

# 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, FLA, OSCEOLA COUNTY, ST CLOUD**

**SEPTEMBER 25 2009.**

### **FIRE, EXPLOSIONS REPORTED AT FLA. BIODIESEL PLANT**

An explosion at a biodiesel plant in Osceola County Thursday afternoon sent one worker running for his life. Osceola County fire officials said more than 30 units responded to the scene at R and J Development Site at 6555 Nova Road, which is east of St. Cloud.

The Orange County Fire Department and the Division of Forestry are also assisting. By 5 p.m., the fire was out, but firefighters continued to spray water on hot spots. The facility was almost burned to the ground, and numerous vehicles and tanks on the property were severely damaged. About 3,000 gallons of methanol, 500 gallons of sodium methane, 55 gallons of sulphuric acid and 4,000 gallons of biodiesel apparently exploded during the blaze, which has nearly leveled the facility.

Pictures from Chopper 2 shortly after arriving at the scene showed thick black smoke and flames raging through the building, which caught fire before 3 p.m. The only worker who was inside at the time the fire erupted ran out and called 911 as soon as he heard popping noises.

Officials said there are no fire hydrants in the area because it is out of county, so 1,000-gallon water trucks from the Osceola County Fire Department have been dispatched to the scene.

Nova Road is closed. Residents of the Eden subdivision should take U.S. Highway 192 to state Road 419 to Nova Road. There are currently no evacuations or injuries.

Chopper 2 over fire in Osceola County. Reports list New Eden Energy as the parent company for R and J Site Development. New Eden Energy is the only provider of biodiesel in St. Cloud, Florida area.

According to biodiesel.org, biodiesel is a clean burning alternative fuel made from renewable resources. It is made through the chemical process of transesterification, where glycerin is separated from fat and vegetable oil. Methanol is a flammable poisonous liquid alcohol most commonly used in antifreeze it is highly toxic to humans and animals. It is also a liquid transportation fuel. Sulphuric acid is a strong mineral acid that is used in lead-acid batteries and for oil refining. Known as a commodity chemical.

<http://www.firehouse.com/topics/news/fire-station-closest-fla-biodiesel-fire-faced-closure>

## **FRANCE, PARIS**

**SEPTEMBER 25 2009.**

### **FRANCE ORDERS REPLACEMENT OF VALVES AT REFINERIES**

*Jean-Francois Rosnoblet, Mathilde Cru, and Muriel Boselli*

France has ordered the replacement of some 6,500 valves made in China for the French petrochemical and refining industries as they do not conform to current standards, an Environment Ministry official said on Thursday.

The French authorities have alerted European neighbours as the company that distributes the valves, Sud Robinetterie Industrie, had also sold the parts in The Netherlands and Italy.

"We are making thorough checks to see if a retailer has sold parts to firms in other European countries," Stephane Noel, in charge of risk prevention at the French Environment Ministry, said.

No officials at Sud Robinetterie Industrie were immediately available to comment.

French oil and petrochemical group Total told Reuters it had discovered valves that did not conform at its

# Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

petrochemical plant at Gonfreville and at its La Mede refinery and that they were being replaced.

"However, this will not affect production," a Total spokesman said.

Total could not immediately say how extensive the issue was. The authorities could withdraw operating licences from firms which did not replace the valves, Noel said.

"In spring we sent orders to industrial companies to replace the valves which are fitted in key systems," he said. "We can wait for those which are used for water distribution for example," he said.

Sud Robinetterie Industrie would supply new valves to replace those that are removed, but it was still unclear how the firm would compensate its clients for the extra work, Noel added. (Reporting by Jean-Francois Rosnoblet, Mathilde Cru, Muriel Boselli; Editing by Anthony Barker)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/rbssEnergyNews/idUSLO10756820090924>

## **NEW ZEALAND, HAMILTON**

**SEPTEMBER 25 2009.**

### **UPDATE: POLICE NAME WORKER KILLED IN TANKER BLAST**

*James Ihaka*

Police have named a man who was killed when a disused fuel tanker he was working on exploded in the Hamilton suburb of Pukete.

He was Kenneth Joseph Crown, 55, who was a metal recycler from Hamilton.

Firefighters and ambulance staff were called to the blaze at Petroleum Services' dangerous goods yard in Kaimiro St, Hamilton, at 2.10pm yesterday.

The yard stores recovered underground tanks and LPG and petroleum tankers.

Mr Crown had just started work on dismantling a tank when it exploded and he was hit by a flying lid.

The disused 5000-litre petroleum container had "cut up for scrap" written in pink spray paint on it.

"It looks like he started to work on this tank, probably with a gas torch, and the tank has exploded," Waikato fire area commander Roy Breeze said.

"When you get an enclosed container that has had even the smallest amount of flammable liquid in it, and then to introduce a flame or spark or something like a gas cutter, you are asking for a huge explosion."

Petroleum Services manager David Kraakman said Mr Crown was working as a contractor for a company called CMA Recycling at the site in Pukete.

"We're very sorry for his loss. We have a very good safety record and there's no way an event like this should have happened at one of our sites.

"I personally didn't actually know the guy, and I think he'd only been working at the site on Monday and Tuesday.

"I understand he was very experienced at what he did," Mr Kraakman said.

A spokesman from Hamilton-based CMA Recycling said it would release a statement later today.

Witnesses reported seeing Mr Crown's colleagues rush to the scene and try to extinguish the flames and perform CPR on him. But he died at the scene.

Engineer Mark Bate, who works at neighbouring site Voyager Trailers, was outside his workshop when he was nearly knocked off his feet by the explosion.

"The tank actually jumped off the ground, you know ... everyone in here could feel it. The whole thing gave me a hell of a fright," he said.

"I started looking over the fence and these guys started running out there with fire extinguishers and that but our boss came and dragged us out the front for a safety assembly."

At the same time, Mohammed Javed was across the road in a warehouse about 80m away from the blast. He and a colleague were setting up shop at their new premises.

"The force of the blast actually penetrated the walls here and for a while I thought the roof was going to cave in," he said.

"We went over and took a look and the guys there did a good job extinguishing the flames but you could see this guy lying in a pool of blood ... it's not a good way to start for us out here."

Police, fire and Department of Labour investigators were still onsite early yesterday evening.

Petroleum Services, which says on its website that it is an oil industry specialist, did not return calls yesterday. Signs outside the plant show the building and land are up for lease.

[http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1\\_andobjectid=10597572](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1_andobjectid=10597572)

# Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

**USA, FLA, SELBRING**

**SEPTEMBER 26 2009.**

## **DIESEL SPILL AT ASPHALT PLANT REQUIRES COSTLY CLEAN UP**

*Ed Baldrige*

What was originally thought as a minor spill of fuel at the Highlands County asphalt plant has turned into a clean up involving over 270 tons of dirt and tens of thousands of dollars.

Estimates of the hazardous spill were originally reported at approximately 15-20 gallons of fuel from a holding tank attached to the generator at the asphalt plant, but so far a hole 10 feet by 12 feet and 7 feet deep has been excavated, according to county records.

Several concrete slabs and large pieces of equipment had to be removed to get access to the contaminated soil.

In May, the attendant, whose name was not released by the county, left the tank filling while he was called away to work on another project.

The operating tank over filled and began to run out into a large metal horse trough-like retaining tank in which the main fuel tank sits.

The retaining tank was there to prevent releasing fuel into the ground in case of such an accident.

It is not clear what happened next, but the surrounding area was discovered at a later date to be saturated with the diesel fuel.

Ken Wheeler, Highlands County landfill manager, estimated over 130 gallons may have been spilled on the ground by the oversight.

A letter dated Sept. 21 addressed to Wheeler states, "The Florida Department of Environmental Protection South District (FDEP-SD) Office has been notified of a significant diesel fuel discharge to surface soils has occurred at the above referenced Highlands County facility. The Discharge Report Form (DRF) dated September 18, 2009 indicates that an estimated 100 to 300 gallons of petroleum product (diesel fuel) was released to the environment."

On Sept. 8, an e-mail from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Raquel Arias, Environmental Specialist, to Dick Gorman, manager of the Highlands County asphalt plant, indicates that the spill an unnamed caller reported the spill on July 24, the date of a major fire at the landfill.

Wheeler did not say why the spill was not reported by county officials at the time of the accident.

The e-mail also shows that the original reported amount of the spill was over 5,000 gallons.

The tank in question only holds 275 gallons, Wheeler said.

In an e-mail, Arias wrote, "I responded to the incident and found no evidence of a spill on site. All storage tanks were in good condition. The incident is considered closed."

However, a document dated Sept. 18 states that Arias "was given wrong location when she was previously out there."

But a later call to the DEP informed them that a clean-up process had begun and that the county was removing large amounts of contaminated dirt.

County load tickets show that over 270 tons had to be removed to mitigate the spill, and after testing Wheeler hopes that they are done.

"We have completed the clean up. Our consultants have tested samples and sent samples off," Wheeler said.

"Currently, the side walls of the dirt that was removed is testing clean, and so is the gradient 50 foot down from the spill. We had to haul the dirt out in phases. We took out over 104 tons on Friday, and over 160 tons on Monday. We have just a few truckloads left.

"This happened a couple of months ago, and it was a cover-up," Wheeler said.

"I don't know all the details, but we are working on it. An employee is involved, and we need to address that issue before anything else, so I really cannot say much more," Wheeler said.

According to DEP spokesman Randal Landers, "We are currently gathering the facts regarding this incident. The facts of the incident investigation will determine if criminal or civil actions are pursued."

Landers states that a spill on land of more than 25 gallons must be reported to the DEP, and that any spill into a body of water must be reported.

<http://www.newssun.com/news/0925-eb-county-fuel-spill>

# Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

**USA, NEB, OMAHA**

**SEPTEMBER 26 2009.**

## **HAZMAT INCIDENT LEAVES WORKER SEVERELY BURNED, FIRM FACING \$52K PENALTY**

OSHA has cited Monarch Oil Inc. of Omaha, Neb., for alleged safety and health violations following an accident investigation. Proposed penalties total \$52,000.

The company specializes in asphalt emulsion, surfacing, and paving. OSHA cited Monarch following an investigation into an accident in Omaha where one of three workers, who was transferring asphalt from rail cars into storage tanks, was severely burned. The worker was covered by almost 240-degree asphalt released from an open valve on the transfer system due to a pressure increase that separated the transfer hose from the system.

"Dangers associated with the transfer of hazardous materials must be addressed and mitigated," said Charles Adkins, OSHA's regional administrator in Kansas City, Mo. "It is imperative that employers take all necessary steps to inspect equipment and provide training for their workers to prevent accidents like this from occurring."

The inspection found six alleged serious and one alleged repeat violation of the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

Two serious violations relate to the improper use, storage, inspection, and maintenance of hoses used to transfer hazardous materials and the use of personal protective equipment as needed to address exposure to hazardous materials during the transfer process. One serious violation addresses the lack of guardrails atop storage tanks. The final three serious violations relate to the use of fixed ladders that either had no fall protection cages, inadequate cages, and/or side-rails that did not extend 3 feet 6 inches above the landing. OSHA issues a serious citation when death or serious physical harm is likely to result from a hazard about which an employer knew or should have known.

The alleged repeat violation relates to the employer's failure to train workers on the hazards of the chemicals in the work area. OSHA issues a repeat citation when the employer has been issued a violation for a substantially similar hazard in the previous three years that has become a final order. Monarch has 15 business days from receipt of the citations to comply, request an informal conference with OSHA's area director in Omaha, or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

<http://ohsonline.com/articles/2009/09/25/hazmat-incident-burns-worker.aspx>

## **REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, BARRACKPORE**

### **SEPTEMBER 27 2009. LIGHTNING STRIKE CAUSES PETROTRIN STORAGE TANK TO EXPLODE**

*Nikita Braxton*

A Petrotrin crude oil storage facility exploded when it was struck by a bolt of lightning during a thunderstorm that swept across South Trinidad shortly before noon yesterday.

No one was at the Tank Battery 6 site at Jaipaulsingh Road, Barrackpore, at the time. But the smoke and fire sent residents running from their homes, some to see the fire, others to escape the area.

Villager Nigel Mungal said shortly before the explosion rocked homes, it had begun raining heavily.

Mungal said, 'There was loud thunder and then a cloud of black smoke despite pouring rain that flooded the road. Some people decided to go check. But nobody got too close because we were afraid the thing would blow up.'

The lightning strike came within an hour of the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management issuing a press statement warning of possible thundershowers, high winds and street and flash flooding.

The tanks store crude oil brought to the surface by two pumping jacks in the area. The crude contains a percentage of highly volatile methane. The facility is a quarter mile from the nearest house.

Petrotrin's communications manager, Arnold Corneal, said there were no injuries.

Three years ago, lightning damaged a Petrotrin facility in the same area, and Petrotrin's oil storage tanks at its Point a Pierre Refinery location have also been hit by lightning.

Corneal said the fire was under control by noon and both State and company fire fighters responded to the blaze.

In an unrelated matter, Petrotrin also announced yesterday that it had called in a receiver to handle the assets involved in the now overdue national Gas to Liquids plant project at Pointe-a-Pierre.

