

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

The Steel Tank Institute is unable to guarantee the accuracy of any information. Every effort has been undertaken to ensure the accuracy of information contained in this publication but it is not intended to be comprehensive or to render advice. Websites may be current at the time of release, however may become inaccessible.

The newsletter may be copied and distributed subject to:

- *All text being copied without modification*
- *Containing the copyright notice or any other notice provided therein*
- *Not distributed for profit*

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, AKA, ANCHORAGE

SEPTEMBER 2 2010.

REVIEW: ALASKA PIPELINE SPILL PROBE SHOWS PATTERN

Elizabeth Bluemink

The company that runs the trans-Alaska pipeline remains under federal investigation and is in the middle of major changes after an internal probe this summer raised serious concerns about how it handled a major pipeline leak and emergency shutdown in May.

Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.'s internal review blamed the May 25 accident - the third-largest oil spill in the pipeline's history - on a technical glitch, potential design failures and a series of human mistakes.

The review said the spill of about 190,000 gallons of oil at a pump station near Delta Junction fits into part of a pattern of similar "significant" pipeline incidents over the past three years. Despite internal probes of those cases, the findings "have not been communicated well throughout the organization," according to the report written by Alyeska's six-member investigative team.

To this day, federal regulators are still requiring Alyeska to keep additional workers at the pump station around the clock, inspecting for leaks or other problems.

The internal report was completed in June and shared with state and federal regulators in July but it wasn't shared with the public until last week, when a pipeline watchdog, Richard Fineberg, posted on the Web a redacted version that he obtained from state officials.

State and federal pipeline regulators did not respond this week to requests for comment about Alyeska's findings. The federal Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration is probing the accident and has not issued any findings yet.

Alyeska has been unable to determine what caused the technical glitch that led to the spill, company spokeswoman Michelle Egan said this week.

While the reason for the glitch remains unclear, the June report explains what happened: When Alyeska was running a battery of fire-system tests, a breaker tripped open and prevented the backup power from kicking in when workers cut off the main power supply. The power failure caused valves on a large oil storage tank to open - an automatic event that prevents the 800-mile pipeline from over-pressuring during outages.

In this case, the flow of oil was already shut down for testing and over-pressuring was not an issue. But because the valves were open, oil began filling the tank. Workers in Anchorage and Delta Junction focused on restoring power without noticing that the tank was filling up. The tank soon overtopped, spilling oil into a lined containment area.

The spill created an explosive hazard for workers and forced a three-day pipeline shutdown. The 800-mile pipeline carries North Slope oil production to the tanker port in Valdez.

But why did the power system fail? The answer remains unclear. During the accident investigation, Alyeska was unable to get the breaker on the backup power system to trip again, despite multiple attempts.

Fineberg, the pipeline watchdog who posted the report on his website, said the company's admission that it didn't learn from previous accidents raises questions about its ability to fix this one.

"They claimed they were going to stop these events from happening. It clearly did not work," he said.

He said he remains deeply concerned that the company hasn't explained why its backup power - an important component during emergencies - didn't work.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

Egan said this week that the company is redesigning its backup power system at its operating pump stations to prevent this sort of accident from happening again. It has also instituted new procedures during shutdowns to make sure that some workers are in charge of looking at the entire system while their colleagues concentrate on the task at hand.

Also, after urging from U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, Alyeska is paying for a global consulting firm to assess systemwide risks along the 33-year-old pipeline, from the North Slope to Valdez.

Separately, the company is examining whether it has enough staffing and storage tank capacity at the pump stations, Egan said.

And, she said, the company is investigating a July whistleblower complaint alleging that an Alyeska worker falsified maintenance work records at the pump station, among other accusations.

In recent years, the company has been automating its pump stations as a way to cut its expenses. The project is near completion but has run years behind schedule and cost tens of millions of dollars more than expected.

Alyeska is owned by BP, Conoco Phillips, Exxon Mobil, Koch Industries and Chevron, the companies that also own the pipeline.

Alyeska's internal report listed six prior cases between 2007 and 2009 that showed a "trend of operational discipline deficiencies" similar to the May incident. Four of those cases, including a 2007 fire, happened at Pump Station 9.

<http://www.adn.com/2010/09/01/1434789/review-alaska-pipeline-spill-probe.html>

USA, ORE, HIGHLAND

SEPTEMBER 2 2010.

LEAKY OIL TANK TAKEN AWAY

The Reedsport School District has rid itself of an 8,000-gallon fuel tank that leaked underground at Highland Elementary School.

District superintendent Ike Launstein said the tank, believed to be 60-75 years old, stored diesel fuel used to fire a boiler and heat the school.

The school's boiler was converted to fire on propane after contractors punched holes in the tank while trying to restore it. Launstein told the district's board of directors the underground tank was rusty and sandblasting wore holes in the side.

Contractors were able to restore and line a similar tank with leak-resistant material at Reedsport Community Charter School. The district will continue heating that school with a diesel-fired boiler.

BB&A Environmental employee Randy Boese was on-site Aug. 23 at Highland while an excavator pulled up the large steel tank.

Soil samples tested by the Eugene contractor will determine whether soil contaminated by diesel will be shipped to an environmentally sound disposal site near Corvallis, Boese said. The tank will be recycled for scrap metal.

http://www.theumpquapost.com/articles/2010/09/01/local_news/doc4c7e8b7b42fff172985943.txt

AUSTRALIA, QUENSLAND, KUNDA PARK

SEPTEMBER 3 2010.

PETROLEUM LEAK CLOSES SERVO

Owen Jacques

A fuel leak has forced a popular service station to close for about five months as the owners try to stop petroleum seeping from the underground tanks.

The Matilda station on Maroochydore Road at Kunda Park has almost disappeared from view, hidden behind a giant pile of dirt, as massive earthworks are done in preparation for new 330,000l tanks.

Site owner Peter O'Keeffe said that the leaking tanks were discovered on May 11 and the station was swiftly shut down.

"I've owned the site since 1992 and we had been doing a major upgrade to the building," Mr O'Keeffe said.

"Then we were upgrading the driveway but in the meantime we sprung a fuel leak."

Kunda Park businesses said they had no knowledge of the leak and had not been given any formal notice.

Mr O'Keeffe said that there was no order to clean up the mess, but he was keen to ensure a small leak would not grow into anything worse.

Crews had noticed differences between the amount of fuel they were selling and the amount of petrol in the tanks, and made a closer examination.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

The pipes have now been removed after the petroleum was found to be dripping from the “aged tanks and fuel lines”.

Mr O’Keeffe said authorities were told and the site was shut down.

“The leak was only small, it leaked into the soil, and all of that has been pulled up and rehabilitated.

“Yesterday we started putting brand new tanks into the ground,” he said.

Those tanks are known as “double skin tanks”, connected to “double skin lines” that will make doubly sure a leak is unlikely to happen again.

When the 24-hour Matilda service station reopens in mid-October, the capacity of these new tanks will allow more than 4500 new Holden Commodores to be filled up before the tanks themselves need refilling.

<http://www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au/story/2010/09/02/Petroleum-leak-closes-service-station/>

USA, N.Y, HENDERSON HARBOUR

SEPTEMBER 2010.

'IT'S JUST A NIGHTMARE'

ETHANOL FLAP: AREA BOATERS SAY FUEL ADDITIVE WREAKS HAVOC WITH ENGINES

Jaegun Lee

Ethanol-laced gas has been wreaking havoc among boaters, who are finding it harder to find a marina that sells ethanol-free fuel.

For some time, boaters could find "real gas" at marina pumps. But John J. Killius, owner of Henchen Marina and Fishing Camp, Henderson Harbor, said marinas in the region are being forced to switch to E10, which contains up to 10 percent ethanol in gasoline, because they are simply unable to find a distributor that sells ethanol-free gas.

He said that Aug. 27 "was the last day we carried real gas" and that three of the first six boats that used ethanol-laced fuel at his marina had their engines die.

Nearly all the gasoline sold in the United States contains ethanol — a move intended to lessen the country's dependence on foreign oil and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

"It's just a nightmare. Seven to eight out of 10 of our customers have had fuel-related problems this year," said Gary D. Cornell, a mechanic and co-owner of Cornell's Marina Inc., Henderson Harbor. "There are around 12 to 15 carburetors sitting here at the shop right now because of alcohol problems."

Barbara J. Caster, executive secretary of the Boating Industries Association of Upstate New York, Cicero, said ethanol can dissolve some fiberglass fuel tanks, soft metals and plastic as well as rubber hoses, seals and gaskets.

"Using E10 voids your warranty, and you just can't get ethanol-free gas anymore. People are just getting fed up with this," she said.

To make matters worse, she said, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is considering increasing the amount of ethanol permitted in gasoline.

Last spring, Growth Energy, a biofuels trade association representing the nation's ethanol producers, requested that the EPA permit the use of E15.

"Everybody's telling us that this is inevitable, but we will continue to fight it," Ms. Caster said.

Last month, 39 organizations — including marine, environmental, motor vehicle, energy and recreational industry groups — requested that the House Committee on Energy & Commerce and Senate Committee on Environment & Public Works hold hearings on the pending EPA action that could raise the blending limit.

"EPA has indicated that it should make a decision on granting a waiver for E15 by the end of September, and we believe that many important questions remain before EPA can make this decision," said an Aug. 25 letter to the committees.

Also, Mr. Cornell warns that anytime fuel with ethanol sits unused for about three weeks, it starts a phase separation in which the water-laden ethanol separates from the rest of the gas and clogs up the engine by sinking to the bottom of the fuel tank.

"Cars normally don't have this problem because most people go through a tank of gas in about a week to 10 days. But most boats, people take them out once a month," Mr. Killius said.

However, simple prevention measures could save boat owners hundreds of dollars in repairs next year.

"People need to start adding stabilizers or their engines are going to stop working next spring when they try to run it again," Mr. Killius said.

Ms. Caster said there are several fuel additives, such as Star Tron, Sta-Bil and K100-MG, which can help prevent phase separation problems.

More important, Mr. Cornell said, is the fact that boat owners should try to keep as little gas left in their tanks

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

as possible.

"Burn as much gas as you can before you store your boats for the winter," he said.

<http://www.watertowndailytimes.com/article/20100904/NEWS03/309049958>

USA, ILL, DU BOIS

SEPTEMBER 4 2010.

FIRE AT ILLINOIS OIL TANK MAY HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY LIGHTNING

Lightning may be to blame for a fire at an oil tank in Du Bois, Illinois. The flames broke out early Friday morning west of Highway 51 and south of Highway 15. Witness Tony Mossa captured the fire on video. Mossa tells News 4 that he heard an explosion just after 6:30 a.m. and then saw billowing black smoke. No one was injured in the fire. Du Bois is about 70 miles southeast of St. Louis in Washington County.

<http://www.kmov.com/news/local/Fire-at-Illinois-oil-tank-may-have-been-caused-by-lightning-102159329.html>

USA, ILL, CHICAGO

SEPTEMBER 3 2010.

CONCERN MOUNTS OVER OIL PIPELINE SAFETY

Phillip O'Connor

When federal regulators learned last year that a Houston company built pipelines using defective steel, they ordered hundreds of sections of the newly laid pipe dug up and replaced.

Since then, the government has relaxed that get-tough approach.

Some pipeline steel that once would have been ordered replaced, now, if discovered, will remain in service. That includes pipe on the new \$5.2 billion Keystone oil pipeline that runs through the St. Louis area.

Some environmental groups and others are questioning the government's action, the result, some claim, of private consultations between regulators and industry representatives who have grown too close.

"It doesn't inspire public confidence when the government ... has a standard one year and changes it the next year without explanation for why they did it," said Paul Blackburn, a lawyer with Plains Justice, a public interest law center that has questioned Keystone's safety.

The Keystone pipeline stretches 2,151 miles from Alberta's Athabasca tar sands to the ConocoPhillips' Wood River refinery in Roxana, then on to Patoka, Ill. One of the longest and most expensive pipelines ever built in North America, Keystone can carry about a half-million barrels a day, enough to supply about 2 percent of the country's daily demand. Oil began reaching the refinery in late June.

Concern about the pipeline comes at a time when the nation is struggling with the environmental effects of its energy policy. Work continues on sealing the Deepwater Horizon spill deep beneath the Gulf of Mexico. And in Michigan, responders expect to spend months cleaning up after the June rupture of a 30-inch pipeline that leaked nearly a million gallons of oil into a tributary of the Kalamazoo River.

Focus on Keystone's safety intensified recently after reports surfaced of two spills on the line even before it became fully operational, and that a spill in St. Charles County could create a "worst-case scenario," according to the company.

"Unfortunately, spills are a part of pipelines," said Josh Mogergerman of the Natural Resources Defense Council. "We don't hear about them. But they're occurring and they're occurring at alarming frequency."

AGENCY WON'T TALK

Pipeline safety officials first learned of problems with defective steel while conducting tests on several projects built during a pipeline construction boom from 2007 to 2009. An investigation revealed that several lines contained significant amounts of defective pipe that stretched under pressure. The problems were traced to defective steel produced by several mills, but mostly by Welspun Power and Steel, a manufacturer based in India.

Almost half of the steel in the 30-inch Keystone pipeline came from Welspun and was manufactured about the same time the company provided defective steel on several other pipeline projects.

In some cases, the Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration took remedial action.

In April 2009, for example, the agency ordered the Houston company, Boardwalk Pipeline Partners, to replace more than 300 sections of newly built 42-inch gas pipeline, about half of which had expanded by as little as 0.6 percent.

But then in October 2009, the pipeline agency issued new guidelines. From that point on, only pipe that expanded by at least 1.5 percent would need to be replaced. Companies were told they needed to notify the agency only of expansions of 1 percent or more.

Officials with the agency, charged with oversight of the nation's 2.1 million miles of pipeline, did not respond

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

to numerous requests from the newspaper over several weeks to discuss the change. An agency spokesman asked for written questions and then did not answer them.

Richard Cooper, a Washington pipeline consultant, said he thinks the government was caught off guard by the appearance of defective steel and that regulators initially took a conservative approach in ordering defective pipeline replaced.

Pipeline steel can withstand some expansion. The question is how much, Cooper said.

"Because it's such a serious issue in terms of possible pipe failure and it's happening on more than one line, they need to be a little bit more public about how they arrived at this number," Cooper said "(1.5 percent) may be a very appropriate number. They ought to be able to get it out to where people can see how they got it and it's defensible."

At a minimum, the government should have consulted outside experts instead of relying on its own staff and industry engineers to arrive at the new standard, Blackburn said.

"The question is, 'What's safe enough or strong enough?'" Blackburn said. "There should be a conversation with other people besides industry about that. These pipes are under so much pressure and would cause so much damage if they rupture that there should be zero tolerance for weak steel."

Mogerman of the Natural Resources Defense Council criticized what he called the pipeline agency's "incredible lack of transparency" in dealings with the industry.

"You begin to hear people talking about 'agency capture' and the idea that much as (Minerals Management Service) was too close to people drilling in the gulf that perhaps the same thing may be in place with pipeline regulators. There's a lot of movement of people between the pipeline companies and regulatory agencies and they've gotten very cozy."

TWO LEAKS

After problems arose elsewhere, regulators ordered more extensive tests on the Keystone line. They also ordered that the line operate at reduced pressure until the work could be completed.

Officials with TransCanada — Keystone's owner — continue to say that the line is safe.

In late July, a TransCanada official said 432 miles of the line had undergone the more extensive testing looking for any defects, and no problems had been discovered. The company this week declined to provide an update. Testing is expected to be completed by the fall.

But problems surfaced on the Keystone line even before it became fully operational.

On May 21, five gallons leaked from a valve at a pump station near Carpenter, S.D. Workers hauled away 185 cubic yards of dirt and 9,356 gallons of water.

On June 23, another spill occurred at a pump station near Roswell, S.D. In that incident, oil sprayed from a loose fitting for three seconds, coating a 60-by-100-foot area with 100 gallons of oil. A crew shut off the oil immediately. Workers recovered 80 gallons of oil and removed 2,500 gallons of oily water and 200 cubic yards of soil.

Miner County Commission Chairman Rollin D. Schulz said TransCanada responded quickly to the Roswell leak, had been good to work with and that the spill wasn't "anything significant."

Still, in a 2006 pipeline risk assessment, TransCanada predicted fewer than two spills would occur during a 10-year period.

TransCanada said the leaks effected only company property, were properly reported and cleaned up. They said Keystone "is prepared to handle the worst-case scenario."

Talk of weakened safety standards and oil leaks raise concern in St. Charles County, home to one of those "worst-case scenarios."

According to TransCanada's own emergency response plan, the potential for the worst possible spill between Steele City, Neb., and Patoka is in St. Charles County near the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers. TransCanada said more than 24,000 barrels could pour from the line before a leak could be stopped. Some fear a St. Charles County spill could contaminate one of Midwest's major sources of drinking water.

Don Boehmer, the county's director of intergovernmental affairs, said no one ever informed the county that it was among the pipeline's worst potential spill sites. Nor were county officials aware of the government decision to change the pipe replacement standard.

"Obviously it's not as strict a requirement," Boehmer said. "That makes you feel less comfortable."

http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/stcharles/article_b8b391f6-0b09-57a7-9b8c-ef008776a3d4.html

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

USA, GA, NORCROSS

SEPTEMBER 8 2010.

FUEL SPILLED AT NORCROSS GAS STATION

About 50 gallons of fuel were spilled Monday evening at a Norcross gas station as a tanker truck was filling an underground storage tank, a spokesman for the Gwinnett County fire department said.

The driver of the truck told authorities the spill was possibly caused by a malfunction of an underground valve, Capt. Thomas Rutledge said. The incident happened about 10:15 p.m. at the QuikTrip at 6140 Jimmy Carter Blvd. in Norcross.

The fire department's Hazardous Materials Response Team used an absorbent material on the ground to neutralize the fuel and checked four nearby storm drains for fuel, Rutledge said. The hazmat crew found a small amount of gasoline in two drains in the parking lot and vapor readings, but no actual product, in the two drains on Jimmy Carter.

A clean-up company from QuikTrip was requested to respond.

<http://www.gwinnettdaily.com/localnews/headlines/102402949.html>

USA, IN, MARION CO

SEPTEMBER 9 2010.

EASTSIDE OIL SPILL CLEANUP CONTINUES TODAY

Melanie D. Hayes

Crews are continuing to clean up the residue of an oil spill today on the Eastside after a valve on a fuel tank broke Tuesday around noon.

The valve that broke was part of a 420,000-gallon capacity tank at Metal Working Lubricants, but it was only holding 170,000 gallons at the time, said Amy Hartsock, spokeswoman for Indiana Department of Environmental Management, which is overseeing the clean up.

About 30,000 gallons spilled out into a secondary earthen containment area on the surface of the site, 199 S. Sherman Drive, Indianapolis. The containment area kept the fuel from overflowing elsewhere or outside of the company's site, and the fuel did not make it into any sewers or surface water, Hartsock said.

"When the large valve broke, they (the company) weren't able to replace or repair the valve, so what was necessary was to pump out the tank and contain the oil that was being released to the secondary containment area," she said.

Crews worked all day yesterday and overnight to pump out the fuel from the tank and the spill. Today, starting early in the morning, workers began addressing the impacted soil in the earthen containment, removing the soil that was soaked in fuel, Hartsock said.

There continues to be a smell of petroleum in the air, but the fumes are not harmful, she said.

"There was a home in the area identified as having private residential well and the Marion County Health Department is sampling (the water), making sure there are no signs of impact," Hartsock said.

<http://www.indystar.com/article/20100908/LOCAL18/100908012/Eastside-oil-spill-cleanup-continues-today>

NETHERLANDS ANTILLES, BONAIRE

SEPTEMBER 9 2010.

BONAIRE OIL TERMINAL STILL SHUT DUE FIRE

Shipping was halted for a second day at a 12-million-barrel oil storage terminal on the tiny and pristine Caribbean island of Bonaire as smoke and flames billowed from a naphtha tank, the government said.

Island Lieutenant Governor Glenn Thode said firefighters had decided to let the blaze burn itself out because they had insufficient foam to extinguish the 200,000 barrels of highly volatile naphtha that caught fire in an electrical storm on Wednesday.

Thode told reporters he estimated the fire would burn out later in the day and that there was little risk of it spreading to more of the Venezuelan-owned terminal's 23 storage tanks.

Bonaire is a popular scuba diving destination known for well protected coral reefs and crystalline water.

Venezuela's PDVSA oil firm uses the site to mix and ship crude and products to China and the United States. The islands its 50 miles (80 km) off Venezuela's northern coast and is part of the Dutch Antilles.

"The tank is still on fire. They have not been able to put it out and, until they do, we won't know the consequences. The terminal is closed," a trader who does business with PDVSA told Reuters, but asked not to be identified.

Thode, who arrived at a news conference in a car blackened by smoke, said villagers who live close to the

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

terminal had been ordered to stay indoors to avoid noxious gases if a dense plume of smoke drifted in their direction.

He said the government was worried about damage to the island's delicate ecosystem from gas and chemicals released by the blaze.

State-run PDVSA has struggled with a series of fires and maintenance issues at its refineries in recent years but blamed this fire on a lightning strike.

The blaze began just one day after an explosion at a Mexican refinery killed one person and drove up prices for diesel and gasoline.

On Wednesday, a senior PDVSA official said the affected tank stored reserves of naphtha to be sent to Venezuela's onshore El Palito and Puerto La Cruz refineries when needed.

PDVSA officials were not available to comment on Thursday.

The terminal, known as BOPEC, also stores heavy crude, gasoline, distillates and residual fuel oils.

Photographs posted on a Bonaire blog(<http://www.bonaire.web-log.nl/>) on Thursday morning showed a thick column of smoke purportedly at the terminal.

Naphtha is a petrochemical feedstock used in Venezuela for high octane gasoline blending and crude blending.

<http://www.foxbusiness.com/markets/markets/2010/09/09/venezuela-bonaire-oil-terminal-shut/>

VENEZUELA, BONAIRE, KRALENDIJK

SEPTEMBER 10 2010.

2nd OIL TANK HIT BY FIRE IN DUTCH ANTILLES

A 750,000-barrel capacity crude oil storage tank caught fire in Curacao overnight and the blaze was only controlled on Thursday morning, an official at a sister facility and a trader said. Another fire was still raging at a Bonaire oil storage terminal on Thursday. Both sites in the Caribbean's Dutch Antilles belong to Venezuela's state-run oil company PDVSA.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/energyOilNews/idAFN0924445220100909>

NETHERLANDS ANTILLES, BONAIRE, KRALENDIJK

SEPTEMBER 11 2010.

PLANES PUT OUT GIANT OIL FIRE ON CARIBBEAN ISLAND

Nochi Willem

A huge blaze that ignited when lightning hit a 200,000-barrel naphtha tank on the tiny Caribbean island of Bonaire was put out on Friday after Venezuelan planes doused it with chemical foam.

Tall flares seen from across the island since the fire began on Wednesday were no longer visible in the morning, witnesses said, but smoke still billowed from the damaged tank at a terminal that stores 12 million barrels of oil products.

"The fire is out," said Glenn Thode, Lieutenant Governor of the island that sits 50 miles off Venezuela's northern coast and is part of the Dutch Antilles.

Speaking on Friday, he said the remaining smoke came from the smoldering remains of the tank, which partially melted in the blaze.

Shipping is not expected to resume at least until the weekend from the Venezuelan-owned terminal that receives up to 25 tankers a month, as officials check for damage.

"The terminal is closed and the ships are floating offshore -- it's too deep to drop anchor," said a trader who does business at the terminal. He said four vessels were waiting to dock.

Venezuela's state oil company PDVSA uses the site to mix and ship crude and products to China and the United States. The island is a popular scuba diving destination famous for its pristine coral reefs and crystalline water.

It was not immediately clear how many shipments will be delayed by the closure of the terminal.

Thode said that several planes sent by PDVSA sprayed the burning tank with foam overnight, cooling adjacent tanks and lowering the flames.

He called for three investigations into the fire and possible damage to the island's delicate ecosystem from gas and chemicals released by the blaze. One study will be carried out by the terminal management, or PDVSA; another by the government of the Netherlands Antilles; and a third possibly by the Dutch government, he said.

The fire was likely caused by an electrical storm, PDVSA said. A lightning strike was also blamed for a quickly controlled blaze at another PDVSA storage terminal on nearby Curacao, also part of the Dutch Antilles.

Oil markets factored in the fires, with no discernible price changes as a result. PDVSA officials were not available to comment.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

The terminal, known as BOPEC, also stores heavy crude, gasoline, distillates and residual fuel oils.

Naphtha is a petrochemical feedstock used in Venezuela for high octane gasoline blending and crude blending.
<http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE6893RG20100910>

GHANA, TEMA

SEPTEMBER 27 2010.

MANAGING DIRECTOR AND OTHERS DIE IN TEMA WILD FIRE

Four people including the Managing Director of a construction firm at Tema Port were burnt to death in a fire outbreak that engulfed the Port city on Saturday.

Mike Sarfo Mensah, Managing Director of M&B Engineering Company Limited along with an engineer, and two welders were consumed by the fire with the last three people burnt beyond recognition. Mr. Mensah died at the hospital after sustaining serious burnt.

It took fire fighters several hours to bring the fire under control. The fire started at an alcohol storage facility located within the Tema Port late Saturday.

The victims, according to an eyewitness, were entrapped following the intense fire which was suspected to have been started by sparks from one of a few welders hired by Midland International Ghana Limited, owners of the facility to do some welding works within the company.

The highly combustible material exploded attracting residents to the scene. This latest fire incident, adds to several other fires that have ravaged the country within the last one-and-a half years, affecting public buildings and corporations.

Apart from the welders, the engineer and the MD were said to be in different offices within the storage facility working when the fire broke out killing them in the process and burning a tanker-truck with registration number GT2193 T, a forklift and a double cabin pick-up which were both parked at the storage.

The welder, according to the eyewitness, arrived at the premises of Midland around 7am in the company of his other colleagues and started working on some of the metallic tanks in which the alcohol was stored and some of the metallic staircases of the main office building.

The welders worked throughout the day and were just about finishing the day's job when the incident occurred around 4 pm.

"Two of the welders were actually working on top of one of the tanks when suddenly we heard a loud explosion which came from the same tank they were working on.

The explosion was so intense that it threw the two welders from the very top to the ground killing one of them instantly with the other one sustaining a deep cut at the back of his head," the eyewitness narrated.

Shortly after the explosion, he (eyewitness) and some persons who rushed to the scene managed to carry one of the injured persons to safety after which he was rushed to the Tema General Hospital.

But the fire quickly spread to other parts so they could not carry the body of the welder who died instantly after hitting the ground as "all we could do was to watch his body burnt beyond recognition from a distance."

He stated that had the firefighters not arrived at the scene early, a different story would have been told about the fire outbreak.

"My brother the fire people worked hard to ensure that the fire did not spread to neighbouring buildings. As you can see, more of the fire tenders arrived early to help control the fire," he remarked.

When DAILY GUIDE got to the scene, several fire fighters from the Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS), Tema Oil Refinery (TOR), Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA) and the Naval Base in Tema were at the scene struggling to douse the fire.

A fire fighter told DAILY GUIDE they were overwhelmed by the fire but that did not deter them from fighting to save lives and property.

The Tema Regional Police Commander ACP Augustine Gyenning, in an interview, said his men arrived at the scene to help in the rescue mission to prevent crimes like looting.

"As you can see, my men are here in their numbers to ensure that we do not record such crimes here and to allow the fire fighters whose main duty is to fight fires such as the one going on here to do their work to prevent it from catching other buildings." ACP Gyenning stated.

Though no amount has been mentioned, it is feared that several thousands of Ghana cedis have been lost in the late Saturday fire.

Policemen had to fire gunshots to disperse angry workers at the port who were infuriated by the inability of the firemen to quench the fire.

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

The Public Relations Officer of the Fire Service in Tema, Timothy Osafo Affum, said they were finding it difficult to put out the fire because there was not enough water to handle the pressure from the fire as at 5pm on Saturday.

He also said one of their extinguishers had developed a fault.

Midland International Limited, according to Citi Fm is West Africa and Ghana's leading importer and distributor of ethanol for alcohol production.

Its terminal consists of five tanks, with a total capacity of 5,000,000 liters, office building, Ghana Excise office, and a drum loading station, with digital flow metres as well as a tank truck loading rack.

Midland distributes ethanol to the Ghanaian market and exports to various West African countries such as Togo, Burkina Faso, Benin, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

<http://news.peacefmonline.com/social/201009/85805.php>

AUSTRALIA, VICTORIA, ALEXANDRA

SEPTEMBER 28 2010.

WELDING BLAST SPARKS SAFETY BOOST

Safety improvements will be made at Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) depots as a result of an incident in Alexandra last year. A worker suffered second degree burns when the fuel tank he was welding exploded. WorkSafe says the worker was not told he would need to clean the tank or remove fuel before he started welding. The DSE has agreed to employ a health and safety worker for its regional depots, invest in safety leadership and advertise the dangers of welding fuel drums.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/09/28/3023979.htm>