEADLY OIL INDUSTRY ACCIDENTS

Jennifer Farrar and Julie Reed

Eleven workers were missing after an oil rig explosion off the Louisiana coast. Here's a look at some of the deadliest oil industry accidents in the United States:

- July 29, 1956: Nineteen men were burned to death and 32 others seriously injured in a petroleum tank explosion at a Shamrock Oil and Gas Corp. tank farm near Dumas, Texas.
- June 30, 1964: Twenty-two people died when the C.P. Baker, a catamaran-type drilling barge operated by Pan American Petroleum Corp., suffered a blowout and explosion while drilling a new well in the Gulf of Mexico near Eugene Island, 80 miles off the Louisiana coast. Twenty-one crew members died and 22 were injured. One crew member on a rescue ship also was killed and another injured.
- April 23, 1976: All 12 men aboard were killed when a helicopter crashed into the Gulf of Mexico en route to a Gulf Oil Co. drilling platform. The craft went down 60 miles south of Cameron, La., near the Texas border.
- Dec. 8, 1977: A helicopter carrying Pennzoil Producing Co. employees to an offshore drilling rig 90 miles south of Morgan City, La., in the Gulf of Mexico, crashed while attempting to land and plunged 130 feet into the ocean. Seventeen of the 19 men aboard were killed.
- July 23, 1984: In the suburb of Romeoville, Ill., two huge explosions and a fire at a Union Oil refinery killed 19 people and injured at least 22 others.
- May 5, 1988: In Norco, La., a Shell Oil refinery explosion killed seven workers and injured 42.
- Feb. 23, 1999: A fire at Tosco Corporation's Avon oil refinery in Martinez, Calif., killed four men and seriously injured one.
- March 2004: Ten people died when a helicopter chartered by Unocal crashed about 90 miles off the coast of Galveston, Texas, while heading to a drill ship near South Padre Island.
- March 23, 2005: An explosion at a BP American refinery in Texas City, Texas, killed 15 people and injured another 170.
- Jan. 4, 2009: Eight people died when a Sikorsky helicopter carrying two pilots and seven oil-rig workers employed by Shell Oil Co. contractors went down in a rural Louisiana marsh in Terrebonne Parish, 100 miles Southwest of New Orleans, while en route to a Gulf of Mexico platform. The sole survivor was critically injured.
- April 2, 2010: An explosion and fire at a Tesoro Corp. refinery in Anacortes, Wash., killed six people. One survivor was critically injured.

Sources: U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB); Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA); AP reporting

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5iaO3E9Q3Yd3POnOaVZCSWUL6c2iQD9F7NLA00>

SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH

APRIL 22 2010.

DIESEL TANK BLAMED FOR RIVER OIL SPILL

The source of an oil slick that polluted a section of the Water of Leith has been traced to a diesel storage tank leaking into a man-made tributary.

The Water of Leith Conservation Trust and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (Sepa) received dozens of calls about an industrial-smelling pollutant under the Murrayfield footbridge.

The pollution was traced to the outlet of a covered culvert which carries floodwater into the waterway from as far afield as Craiglockhart.

Graeme Brown of Sepa said: "Booms have been put in place at the site of the culvert discharge to the Water of Leith to stop any residual oil getting into the watercourse."

Sepa officers attending the site have not seen any evidence of harm to wildlife, including fish and birds. Further monitoring will be carried out to establish whether there has been an impact on the water quality as a result of this spill.

A Sepa spokeswoman added: "The leak from the diesel storage tank does not appear to have been a deliberate act, but investigations into the circumstances are ongoing."

<http://news.scotsman.com/scotland/Diesel-tank-blamed-for-river.6245525.jp>

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps