

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, OH, COSHOCTON

JULY 16 2012.

COSHOCTON MAN BURNED WHEN WORKING WITH GASOLINE

Kathie Dickerson

Although life returned to normal for most Coshocton County residents after electric was restored to all customers this past week, it will take several weeks for things to get back to normal for the Laugesens, of Warsaw -- if they ever do.

Kristopher Laugesen, 56, suffered second- and third-degree burns on his legs July 1 after a gas can blew up in his hands. He was trying to fuel a generator and because it was a metal gas can, he thinks somehow a spark was generated when it hit against something. The can exploded and sprayed gasoline onto his legs, which caught fire. He's spent the past two weeks at Akron Children's Hospital Burn Institute. Doctors performed eight skin grafts using tissue from his upper thigh area.

His wife, Mary, said the morning of the incident he dropped and rolled, but it didn't help. He then dove into a hot tub they'd just filled, and as a result skinned up his head. But his other injuries were far more serious.

"His legs were horrendous," she said.

She drove him to Coshocton Hospital herself, not wanting to wait for the ambulance to get there.

"I used to be an EMT," she said. "I knew we had to hurry, and I think we made it there in 12 minutes."

Kris, who's been too ill to speak this week, told Mary he's embarrassed by the incident, that he should have known better.

"I tell him, accidents happen," she said.

She said it will be a while before he can get back to his carpentry trade.

"I don't know why something like this had to happen to us," she said. "We just paid off our property, have struggled and not taken vacations."

Her concern about their future has led to the decision that she might take up a crusade after Kris recovers.

"If you don't have children and you aren't indigent, there's no help out there," she said.

Although Kris has medical insurance, there still is the expense of making the 2.5-hour drive to Akron. Mary took some time off work to be with him. They'll need to continue to make trips to Akron for checkups and rehabilitation.

"I think I want to become a lobbyist to see if there can't be something to benefit the thousands of others out there like us," she said.

She's contacted her state and federal legislators, and while everyone has been really nice, they've not found any assistance for the Laugesens.

Mary did get one wish, however. Kris was dismissed from the hospital this week and the couple celebrated their 28th wedding anniversary Friday.

"We've never spent one anniversary apart," she said. "This has been an eye opener as to how quickly things can change."

Luckily the couple has some backup as far as taking care of their 40-acre farm near Warsaw. Their son, Brandon, and his wife, Jennifer Laugesen, are home from an overseas tour in the military, and son Blake Laugesen is also a big help, Mary said.

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"And we've received lots of prayers on Facebook," she said. "Continue to put us in your prayers until Kris recovers."

<http://www.coshocotribune.com/article/20120715/NEWS01/207150302/Coshocot-man-burned-when-working-gasoline?odyssey=mod%7Cnewswell%7Ctext%7C%7Cs>

USA, N.D, WILLISTON

JULY 16 2012.

LIGHTNING STRIKE IGNITES TANK IN OIL PATCH

Officials say lightning struck a saltwater tank near Williston causing the contents and the tank to burn. The Williston Rural Fire Department responded to the blaze last week. Fire Chief Dave Benth tells the Dickinson Press that the fiberglass tank held a mixture of gas and saltwater. When the lightning struck the tank, the gas caught on fire, causing the tank to burn. Saltwater is a byproduct of oil production.

<http://www.inforum.com/event/article/id/367445/group/homepage/>

USA, OH, TUSCARAWAS CO, BOLIVAR

JULY 17 2012.

1 DEAD IN BOLIVAR WELL EXPLOSION

One person was confirmed dead from an oil- and natural gas-well explosion Monday morning, but authorities will need additional time to provide positive identification of the victim and an exact cause of the explosion that sent flames and an oil holding tank high into the sky and created a blanket of intense heat that could be felt across the street.

The explosion, believed to have occurred about 9:30 a.m., was in Lawrence Township at a site about two miles south of Bolivar in the vicinity of Bolivar Group Home at 10071 State Route 212, near the Wilkshire Hills subdivision.

Dr. James Hubert, Tuscarawas County coroner, said late Monday that the victim's name won't be released until identity is confirmed through the use of dental records. Hubert said once the victim's dental records are acquired and examined by a specialist, he should be able to confirm the victim's identity by the end of the week.

The victim, believed to be a 19-year-old male, was painting at the well site, according to Bolivar Fire Capt. Marty Huth, who served as incident commander at the scene Monday.

The actions of that individual, who is believed to have been employed by the owner of the well, are being considered as a possible cause of the explosion, according to a statement Monday night from the Tuscarawas County Sheriff's Office.

Witnesses had initially reported seeing two workers at the well site, leading to speculation that the blast may have claimed a second victim.

"However, one was later located and confirmed to have left that well site prior to the explosion to check on other wells," said Sheriff's Detective Capt. Orvis Campbell.

The explosion, which blew the oil holding tank high into the air and ignited grass and trees for about 100 yards in all directions, was reported to the county's emergency dispatch center at 9:50 a.m., according to 911 records.

Witnesses, however, said the blast occurred between 9:30 and 9:34 a.m.

The county's 911 Center received so many calls that it could not answer them all.

Huth said his department initially was called out to investigate a natural gas odor, but in less than three minutes the call was changed to "heavy smoke and flames."

He said several fires were burning when his department arrived at the scene. Huth said firefighters had most of the tree and grass fires under control about 18 minutes after being dispatched.

Huth said firefighters allowed the gas well itself to continue burning to prevent another explosion until additional help from other area fire departments could arrive.

Nathan Mutschelknaus of Dover, an employee of the group home owned and operated by Horizons, was an eye-witness to the explosion.

"I was out back, pressure-washing the porch and moving some of the furniture when the ground started to shake. I was looking over at the oil well, wondering what was shaking. Next thing I know, I heard the loud explosion and felt the shockwave," Mutschelknaus told The Times-Reporter.

Mutschelknaus said he then saw the holding tank shoot up high into the air, and as it flew, oil leaked out onto the ground below and was running down the driveway near the group home.

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"Then I heard the tank land over there," Mutschelknaus said, gesturing toward the tank's landing site in a field on the opposite side of the driveway. "I got a little scared, because I didn't realize at that point that stuff was flying out of there," he added, referring to the well site.

Mutschelknaus and two other group-home employees, Leslie Roney and Melody Alexander, estimated the well flames were rising about 100 feet into the air at that time. He said the driveway and surrounding grass areas all were ablaze.

"(It was) like a rocket," said Roney, as she recalled seeing the holding tank fly.

The Sheriff's Office statement said the tank was propelled an estimated 300 feet into the sky.

"The explosion shook the whole house," said Alexander. "I looked out the window and I was like ... there's a fire in the back yard, and we went running."

All three agreed that "some awesome citizens" stopped to assist them as fire enveloped the area and threatened the group home.

Among them was Russ Sands of Zoarville, who was driving by on Route 212 with his 10-year-old granddaughter, Felicity, when he saw the holding tank "go up in the air. It was pretty high."

Then Sands saw a huge cloud of black smoke, and he stopped to assist with watering down the group home and its surrounding area with a garden hose.

Brandie Hanley, who resides on Hess Mill Road NE, on the opposite side of Route 212, said the explosion shook her whole apartment, causing the rear and basement doors to pop open.

"I came outside because I thought someone had wrecked into the house," she said. That's when she saw the holding tank in the air and felt the ground shake as it landed, creating "instant black smoke and flames."

Hanley said the time was "right around 9:30 a.m." She attempted to call 911, but could not get through.

An amateur photographer, Hanley got her camera to begin taking photographs, but discovered the battery was dead. She replaced the battery and in a few minutes was taking some of the earliest photos of the disaster area.

Hanley said she first thought an airplane had crashed. But as soon as she could see through the thick smoke, Hanley realized it was something else.

Hanley used a telephoto lens and stayed away from the scene. "The heat from the fire was so hot I could feel it across the street," she said.

Huth said the investigation is being handled by the state Fire Marshal's Office, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Oil and Gas Division, as well as the Tuscarawas County Sheriff's Department.

Published reports indicate the well is owned by MKE Producing, a private investment group.

<http://www.cantonrep.com/newsnow/x1062475088/1-dead-in-Bolivar-well-explosion>

AUSTRALIA, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

JULY 18 2012.

MAN KILLED IN WORK EXPLOSION

A man has been killed in an explosion at a Welshpool business. Arson squad investigators and firefighters were called to the Welshpool Road business just before 2pm. Welshpool station officer Graeme Green said initial reports were that there was smoke coming from the building. When firefighters arrived they found smoke coming from the side of the property. "We attended and put out the smoke and at the same time found a person had been injured by an explosion," Mr Green said. "At the moment it is subject to an investigation, but it looks like a vaporisation has caused the tank to explode." Mr Green said investigators would examine whether the worker was using an angle grinder on a large fuel tank moments before it exploded. "The blast was quite extensive, it has blown the ends of the tank out and damaged the buildings on both sides," he said. They have not released any details about the man's age. WorkSafe inspectors are investigating the death of a man.

<http://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/a/-/wa/14245926/man-reportedly-killed-in-work-explosion/>

USA, TX, ROCKPORT

JULY 19 2012.

LIGHTNING STRIKE CAUSES OIL TANKER FIRE IN ROCKPORT

An oil-tank battery fire sent flames and smoke up into the air just north of Fulton for more than an hour Wednesday. A passerby said it was started by a lightning strike.

It happened along FM 1781, near the Aransas County Airport, and by around noon on Wednesday, the fire was out.

Two firefighters had to be treated for heat exhaustion, but are okay. As the fire raged on, firefighters with half a dozen agencies battled the flames.

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When the fire began, emergency crews raced to the scene. In all, two tank batteries were destroyed, but quick action from firefighters kept the blaze from spreading. It put up lots of smoke, which could be seen from several miles away.

The lightning strike hit the tank on property belonging to Derrick Construction, according to officials on the scene. Luckily, no one was seriously hurt, and no one had to be evacuated.

However, police did shut down FM 1781 as a precaution.

Firefighters' first priority was to find out what was burning inside those tanks. According to Fulton Fire Chief Rickey McLester, the tank that was struck was mostly salt water, but contained some crude oil. The lightning strike caused the tank to burst, which then caused the fire to spread around the property.

Throughout the battle, firefighters also had to deal with the extreme heat. Luckily, the fire corps provided them with plenty of water and shade.

Emergency management stepped in as well, such as the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

Fire officials said it could have been a lot worse.

<http://www.kiiitv.com/story/19059191/lightning-strike-causes-oil-tanker-fire-in-rockport>

USA, WI, GREEN BAY

JULY 20 2012.

SECTION OF MAJOR FUEL PIPELINE FROM CHICAGO TO GREEN BAY SHUTDOWN AFTER LEAK

A section of a major fuel pipeline between Chicago and Green Bay has been shut down after a significant gasoline leak.

Buckeye Partners says it closed a 10-mile section of the West Shore pipeline when its equipment indicated a change in pressure about 10 miles northwest of Milwaukee, WBAY-TV reported. The leak was reportedly detected just before noon on Tuesday.

A significant leak of gasoline was then discovered near Elkhart Lake, Wisc., where 1,000 barrels of unleaded automotive gasoline spilled from a break in the pipeline, according to a filing with the National Response Center.

The 650-mile long, 10-inch diameter pipeline transports gasoline, diesel and jet fuel to Green Bay from Chicago at a capacity of 70,000 barrels a day.

Crews were on the scene, repairing the pipeline and assessing any environmental damage that likely occurred.

Some residents in the area were evacuated after complaints of headaches, upset stomachs and nausea, FOX 6-TV reported. But the company says the impact appears to be very limited.

"We have fixed monitors in the area as well as handheld monitors, and we haven't registered any concerns to the risk of the residents at this time," Patrick Hodgins, Director of West Shore Pipeline said.

The company is investigating what caused the change in pressure that led to the leak.

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration says they have an inspector at the scene and will investigate whether the operator is in compliance with federal safety regulations.

In a released statement, the company said that the pipeline system will remain closed until it is deemed safe by company officials and regulatory authorities.

<http://www.examiner.com/article/section-of-major-fuel-pipeline-from-chicago-to-green-bay-shutdown-after-leak>

USA, PA, PITTSBURGH, DERRY TWP

JULY 22 2012.

LIGHTNING STRIKES A GAS WELL TANK IN WESTMORELAND CO.

"In Derry Township, a lightning strike sparked a fire in a condensate tank at a non-Marcellus Shale CNX gas well near the intersection of state Route 982 and Laughlin Farm Road. "The 500-gallon fiberglass tank was struck about 3:30 p.m., according to the state Department of Environmental Protection, causing a fire that burned for an hour, melting the tank and causing a spill of about 440 gallons of oily "wet gases." "The Westmoreland County hazardous materials team used foam designed for gas fires to quell the 10-foot flames. Crews then let the fire burn itself out. Nearby residents were not affected by the fire, Westmoreland County emergency management spokesman Dan Stevens said. "The spilled gas was contained by a dike around the tank. DEP inspectors plan to visit the site this morning."

<http://www.democraticunderground.com/10741978>

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USA, TX, ROCKPORT

JULY 19 2012.

LIGHTNING STRIKE CAUSES OIL TANKER FIRE IN ROCKPORT

A lightning strike is believed to be what caused a tank fire on FM 1781 about a mile and a half north of Rockport near the Aransas County Airport.

It happened around 11:20 this morning on property owned by Derrick Construction.

We're told lightning struck one tank containing a minimal amount of petroleum, and that explosion set fire to 2 other fiberglass tanks containing salt water.

Fulton Volunteer Fire Chief Rickey Mc Lester also told us none of the oil leaked into nearby Copano Bay.

Fire crews from Rockport, Fulton, Ingleside, Aransas Pass, and Lamar used flame-retardant foam to put out the fire in an hour and a half.

Tammie Shelton was working at nearby Camp Aranzazu when it happened. "I saw the lightning. I heard the kaboom! I saw the flames come up instantly right at the same time," she said.

No one was on the property at the time and no one was injured. A nearby house was not damaged either.

<http://www.kristv.com/news/rockport-tank-fire-sparked-by-lightning/>

UK, JERSEY

JULY 4 2012.

JERSEY GAS FACILITY FIRE LEAVES HUNDREDS STRANDED OVERNIGHT

Jersey Gas said the holder would be out of service by the end of Wednesday with no gas then stored in central St Helier.

Thousands of people had to leave their homes, businesses and schools for up to 24 hours during the fire in Gas Place.

Workers were doing maintenance on the cylinder when it caught fire at the beginning of the month.

The firm has worked with health and safety experts and the fire service to decide the safest way of taking it out of action.

The remaining gas will be removed on Wednesday by what is called a controlled flaring operation.

The gas company says it is a safe process but could be noisy and create a heat haze.

Homes, schools and businesses were evacuated and roads sealed off after a back-up gas holder caught fire.

Firefighters are tackling the blaze at Gas Place and Jersey Fire Service has urged people to stay out of the area.

A Jersey Police spokeswoman said they were dealing with a fire and a gas leak and there was a risk of explosion.

Flames and smoke could be seen from across the town.

Jersey Fire service said people living within the roads immediately surrounding the fire had been evacuated and would not be able to return on Wednesday night.

The only houses that need to be evacuated are Tunnel Street (immediately adjacent to the site) St Saviour's Road from Tunnel Street to Simon Place and Simon Place to Ann Street (bar the last few houses).

People living within the wider 400m exclusion zone have been told to remain in their homes with windows and doors closed.

'Very traumatic'

Chief of Police Mike Bowron said it would be "grossly inconvenient night for many people".

People displaced are being told to visit the Town Hall in St Helier or call the support line on 01534 612000.

Some people are being put up at Fort Regent and others in churches but police are urging people to try to stay with family or friends.

He said: "Subject to technical advice and fire advice, our best guess is to get people back by rush hour tomorrow.

"We are relying on assistance from friends, relatives, who can take the pressure of States services tonight."

A Beaulieu school student said: "We have come from Beaulieu and were dismissed early today.

"Lots of the students were crying and it was a very traumatic experience."

A spokesman for Jersey Gas said one employee, a plant fitter, had minor burns to the face and another was treated for shock.

Three options

He said the gas holder provided back-up gas and there was currently no risk of islanders' supplies being affected.

The top of the tank has buckled. The spokesman said this did not increase the risk of the incident escalating.

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Jersey Fire Service said there were three options they were considering.

A spokesman said: "Option A is to allow it to continue to burn and control that burn down until there is none left.

We are asking people to avoid the area and if they are residents who have not been evacuated to stay indoors with their windows closed"

"Option B is to try and extinguish the flame, which is a much smaller flame now, and then try and contain the vapour release.

"Option C is to pump gas back into the gas holder, that sounds like an odd thing to do, but it maintains the strength and structure of the holder.

"With the burn-down strategy the potential is the structure could collapse and exacerbate the problems."

Steve Coleman from the Jersey animal shelter said the 265 animals in their care would not be moved this evening, despite the shelter being within the exclusion zone.

He said he had spoken to the police and the animals had been bedded down because there was nowhere for them to go.

Mr Coleman said he would check on the animals this evening and staff hoped to return to the shelter at 08:00 BST.

Code red status

The police spokeswoman said the fire had been declared a major incident.

"We are asking people to avoid the area and if they are residents who have not been evacuated to stay indoors with their windows closed," she said.

The code red status of the blaze has meant all off-duty fire crews have been called into work.

Parents were asked to pick up their children from the seven schools that were evacuated.

Seven schools have been closed due to a possible change in wind direction.

They are Springfield, Beaulieu, De La Salle, Victoria College, Victoria College Prep, JCG and JCG Prep.

As well as the schools La Petite Ecole, St Mark's Road, Charlie Farleys Too, Leeward and Little Oaks are also closed.

Customers and staff at the Co-op Grand Marche were told to leave the store and staff from the Royal Bank of Scotland in Bath Street were sent home.

Connex said some bus services had been cancelled.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-jersey-18709055>

UK, JERSEY

JULY 10 2012.

JERSEY GAS HOLDER FIRE STARTED WHILE WORKERS FIXED A LEAK

Jersey's Fire and Rescue Service has been investigating the cause of the fire which caused thousands of people to be evacuated from homes, schools and businesses last week.

A Jersey Gas worker suffered facial burns and one other employee was treated for shock.

Investigators have examined the scene, CCTV evidence and interviewed Jersey Gas employees.

A Fire Service spokesman said the fire developed quickly and attacked the joints in the tank.

He said: "This caused the joints to leak substantial amounts of gas to create a wall of fire."

The type of equipment used by the workers has not been revealed as it form part of the investigation.

Neil Shaw, chairman of Jersey Gas, said: "We acknowledge the findings of the Fire and Rescue Service investigation and can confirm that we will continue to co-operate fully with the ongoing Health and Safety Inspectorate investigation.

"We would like to take this opportunity to once again thank the Fire and Rescue Service and all of the emergency services and community groups who played a key role in bringing the incident to a safe conclusion."

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-jersey-18780453>

UK, JERSEY

JULY 28 2012.

JERSEY GAS TANK TO BE DE-COMMISSIONED AFTER FIRE

Jersey Gas said the holder would be out of service by the end of Wednesday with no gas then stored in central St Helier.

Thousands of people had to leave their homes, businesses and schools for up to 24 hours during the fire in Gas Place.

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Workers were doing maintenance on the cylinder when it caught fire at the beginning of the month.

The firm has worked with health and safety experts and the fire service to decide the safest way of taking it out of action.

The remaining gas will be removed on Wednesday by what is called a controlled flaring operation.

The gas company says it is a safe process but could be noisy and create a heat haze.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-jersey-19006052>

USA, WA, CLE ELUM

JULY 28 2012.

CREWS WORK TO CLEAN UP CLE ELUM GAS SPILL

A fuel truck driver overtopped an above-ground fuel storage tank at the 76 gas station in Cle Elum early Monday morning, spilling about 550 gallons of gasoline.

The state Department of Ecology is overseeing the cleanup operation at the gas station at 1001 E. First St., in Cle Elum. DOE spokeswoman Joye Redfield-Wilder said it wasn't the gas station operators who caused the spill, but a truck driver for R.E. Powell Distributing Co. of Grandview.

"It overtopped, meaning it was left unattended and spilled over the top," Redfield-Wilder said. "They're estimating 550 gallons spilled to the ground."

The base beneath the 9,500-gallon above-ground tank is gravel and the gasoline seeped into the ground and has reached the groundwater, she said. A cleanup crew is working to capture as much gasoline as it can.

R.E. Powell is charged with cleaning up the spill, Redfield-Wilder said. A message left for the company by the Daily Record was not immediately returned.

The spill happened between 1 and 2 a.m. Monday morning.

"It wasn't reported to us until much later," Redfield-Wilder said.

A cleanup firm was contacted Monday. DOE was notified of the spill on Tuesday. Some type of enforcement action could be considered, Redfield-Wilder said.

The first stage is determining how much fuel spilled and how far it went into the ground, she said. It could be localized to the immediate area, but groundwater moves.

Until DOE knows the extent of the problem, officials won't know how long cleanup will take. In the meantime, the gas station and convenience store remain open.

Everyone near the spill is on city water so there isn't a concern of fuel getting into people's water, Redfield-Wilder said.

http://www.dailyrecordnews.com/top_story/crews-work-to-clean-up-cle-elum-gas-spill/article_954f091c-d812-11e1-8b0c-001a4bcf887a.html

USA, FLA, MELBOURNE

JULY 28 2012.

EPA LAUNCHES CHEMICAL CLEANUP IN WEST MELBOURNE

SCORES OF CONTAINERS SAT UNSECURED IN TRAILERS, TRUCKS IN WEST MELBOURNE

Jim Waymer

The soles of his shoes melted when a general contractor happened upon thousands of chemical containers stashed inside trailers off Dike Road in 2010.

There were so many, state investigators had planned to bring in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to help.

But before EPA could take action, the trailers mysteriously disappeared.

Now, state investigators say some of the same chemical-filled trailers have become part of an estimated \$110,000 federal cleanup this month just down the road, at 1080 S. John Rodes Blvd. in West Melbourne.

U.S. Department of Defense officials are investigating whether some of the chemicals came from Navy or other military facilities and are trying to figure out who should be responsible for the cleanup.

Some 3,500 containers of hazardous substances sat unsecured in the seven trailers and two box trucks on the north side of the John Rodes property for an unknown period of time.

Flammable liquids, strong acids and bases seeped underneath the trailers, near a drainage canal and within 100 yards of residential areas Sheridan Lakes to the south and Greenwood Village to the east. Interstate 95 runs about 500 yards to the west.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency officials secured the site earlier this month. The agency is in talks with the military to determine when the chemicals can be hauled to a hazardous waste landfill out of state. It's uncertain

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whether any chemicals seeped into the groundwater.

"If we'd had a fire out there, our concern was 'nobody knew the stuff was there,' " said Janine Kraemer, an environmental manager for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in Orlando, who's inspected the site. "We do believe some has leaked onto the ground but we don't have any evidence that it's leaked into the canal."

Graffiti on some of the trailers left traces that trespassers had come close to the chemicals, some of which oozed from drum lids and leaked from pin-sized holes in the containers.

"It's all secured at this point," Kraemer added. "The leaks that we've seen have been contained to right under the trailers."

But DEP inspectors found so many chemical containers and drums at the site they decided to call in EPA's National Response Center Emergency Response and Removal Branch in Tallahassee to help.

On July 13, EPA responders put a chain-link and barbed-wire fence around the trailers and "no trespassing" signs at the property's gate.

Labels on some of the chemicals traced them back to the Navy, according to DEP documents, and some of the substances may be more than 20 years old.

Wayne Dickinson, a Brevard County resident, would buy chemicals from the U.S. Defense Logistics Agency, according to Thomas Lubozynski, DEP's waste program administrator. "DLA, using its Defense Reutilization and Marketing Offices, would sell chemicals that the Department of Defense or other government agencies, such as NASA, could no longer use," Lubozynski said by email.

"Oftentimes the chemicals were still useful, but had passed their stated expiration date," Lubozynski said. "Dickinson could sell the chemicals to others who were willing to use them. The discovered chemicals were ones that he had not been able to sell, even though he had owned them for many years."

None have been documented as from the space program.

"We didn't see any labels that said NASA on them," Kraemer said.

No landfill in Florida can accept such hazardous material, Kraemer said, so they must be shipped out of state to a hazardous waste landfill.

Among the waste was 20 drums of exo-tetrahydrocyclopentadiene — a chemical used as high-power fuel, as well as in pesticides, medicines, photosensitive and IT materials.

One of the main chemicals found was potassium hydroxide, also called potash lye. The Navy uses it in submarines to clean the resins in treatment systems that distill seawater through reverse osmosis, among other uses.

"We're premature in figuring if it's in the groundwater or not," Chris Russell, of EPA's emergency response and removal branch, said of the chemicals. "There really wasn't that many that were leaking," he said of the containers. "Our concern was some kids could get in there and start playing around."

DEP officials say the situation dates back to 2010, when the agency received a complaint of improper storage of tires and abandoned hazardous waste.

According to a complaint filed with DEP in July 2010 by a relative of the property owner, Dickinson had been leasing property at 293 Dike Road. The owners were worried cars, tires and other items at the site were not permitted by the lease agreement and were code violations. The owner ultimately initiated eviction proceedings, the complaint said, and hired a general contractor to remove the waste tires and scrap metal. The contractor found unlabeled drums, and the soles of his shoes melted when he entered one of the trailers.

During that investigation, the chemicals disappeared. DEP officials said they asked Dickinson what happened with the chemicals, and to provide documentation that they were disposed of property. He never did, DEP's Kraemer said.

Dickinson hired an attorney and refused to answer any questions in 2010, but admitted during the July 11, 2012 site inspection to moving them to the John Rodes site, Kraemer said.

Calls from FLORIDA TODAY to Dickinson and the Melbourne attorney who has represented him were not returned.

Owners of the John Rodes property, Michael C. Smith and Mireille Smith, also could not be reached for comment Friday.

On Feb. 17 of this year, an owner of another nearby property on Dike Road discovered two people on his property dumping containers of potassium hydroxide. West Melbourne police arrested the men thought responsible but prosecutors dropped the case because of lack of evidence, according to DEP documents.

The military cleaned up that site after the owners traced the chemicals back to the Navy.

Officials are in the process of determining where all the chemicals originated and who should be responsible for paying for the cleanup.

Dickinson, according to DEP, said he could not afford the removal cost of the chemicals.

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The materials had been advertised on the craigslist website earlier this month, including an offer of free 55-gallon drums of epoxy paints and glues, listing a phone number and saying call "Wayne" for information.

DEP has an open case pending against Dickinson, for potential hazardous waste violations.

"He did not get a permit" to store the waste, Kraemer said.

What they found

Here are some of the chemicals found at 1080 John Rodes Blvd., West Melbourne:

- 90 quart containers of Flexform coating compound (epoxy)
- 270 two-gallon containers of potassium hydroxide
- 15 one-quart containers of polyamide (used in automotives, textiles and carpet)
- 154 one-pint containers of lube oil
- 100 one-pint containers of resin
- 414 lube oil containers contained in 23 boxes (18 containers per box)
- 64 drums of two-part epoxy adhesive and 20 drums of exo-tetrahydrocyclopentadiene.
- 150 aerosol cans of corrosion prevention cleaner
- 1,200 one-gallon containers of epoxy adhesive

http://www.floridatoday.com/article/20120728/NEWS01/307280017/EPA-launches-chemical-cleanup-West-Melbourne?nclick_check=1

USA, W.VA, NEW MARTINSVILLE

AUGUST 2 2012

GASOLINE LEAKS FROM VERTICAL TANK

Approximately 6,000 gallons of gasoline is believed to have leaked from a vertical storage tank at Tri-State Petroleum at 98 Main Street, New Martinsville, Tuesday.

New Martinsville Fire Chief Larry Couch said the 16,000-gallon tank contained 87 octane unleaded gasoline. While they don't know how much gasoline the tank contained at the time of the incident, they do know it contained 11,000 gallons at the start of the business day.

The staging area for fuel loading is not typically manned. "One of the trucks apparently accidentally caught part of the plumbing as it was leaving the scene," said Couch. "It tore the housing for the valves away from the bottom of the tank." He said apparently the driver didn't realize he vehicle had caused damage to the three-inch valve.

The NMFVD received the call of a fuel leak at 12:12 p.m. He does not know how long the tank leaked before the call came in.

As required by law, the area does have a dike to prevent spills outside of the area. Couch believes 1-2,000 gallons may have leaked into the ground. But the good news is they do not believe any fuel made its way to the adjacent waterways.

"To this point we haven't seen any sheen come up in Fishing Creek or the Ohio River."

The emergency responders set up a temporary chute to run the leaking fuel from the compromised tank into a portable water tank. The fuel was then off-loaded into fuel trucks. "We were able to recover over 4,000 gallons of gasoline," stated Couch.

The incident caused the evacuation of several buildings in the immediate vicinity, but caused no fire, explosion, or other known hazards. The New Martinsville Police Department evacuated, on order of Couch, five houses and several businesses including West Virginia Northern Community College.

New Martinsville Electric Department workers shut off electricity to the area and the New Martinsville Street Department closed streets in the vicinity.

The NMFVD was also assisted by the Clarington, Sardis, and Paden City fire departments. "All of the help from the neighboring communities was a true asset today," noted Couch. The entire incident lasted five hours.

The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection and United States Environmental Protection Agency came to the scene to assure compliance and assure proper clean up. Tri-State Petroleum has contracted with Weavertown Environmental to remediate the site, which will begin this morning.

"I will be back there tomorrow conferring with WVDEP and USEPA to follow up and make sure everything is going well," said Couch Tuesday evening.

<http://www.wetzelchronicle.com/page/content.detail/id/511431/Gasoline-Leaks-Gasoline-Leaks-From-Vertical-Tank-Vertical-Tank.html?nav=5001>

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

USA, OK, ELK CITY

AUGUST 13, 2012.

HYDRAULIC FRACTURING MATERIALS INVOLVED IN OKLA. BLAST

Juliana Keeping

An explosion at a trucking company involved materials used in hydraulic fracturing, a fire official in Elk City said Sunday.

About 100 people were evacuated from their homes Saturday after the explosion that injured two people and sent flames and a plume of black smoke into the air about 9 a.m. at Hodges Trucking, 2491 S Merritt. Firefighters remained on the scene until 7 p.m., about the same time those evacuated were allowed to return home, Elk City Fire Department Capt. Jackie Addington said.

Addington said the explosion was in the business's yard and described the material inside a "frac tank" apparently involved in the incident as "highly explosive."

According to its website, Hodges Trucking is an oil-field and heavy haul transportation company and an affiliate of Chesapeake Energy Corporation. Elk City is about 100 miles west of Oklahoma City.

One injured person was taken by air to Oklahoma City for treatment, Addington said. Another victim was taken to Great Plains Medical Center in Elk City.

A man was treated and released at the medical center, said Monte Deramus, a Great Plains hospital administrator.

Addington did not have information on the victims' names or conditions.

No firefighters were injured in the blaze, which remains under investigation, Addington said.

Bob Jarvis, manager of corporate communications for Chesapeake Oilfield Services, a subsidiary of Chesapeake Energy Corporation, said by email Sunday the investigation to determine a cause of the fire is ongoing. The person being treated in Oklahoma City is expected to be released in the next day or two, he said.

<http://www.firehouse.com/news/10758620/hydraulic-fracturing-materials-involved-in-okla-blast>

USA, WY, CASPER

AUGUST 17, 2012.

STORAGE CONTAINER TRAPS, KILLS CASPER WORKER

A worker who died Thursday at a Baker Hughes building was found trapped underneath a 500-gallon metal storage container, a Natrona County sheriff's official said Friday.

David Morgan of Casper was alone when he died. Another worker found him and called authorities about 2:30 p.m. Thursday, Lt. Mark Sellers said.

The 65-year-old Morgan died at the scene. Investigators are still examining the circumstances of his death, but consider it an industrial accident, Sellers said. Foul play is not suspected.

The container was storing gasoline additives and weighed roughly 4,000 pounds.

Investigators aren't sure exactly when Morgan died, because no one else was around at the time.

An autopsy is scheduled for Monday. A preliminary examination indicated Morgan suffered a traumatic crush injury to his upper body, Natrona County Coroner Connie Jacobson said.

The accident occurred at a Baker Hughes building on Mid Way Road in Natrona County.

A Baker Hughes spokeswoman did not return a message left Friday seeking comment.

http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming/storage-container-traps-kills-casper-worker/article_3d07bd71-996a-5ba4-b778-2350b3feb2f3.html#ixzz24COVDSWw

USA, LA, BELLE CHASSE

AUGUST 18, 2012.

EVACUATION ORDER LIFTED NEAR BELLE CHASSE CHEMICAL PLANT

A mandatory evacuation order was lifted Saturday morning for residents near the Sun Drilling Chemical plant in Belle Chasse.

The all-clear was given shortly before 10 a.m. As of 8:00 a.m. the situation had been stabilized and the immediate danger over, according to State Police, which had become the lead investigating agency.

Trooper Nick Manale, a State Police spokesman, said Saturday that the situation was a chemical release and not a fire caused by a lightning strike, as was originally believed.

People were evacuated, Manale said, because of the possibility that a tank involved might explode and cause a more serious leak.

The chemical reaction at the plant near Main and G Streets near the Belle Chasse ferry caused the evacuation

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

of some nearby residents and some government buildings, including the district attorney's office, the sheriff's office and the council building.

Initially, officials said a lightning strike sparked a fire in a chemical tank, releasing chemicals and prompting road closures and voluntary evacuations. Then officials called mandatory evacuations, saying the tank began to swell and they feared an explosion.

But by 10 p.m. officials said the tank wasn't swelling, and there may not have been a lightning strike or a fire. Instead they said the tank, which contains about 2000 gallons of a hazardous material called divinylbenzene, was having a chemical reaction.

And the smoke seen earlier Friday may have been the result of nitrogen firefighters used to try to cool the tank. But that hasn't worked and the tank remained volatile, with the possibility of an explosion.

Officials continue to test air quality and have found no dangers. The biggest threat now remains the volatile tank. A crew from Baton Rouge brought a chemical stabilizer, but that neutralizer could take hours to work.

"There is no catastrophic failure right now as was said earlier, but we're going to do it as a precaution, it's for public safety to keep this evacuation area clear, until we have the tank stabilized and the chemical reaction is stopped," said Sgt. Joe Piglia of Louisiana State Police.

"Whenever you talk about the possibility of an explosion, you talk in two terms, plumes which is the air and fragments which is when it explodes, the fragments run out. Whenever you set up a safe zone, you take those things into consideration," said Guy Laigast, Plaquemines Parish Emergency Management director.

Statement from Sun Drilling Products Corporation:

Sun Drilling Products Corporation ("Sun") is currently investigating an incident at its Belle Chasse plant which occurred on August 17th, 2012 at approximately 1:30 p.m.

As reported by at least one eyewitness, it is believed that the facility sustained a direct lightning strike which triggered a reaction in the facility's divinylbenzene raw material storage tank inside the facility. The reaction was contained to the raw material storage tank. That area of the manufacturing plant had been shut down at the time and no one on site was injured.

The incident is under investigation by the Company and Louisiana DEQ. SUN is cooperating with all local and state authorities to determine the full extent and impact of the event.

Sun is a closely held oilfield and specialty products company employing approximately 30 people in Belle Chasse.

<http://www.wvltv.com/news/Chemical-release-fire-in-Belle-Chasse--166568096.html>

USA, FL, JACKSONVILLE

AUGUST 18, 2012.

TURPENTINE TANK EXPLODES AT JACKSONVILLE PLANT, NORTH LANE AVENUE CLOSED AS A PRECAUTION

Hazmat teams worked to clean up after a chemical explosion Saturday morning at the International Flavors and Fragrances plant on the Westside.

People working across the street from the plant at 2051 North Lane Ave. said the blast was so strong, their walls shook.

"I was at work and heard a loud noise and I walked outside and I saw smoke," Eli Kervin said. "And then I saw the fire trucks and police cars and everybody and I tried to see what happened."

Jacksonville Fire-Rescue said a 250,000 gallon tank of turpentine products, a little less than half full, caught on fire, causing a vapor explosion. Sixty firefighters and hazmat crews worked to put the fire out.

JFRD said they still aren't sure what triggered the explosion.

"Turpentine, as you know, is a product from pine trees and stuff, but it is flammable and under high heat conditions like today, you will have a vapor and vapor can flash," JFRD Chief of Operations Chip Drysdale said.

There were workers on top of the tank doing welding work when the tanks exploded, but they weren't hurt. The only damage done was to the roof and surrounding trees.

The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office kept the street blocked off for hours following the explosion, but JFRD said it was done as a precaution and no one in the community was in any real danger. Firefighters said no one had to be evacuated and vapor exposure was not a concern.

"Turpentine is not something you want to eat or drink but the fumes themselves are not particularly nauseous," Drysdale said.

<http://www.news4jax.com/news/Turpentine-tank-explodes-at-Westside-plant-in-Jacksonville/-/475880/16183852/-/v5xpxq/-/index.html>

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

UK, JERSEY, HELIER

AUGUST 3 2012.

JERSEY COMPANY BURNS OFF GAS FROM TANK IN ST HELIER

Homes, schools and businesses were evacuated after the tank caught fire

A gas tank in St Helier which caught fire and nearly exploded after problems with maintenance works is being emptied. All gas in Jersey will come from the site at La Collette from Friday after the Tunnell Street facility is decommissioned. Experts will use nitrogen to displace the gas before putting it through a process called "control flaring". Jersey Gas said this was to make sure none is released into the atmosphere. The company said no-one would be able to smell or hear the gas being removed and work would be finished by late on Thursday. Thousands of people had to leave their homes, businesses and schools for up to 24 hours during the fire in Gas Place. Workers were doing maintenance on the cylinder when it caught fire at the beginning of the month.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-jersey-19068997>

USA, N.Y, POUGHKEEPSIE

AUGUST 5 2012.

I-84 OPEN AFTER ACCIDENT

Assumption Parish officials said powerful underground forces unleashed by the formation of an acre-sized swamp land sinkhole had bent and shifted an adjacent 36-inch natural gas pipeline, posing an explosion risk to nearby motorists.

As a result, the officials said, they shut down vehicular traffic about 7:30 p.m. Saturday over a four-mile stretch of La. 70 South in Pierre Part and Bayou Corne while the pipeline operator, Crosstex Energy L.P., of Dallas, worked to depressurize the line.

John Boudreaux, director of the parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, said the pipeline was not leaking but presented an explosion risk if it would rupture.

Assumption Parish Sheriff Mike Waguespack noted that two 20-inch natural gas pipelines owned by Acadian Gas run parallel to the Crosstex line and also were at risk from Crosstex's line.

"If one of them goes, probably all three of them go," Waguespack said.

He said the Crosstex pipeline has an operating pressure of 800 pounds per square inch.

An evacuation order remained in place Saturday but area residents were not being forced to leave their homes, Waguespack said.

Officials handling the emergency estimated about 350 people occupy about 150 residences in the Bayou Corne community.

Fears that the sinkhole area could expand, shear off nearby wellheads and release flammable materials prompted Friday's evacuation order by parish officials.

But Assumption Parish President Martin "Marty" Triche said the slurry area had not grown in size as of Saturday evening.

Boudreaux said the decision to close La. 70 — a major east-west corridor — was required because the pipeline crosses under the highway just east of Bayou Corne.

Boudreaux said the compromised section of pipeline stretches about 400 feet in length about a half-mile south of La. 70. The pipeline has bent 16 feet downward and 15 feet to the east toward the sinkhole.

Crosstex spokeswoman Jill McMillan said in an email that company personnel have responded and "their highest priority is to ensure the safety of all involved."

"As a precautionary measure, Crosstex has isolated and shut down the pipeline," McMillan wrote. "We're currently depressurizing the pipeline, and we expect this to be complete by Sunday evening."

Waguespack said the road closure would extend from La. 69 and La. 70 southwest to Derrick Street in Pierre Part. He said Derrick is the closest point to the pipeline crossing where 18-wheelers can turn around and find a suitable departure route.

He said that while residents have been advised of the risk of remaining, they would be able to continue to access their homes off La. 70 but would not be able to drive into the area where the pipeline crosses under La. 70.

News of the endangered pipeline emerged Saturday afternoon after officials and curious residents had taken airboats down the Crosstex pipeline corridor to get a closer look at the slurry area and take air and soil samples.

The big sinkhole swallowed and toppled trees overnight Thursday, turning the formerly forested patch of swamp into a watery mud flat flecked with bits of green foliage and tree tops peeking out of the dark-brown muck.

Louisiana Department of Natural Resources officials believe a potentially failed salt cavern well owned by Texas Brine Co. LLC, of Houston, could be the cause of the sinkhole, as well as natural gas releases bubbling in Bayou

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

Corne and Grand Bayou for more than two months.

Joe S. Ball Jr., director of DNR's Injection and Mining Division, said some scientists are suggesting that a large gas bubble belched upward from underground and reached the surface, liquefying the overlying soil and creating the slurry.

Ball said Louisiana Geological Survey officials have called a meeting for 9 a.m. Monday at LSU where geologists and scientists would be able to see all the data at one time.

Parish officials also are planning to hold a community meeting at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday in the St. Joseph the Worker Catholic Church Hall on La. 70 in Pierre Part, a parish government news release says.

Gov. Bobby Jindal declared a statewide emergency Friday and the state Office of Conservation issued its own emergency order Friday directing Texas Brine to evaluate the structural integrity of its salt cavern and to begin remediation efforts in 24 hours.

Sonny Cranch, spokesman for Texas Brine, said the company is committed to working with state and parish authorities to find out what caused the eruption and perform any remediation deemed appropriate.

Cranch said company employees were working on a plan Saturday. He declined to provide details before DNR looked at the document.

While DNR officials have pointed to the cavern as a possible, though not confirmed, cause, Cranch said Texas Brine does not know if the salt cavern is related one way or the other.

"We're saying, 'We're not sure, but we want to find out,'" he said.

Cranch said none of Texas Brine's three brine caverns are used for hydrocarbon storage. DNR officials have speculated that naturally occurring gas could have filled the cavern in question after it was plugged.

The slurry area is on Texas Brine's 40-acre facility on the south side of La. 70. The sinkhole could be seen Saturday through a patch of cypress trees from the pad of the salt cavern well drawing DNR officials' attention.

The cavern under that pad, which has a capacity of 20 million barrels, each holding 42 gallons of brine, has been plugged since 2011. It has been out of service for brine production for three years but is filled with brine for structural integrity, Cranch said.

The cavern's solid salt deposits were dissolved with injected water from the western flank of the Napoleonville Dome and extend from about 3,400 feet deep to 5,650 feet deep.

Texas Brine and other brine producers in the area use the salty mix to supply industry. Texas Brine has been operating in the area since 1973 and began using the well in 1982, DNR officials said.

Cranch said the cavern, which is in roughly the shape of a narrow vase, is overlain by a salt cap 1,000 feet thick. More than 2,400 feet of dirt and rock lie atop the cap. The cavern well extends through this upper layer from the surface to the cavern's top.

He said the cavern has a diameter of 150 feet at the top and 310 feet at the bottom.

While Cranch said he could not say if the cavern had collapsed — as some residents fear — DNR's Ball suggested it was not likely, given the amount of earth and salt over the top.

Nancy Malone, American Red Cross spokeswoman, said a shelter at Belle Rose Middle School remained open but no one had used it by Saturday afternoon. She said residents were staying mostly with friends and relatives.

While some residents remained in Bayou Corne and could be seen cutting grass Saturday, many others have left.

Abbie and Jason Hue and their daughter departed after a community meeting Friday when the evacuation order was given, Abbie Hue said.

Abbie Hue, 31, said her family was staying with relatives in Belle Rose, at least until school starts late next week. She said her husband has been checking on their residence.

"He just kind of goes back and forth to check it out," Abbie Hue said. "I mean it's our home, you know."

<http://theadvocate.com/home/3539214-125/sinkhole-forces-bend-gas-pipeline#comments>

BULGARIA, RAZGRAD

AUGUST 8 2012.

2 CRITICAL AFTER GAS STATION BLAST IN BULGARIA

Five people were injured when a tank loaded with fuel exploded at a gas station in the northeastern Bulgaria city of Razgrad late Monday afternoon.

Two of the injured, a driver from the city of Stara Zagora, 38, and a man from Razgrad, 48, have sustained severe burns and are listed in critical condition in the hospital of the Danube city of Ruse. Their state does not allow for them to be transported to the capital Sofia.

Three other men, of the total of seven people at the gas station at the time of the incident, have sustained

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

lighter injuries, such as light burns and a broken ankle. One of them is the manager of the station.

The call was placed on the 112 emergency hotline after 5:15 pm. People who were in the vicinity at the time say that they heard a loud bang. Nearby offices and stores were evacuated.

The fire was tamed close to midnight. A fire truck remains on the spot Tuesday still cooling down the tank.

Air probes have not revealed increased amount of harmful substances.

The station is the only one in the city providing household gas and is located in a busy district with two gasoline fuel stations, the central bus station, the local college and several large stores nearby.

The initial lead is that the explosion was sparked when gas has been loaded from the tank of a truck to the gas column at the station.

http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=142076

USA, CA, RICHMOND

AUGUST 9 2012.

QUESTIONS RAISED ABOUT CHEVRON'S HANDLING OF GAS LEAK THAT SPARKED MASSIVE BLAZE

Matthias Gafni and Denis Cuff

Federal, state and local agencies descended Wednesday on the site of Chevron's massive refinery fire, as questions deepened about whether the company could have prevented the accident by shutting down a crude unit that began leaking hours before the eruption of the blaze.

The lingering fire was finally extinguished Wednesday afternoon, but the company acknowledged that the damage is so severe the plant's ability to produce refined petroleum is limited -- a situation that is pushing up gas prices here and across the Western United States. No timetable has been set for repairs to be complete; in fact, even the investigations may not begin in earnest until Friday, after state officials declare the site safe.

At least five separate investigations, including one by the U.S. Chemical Safety Board, will target a pipe that burst after two hours of monitored leaking, sparking the fire.

"Any time you lose containment of hydrocarbons, it's a critical situation," said Jeff Clark, field representative for United Steelworkers Local 5, which represents about 600 operators and mechanics at the Richmond plant. "And obviously from our point of view, the majority of the time, shutting down the unit is the safest thing to do."

The San Ramon-based oil giant said shutting down the plant is a difficult call.

"To do an unplanned shutdown of a plant is fairly dangerous," said Mark Ayers, the refinery's chief of emergency services. "While we were looking at our options, the leak got worse and the fire broke out."

Meanwhile, Western Contra Costa residents raised a new round of questions on how to best coexist with their toxic neighbors. About 1,700 had visited county hospitals since Monday evening, said Pat Frost, director of Contra Costa's Emergency Medical Services. More than 1,000 residents filed claims against Chevron -- so many that the company's hotline was often busy.

Contra Costa had its own phone issues, as the county's hazardous materials chief said warning calls to area residents went out too slowly through the automatic phone system. Frost plans to beef up the system's capacity.

The leak

The Richmond No. 4 crude unit is the starting point of the refining process at Northern California's largest such facility, which processes up to 240,000 barrels of oil feedstock a day. In the processor, crude oil is heated to between 700 and 800 degrees, sometimes chemically treated, to create jet fuel, gasoline, diesel fuel and other byproducts.

The leak found Wednesday was in a pipe that separates the diesel-like mixture. Originally about 20 drips a minute, the leak suddenly "broke loose" as refinery employees attempted to take off the insulated aluminum shield around the pipe, said Randy Sawyer, Contra Costa County's chief environmental health and hazardous materials officer.

Crews evacuated, and the vapor caught fire so quickly that a Chevron fire truck was destroyed in the blaze.

Chevron officials pushed the notification button 10 minutes after the fire started, Sawyer said, automatically sounding sirens and alerting authorities. He said that was a reasonable response time.

The No. 4 crude unit was the site of a major 2007 Chevron fire, but Sawyer said the two incidents were in different areas.

Keeping production flowing is often a driving force in decision making at all refineries, Clark said.

"Any disruption in production affects profits," he said. "As far as the overall industry goes? Yeah, we have concerns that sometimes decisions are made to fix things without disrupting production."

Chevron representatives said Wednesday safety is top priority.

While a controlled burn smoldered Wednesday morning, a leak from a valve above the first fire dripped onto the burn and caused a small secondary fire near the upper valve, a Chevron spokesman said.

Chevron called Richmond firefighters, and they combined to extinguish the controlled burn and secondary fire.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

The company said there still was a risk a small fire could break out in the lines, so they are monitoring the site.

Environmentalists fume

Some critics said Chevron is part of an oil industry responsible for too many toxic releases, and that they happen because too much emphasis is placed on profit.

Many previous refinery accidents around the country could have been prevented if plant operators had shut down production equipment rather than continue its operation while trying to fix a problem, critics said.

"If Chevron had shut down that unit when they first discovered the leak, the fire wouldn't have happened," said Denny Larson, executive director of the Global Community Monitor, an environmental watchdog group. "By not shutting down, Chevron had effectively lost control of that equipment when the fire started."

In 1993, Larson noted, the refinery in Rodeo then operated by Unocal had a leak of a chemical called catacarb for 16 days before public and regulatory complaints spurred a shutdown. Hundreds of people sought medical treatment for the pollution.

Community alert system

What was clear during Monday's fire was the inadequate automatic phone notification system, Sawyer said.

Calls went out to 18,800 residents alerting them to shelter in place, but it took from 6:39 p.m. until 11:58 p.m. for all the calls to go out.

"We need that to be two times or three times faster," Sawyer said.

The outside company that manages the automatic calls has a limited number of lines and limited system capacity, he said. Industrial companies in the county pay for the system.

Sawyer said more sirens should have sounded, as well.

"We were most concerned about people most around the refinery," he said. "Looking in hindsight, maybe we could have sounded more alarms ... that was my decision."

Meanwhile, Chevron's 24-hour, seven-day-a-week hotline intended to compensate community members for medical and property expenses incurred from the fire had capacity issues of its own, as many callers got busy signals.

"We have heard those complaints and are in the process of adding phone lines," said Heather Kulp, a Chevron spokeswoman. The claims number is 866-260-7881.

The company also plans to open a Richmond office to allow residents to file claims in person.

http://www.conracoostatimes.com/news/ci_21264773/small-fire-flares-up-at-same-site-major

USA, N.Y, GREENE CO, CAIRO

AUGUST 10 2012.

IMPROPER MARKINGS ON TANKS COST TOWN

BOARD AGREES TO PAY \$2,400 FINE FOR FUEL STORAGE INFRACTIONS

Susan Campriello

Cairo officials have agreed to pay a state-imposed fine concerning improper markings on fuel storage tanks and inadequate overflow protection.

The Town Board voted Wednesday evening to allow Town Supervisor Ted Banta to sign a consent order from the state Department of Environmental Conservation and pay an approximate \$2,400 fine for the infractions.

Last year, the state alleged that ports on two fuel storage tanks on town property were improperly color-coded; that one tank lacked proper means of preventing spills and a valve was missing on certain lines, according to official documents.

It was also alleged that the town had removed a tank without properly notifying state officials.

According to Banta, the state issued Cairo a violation notice at the end June 2011. The state claimed that Cairo had not responded, and issued the order about 10 months after the initial violation notice, according to Banta.

Banta said Cairo's highway officials immediately sent the state information and documentation needed to complete a state-issued compliance schedule.

Robert Hempstead, superintendent of the town's highway department, said Wednesday evening that the state was "beating up on" the town for what called a "clerical error."

"We thought we'd done everything we needed to do," he said.

Wednesday evening, Cairo Town Attorney Tal Rappleyea explained that, in his opinion, the state's position was that the town had completed the work but had not provided the correct paperwork.

He advised that the fines could increase if the town did not respond to the order.

According to Banta and Rappleyea, the state initially asked for a fine of about \$3,200. However, Rappleyea worked with the state to lower the final amount due.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

"We were still disappointed that we were going to get fined," Banta said Thursday. "They were kind enough at least to reduce the fine."

<http://www.thedailymail.net/articles/2012/08/10/news/doc50249cf95e7d1775949943.txt>

USA, FLA, ST. AUGUSTINE

AUGUST 12 2012.

TRUCK DRIVER CHARGED IN ST. AUGUSTINE GAS STATION EXPLOSION BP WORKER FACES 1 COUNT OF MISDEMEANOR CULPABLE NEGLIGENCE

Sheldon Gardner

The State Attorney's Office has charged David Cowles with culpable negligence in the State Road 16 BP gas station explosion on Aug. 19.

Cowles was delivering thousands of gallons of fuel to the BP station for Florida Rock and Tank Lines when the explosion occurred.

The explosion severely injured Cowles, destroyed businesses and dumped thousands of gallons of fuel in the nearby marsh.

The negligence charge stems from a report by the State Fire Marshal's office that claims Cowles left a tanker unattended while it was off-loading fuel.

The charge is a second-degree misdemeanor and is punishable by a maximum of six months of probation and carries a maximum of 60 days in the county jail, according to State Attorney's Office spokeswoman Klare Ly.

Cowles, of Fort McCoy, was severely burned in the explosion at the 5th Wheel BP gas station on Masters Drive. The station is owned by Coomes Oil, a company owned by J.B. Coomes.

The burns caused permanent damage to Cowles' hands and left arm, his attorney Stuart Ratzan said. Cowles is able to move now but can't work, and he is dealing with "a lot of post-traumatic stress," said Ratzan.

In May, the State Fire Marshal's office finished its investigation into the explosion and subsequently filed a complaint affidavit with the State Attorney's Office for culpable negligence against Cowles, said State Fire Marshal's Office spokeswoman Deborah Cox.

The Fire Marshal's report came after the Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited Florida Rock and Tank Lines and Coomes Oil and Supply with failing to provide a way for delivery drivers to determine how much gas was in the above-ground tank at the gas station.

Cowles has since sued Coomes Oil, and J.B. Coomes' and his attorney have appealed the citation and filed counter-claims.

The State Attorney's Office formally charged Cowles with culpable negligence recently. He has pleaded not guilty, and is scheduled for a pretrial hearing on Sept. 4.

Ratzan said that Cowles is not to blame for the accident, and that the Fire Marshal's report did not sufficiently investigate Coomes' accounting practices.

"The charges stem from the Fire Marshal's report which is something that I think we're going to prove ... (was) insufficiently investigated and reached an irresponsible conclusion," Ratzan said on Friday.

Ratzan also said Cowles was not 59 feet away from the truck when it was off-loading fuel, as the Fire Marshal's report alleged. He also said that Coomes failed to properly figure the amount of gasoline in the tank and ordered too much for that day.

"Mr. Cowles is supposed to pump when the customer orders fuel," he said. "It's not David Cowles' job to manage the inventory."

Coomes' Attorney Michael Stevens, said that the accident would not have happened if Cowles had not walked away. He also said that fuel gauges were on the tanks and that Coomes physically checked the levels on the gasoline tanks every week.

<http://jacksonville.com/news/crime/2012-08-11/story/truck-driver-charged-st-augustine-gas-station-explosion#ixzz24x1Xidn7>

USA, CA, RICHMOND

AUGUST 12 2012.

INVESTIGATOR: CHEVRON'S RICHMOND REFINERY FIRE 'NEAR DISASTER' FOR WORKERS; PIPE SAFETY IN QUESTION

Matthias Gafni and Sean Maher

More than a dozen workers were nearly killed when the vapor cloud that sparked Monday's massive Chevron refinery fire engulfed them as they worked on a leaky, four-decades-old pipe that the oil giant had not replaced during a round of maintenance last year, federal investigators said Saturday.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

The team of U.S. Chemical Safety Board investigators painted a frightening picture of the seconds after the pipe released a 600-degree "gas-oil" liquid that created a highly flammable vapor cloud that quickly engulfed Chevron employees who were examining the pipe. In revealing these new details, they called it one of the worst refinery accidents in recent years and noted that it was rare for so many employees to be in harm's way.

"These workers might have been killed or severely injured had they not escaped the cloud as the release rate escalated and the cloud ignited, shortly thereafter," said team leader Dan Tillema.

Five Chevron workers had minor injuries.

"Monday's fire was a near-disaster for refinery personnel," said Dr. Rafael Moure-Eraso, the chemical board's chairperson. "The circumstances warrant a full and independent federal investigation to determine the root causes. Although fortunately no workers were killed, the overall impact of the incident ranks it as among the most serious U.S. refinery incidents in recent years."

A 12-inch pipe adjacent to the leaky pipe, which dates to the 1970s and is original to the No. 4 crude processing unit, was reportedly replaced during maintenance last year after it was found to be corroded, but not the 8-inch one that failed just before the fire, said Dr. Daniel Horowitz, chemical board spokesman. Investigators have asked for that inspection report from last year.

"One of the key issues for us will be to understand what condition the 8-inch pipe was in during the inspection," Horowitz said.

To have left the pipe in place would mean Chevron employees believed it could last another five years before the next mandatory inspection, he said.

On Monday, workers found the old pipe leaking at 20 drips a minute and took two hours before deciding to remove the pipe's fiberglass insulation while the unit was still processing crude, causing the leak to accelerate and quickly ignite. The large fire sent black smoke billowing across the East Bay, leading to more than 5,700 residents seeking medical treatment for symptoms ranging from anxiety to respiratory distress, according to the Contra Costa health department.

Federal investigators plan to evaluate what procedures and industry practices exist when responding to a combustible material leak at a running unit. Critics have questioned why Chevron did not shut down the crude processing unit while investigating the leak. The oil company's officials have said shutting down the plant can cause other dangers and is not always the best course.

"We agree that this is a serious incident that warrants thorough investigation," Chevron spokesman Justin Higgs wrote in an e-mail Saturday. "We are cooperating with all regulatory agencies and are committed to better understanding the root cause of this incident."

Chevron employees are safe, Higgs wrote, "because of the professionalism of emergency responders and their strict adherence to emergency procedures in evacuating the area when it became clear that the situation was escalating."

Asked how old the pipe in question was, why it hadn't been replaced and what standards the refinery uses for maintaining its pipes and infrastructure, Higgs said the company is not publicly disclosing that information and that investigators have yet to see the leaky pipe's testing records. Given its age and the condition of the pipes around it, corrosion remained a possible cause for its failure, he said.

"As soon as the investigation concludes, we fully intend to make that information public," Higgs said.

The Chemical Safety Board investigators have already conducted witness interviews and reviewed documents, and plan to let their structural and industrial safety experts visit the fire site Monday once the area has been deemed safe.

They will do independent testing of the leaking section of the pipe to determine how it failed, as well as review the county's emergency notification system, which has been criticized for spotty siren sounding and tardy phone notifications.

Pipes from the 1970s and earlier remain throughout the No. 4 crude unit and the rest of the 110-year-old facility, the oldest refinery on the West Coast which began processing crude oil before Richmond became a city, said Randy Sawyer, Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Program director.

"If there was no source of corrosion, they could be there for a very long time," he said of the network of pipes.

Even if the refinery had followed a strict inspection plan in search of corrosion, pipes could still fail, said Richard Kuprewicz, a pipeline safety consultant.

"Just because a pipe is old doesn't mean you have to replace it," he said, adding that technology and equipment on units that process crude oil have not changed much since the 1970s.

Most refineries pipes are made of carbon steel, wrapped in fiberglass insulation and an aluminum shield and are inspected for thinning or fatigue through human inspection, ultrasounds, X-rays and dye testing.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

Performing maintenance on a running unit is dangerous, as evidenced by the 1999 Tosco refinery accident in Avon, north of Concord. Workers attempted a risky operation to replace a leaky pipe around a crude-processing unit while it was still operating. Employees cut out part of the pipe, and hot petroleum spewed out and ignited, killing four workers and severely burning a fifth. Two company mergers later, Tesoro now operates the Avon refinery.

"When do you make the decision to shut down and go in when the unit is cold and you've removed the hazardous materials?" Horowitz asked rhetorically. "Or when is it OK to go into it with a running unit?"

Industry experts say leaks are common at refineries, but national regulators warn of the inherent risks.

"That's not an acceptable posture saying there will be leaks at refineries," Horowitz said. "That wouldn't be tolerated at a nuclear plant."

And local leaders are concerned as well.

Contra Costa Supervisor John Gioia, of Richmond, wants to know why Chevron did not replace the pipe in November when the unit was shut down and every pipe inspected.

"In order to prevent these type of accidents in the future we need to know why that pipe was not replaced at the last turnaround," he said. "This is what you classify as a near miss."

http://www.mercurynews.com/news/ci_21291089/investigators-raise-alarm-about-chevron-pipe-maintenance-record

VENEZUELA , AMUAY

AUGUST 29, 2012

FIRE ERUPTS AT VENEZUELA REFINERY

George Gill

Firefighters yesterday extinguished the last of three fuel storage tank fires triggered by a devastating gas leak explosion Saturday at Petroleos de Venezuela S.A.'s Amuay refinery in Venezuela. The refinery has a base oil plant with 1,250 b/d API Group I capacity.

According to an Aug. 28 Bloomberg report, a gas leak that formed a cloud at the refinery exploded at 1:10 a.m. on Aug. 25, sending a ball of flame into the air, killing 48 people, destroying a nearby National Guard post and damaging about 500 homes. An Aug. 26 New York Times report said the blast also killed five workers at a lubricant manufacturing company's plant located just outside the refinery grounds.

Rafael Ramirez, president of state-run PDVSA and Venezuela's minister of petroleum and mining, said in a statement Monday that the incident took place in the storage block on the southern end of the refinery, which is distant from its operational area.

"All operational areas are perfectly normal, but as indicated by the protocol established for these events, some plants were shut down to prevent the flow of oil to the affected area and allow firefighters to concentrate on extinguishing the fire," Ramirez said.

According to Ramirez, the fire was put out through the work of more than 200 volunteer firefighters. He stated the area would remain cordoned off as part of the cooling process where the fire occurred and that the company would subsequently begin assessing the incident.

Eulogio Del Pino, PDVSA's vice president of exploration and production and president of Venezuelan Petroleum Corp., said in a broadcast on Venezolana de Television that a committee had been appointed to determine the causes of the incident and the source of the gas leak.

Amuay is part of the Paraguana Refining Center complex, which includes PDVSA's Cardon refinery. Cardon has a large Group I base oil plant with 4,800 b/d capacity.

The Amuay refinery has about 645,000 b/d of fuel production capacity. According to Del Pino, the country's national refining system still produces about 735,000 b/d of fuel at its other plants, which is considered almost three times the national domestic consumption of Venezuela at 280,000 b/d. The nation has an inventory of 4 million barrels of gasoline.

http://www.imakenews.com/Ing/e_article002508623.cfm?x=blt6gSI,bgF87TW