This happened after Petrotrin's partner in the venture, World GTL, allegedly defaulted on a loan payment which was due on September 18.

World GTL is a US-headquartered cross national company which was contracted to work with Petrotrin to  
532, 533, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540

# Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

construct the first Gas to Liquids hydrocarbon energy facility at Pointe-a-Pierre.

GTL is a colourless, odorless liquid with the same uses as diesel fuel, but is more environmentally friendly as it releases less emissions. It can be used in existing machinery, infrastructure and vehicles without modification.

Yesterday, the administrative staff of World GTL Trinidad Ltd met with the Petrotrin appointed receiver. A release from Petrotrin said the concerns of workers, who had reportedly downed tools due to concerns with the matter, were also addressed and they are expected to report to work on Monday.

Petrotrin representatives have said the receiver, Brian Hackett, of PricewaterhouseCoopers Ltd, has now taken control of all assets with the 'objective of completing the project'.

[http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article\\_news?id=161536821](http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article_news?id=161536821)

## **USA, TX, AMARILLO, SEPTEMBER 27 2009. NO ONE HURT IN UREA-TANK EXPLOSION IN DUMAS**

*Janelle Stecklein*

Dumas firefighters responded to a hazardous material call Saturday afternoon after a tank with urea inside exploded. Firefighters said they were called to 106 Schroeter Blvd. in Etter about 3 p.m. after the tank storing the chemical used in fertilizer exploded about an hour before. No one was injured and there wasn't a fire, but because the chemical is hazardous it was treated as haz-mat spill, firefighters said. The tank exploded after the urea overheated, causing the tank to rupture, they said.

[http://www.amarillo.com/stories/092709/new\\_news8.shtml](http://www.amarillo.com/stories/092709/new_news8.shtml)

## **USA, FLA, MIAMI**

**SEPTEMBER 30 2009.**

### **EXPLODING GAS STORAGE TANKS INJURE WORKER IN MIAMI**

*Tim Chapman and Ennifer Lebovich*

A man was maimed early Tuesday morning after an explosion rocked a Miami convenience store where workers were cleaning and dismantling old gas storage tanks, fire officials said. The 38-year-old man was rushed to Ryder Trauma Center at Jackson Memorial Hospital. His left leg had been severed below the knee, and firefighters brought it to the hospital in the hopes it could be reattached, said Lt. Ignatius Carroll, a Miami Fire Rescue spokesman. "The man was talking to them as they were working on him, but he was in shock," Carroll said. The man and another were working at 350 NW 79th St., now a Quik Stop Market. They had dug up three 3,000-gallon gasoline drums on Monday and were cleaning and dismantling the tanks, which hadn't been used in more than two decades. The men were cutting through one of the tanks when a spark from the large circular saw apparently ignited fumes. The end of one of the tanks blew off, striking the man's leg, Carroll said. The second worker had stepped away for a moment and was not injured. Inside the tank, fire crews found a few hundred empty beer bottles. "We believe vagrants might have been using the tank for garbage," Carroll said. Remnants from the gasoline that was siphoned out may have been lingering in those bottles." Miami fire and police are investigating.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/breaking-news/story/1257617.html>

## **NAMIBIA, OSHIVELO**

**OCTOBER 1 2009.**

### **FUEL EXPLOSION KILLS WORKER**

A fuel tank explosion at Caltex Oil Namibia's now desolated Shali Filling Station at Oshivelo on Tuesday left one man dead and two other workers seriously injured.

Caltex Oil Namibia, one of the major oil companies in the country that markets fuels and lubricants, is now called Chevron Oil Namibia (Pty) Ltd. Frantic workmates told Informanté that the man, identified as 52-year-old Albert Patrick Ellitson, was supervising two workers who had started work on dismantling a tank, when it exploded and he was hit by a flying lid.

Regional Crime Coordinator in the Oshikoto Region, Inspector Edna Nawa, said the metal piece from the exploded fuel tank hit Ellitson at high speed beheading and killing him on the spot. "A piece of the tank hit him so hard that his head flew about 50 millimetres from his body and lay there," said Nawa.

Nawa also said Ellitson's unidentified workmates were using a gas to RCH as welding gear ignited petrol fumes in the tank causing the explosion. They were in critical condition when they were rushed to the Oshivelo Clinic before they were taken to the Tsumeb Private Hospital.

Workers say that the tank was one of several being broken done for scrap metal after the Shali Filling Station permanently shut down for business last year.

# Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

Attempts to get comment from the Marketing Director of Chevron Oil Namibia, Peter LeRoux, said he was in Oshivelo. An employee at Chevron, who refused to identify himself, told Informanté that LeRoux had flown to Oshivelo to conduct a proper investigation on the incident.

[http://www.informante.web.na/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=4984&Itemid=1&andPHPESSID=84f114275bdb9fc534b9902110d7acab](http://www.informante.web.na/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4984&Itemid=1&andPHPESSID=84f114275bdb9fc534b9902110d7acab)

## **NAMIBIA, OSHAKATI**

**OCTOBER 2 2009.**

### **MAN BEHEADED IN UGST EXPLOSION**

*Helvy Tueumuna*

Tragedy struck when a 57-year-old man had his head blown off by a flying lid from a fuel tank which exploded at Oshivelo Caltex Service Station on Tuesday afternoon. Two other men are hospitalised after sustaining serious burns in the incident.

On Tuesday afternoon, a company contracted by Shali Group of Companies was demolishing an old service station at Oshivelo. In the process, one of the fuel tanks exploded. The lid of the tank beheaded one of the workers.

According to Namibian Police spokesperson, Deputy Commissioner Hofni Hamufungu, it is suspected that the company was using gas to demolish the tanks. In the process, a tank next to the one that the employees were busy removing exploded. It is suspected that the tank caught heat, causing it to explode.

Albert Patrick Ellitson (57), a resident of Khomasdal in Windhoek, who was the head of the employees working on the site, died on the spot. He was reportedly decapitated. According to Hamufungu, Ellitson's next of kin have been informed.

Two other employees who sustained minor to severe injuries are receiving medical treatment at the Tsumeb State Hospital. Piet Leru of Caltex said his company cannot make any statement until site investigations are carried out. "I'll only give out the information when I know that I have all the correct facts," he said.

<http://www.newera.com.na/article.php?articleid=7206>

## **USA, MT, LOCKWOOD**

**OCTOBER 9 2009.**

### **MAN INJURED IN FUEL TANK FIRE**

A man was taken to the hospital today after a flash fire broke out in the fuel tank in which he was working.

The man, whose name and age have not been released, was working inside a fuel tanker at Ducks Painting Shop, at 1443 Coulson Road, when a spark ignited some residual fumes inside the tank at about 2:30 p.m., Lockwood Fire Capt. Allan Hutton said.

By the time firefighters and an ambulance from Lockwood Fire and Rescue arrived, other employees at Ducks had removed the man from the tank and he was standing outside the building waiting for emergency crews.

Hutton described the flash fire as similar to when the lid is left on a propane barbecue for too long and the gas is ignited, causing a quick burst of heat and flame, but on a larger scale.

The man was taken by ambulance to Billings Clinic to be treated for non-life-threatening injuries sustained in the fire.

There were no flames when emergency crews arrived and there was only "a little superficial damage" to the insulation on the building's ceiling, Hutton said.

What caused the spark that lit the fire has not yet been determined.

The Yellowstone County Sheriff's Office also responded.

[http://billingsgazette.com/news/local/article\\_1e26f53a-b460-11de-80ad-001cc4c002e0.html](http://billingsgazette.com/news/local/article_1e26f53a-b460-11de-80ad-001cc4c002e0.html)

## **USA, MI, GRAND TRAVERSE**

**OCTOBER 15 2009.**

### **BULLETIN OUTLINES FUEL STORAGE REGULATIONS**

*Roberta I. Dow*

Fuel storage is one of the highest groundwater contamination risks for farmers. A new, revised On-farm Fuel Storage bulletin is arriving soon at local MSU Extension offices to assist farmers in fuel storage management and help reduce contamination risks. It provides abundant information to farmers on the considerations and rules

532, 533, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540

## Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

they need to meet for safe and legal motor vehicle fuel storage.

This bulletin, WQ 59, was funded by the Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program. Users of the bulletin need only refer to the sections dealing with the tank size and location (above ground or underground) that they have or plan to have. They complete the checklists for these sections to determine if they are in compliance with the rules that apply to their situation.

The previous bulletin focused on managing small (1,100 gallons or less) tanks; this revised bulletin includes more information pertaining to large (greater than 1,100 gallons) storage tanks. With erratic fuel prices, more farmers are investigating storing larger quantities of fuel to provide more seasonal cost certainty.

Leaks or spills from farm and non-farm fuel storage have resulted in many contamination sites around the state. As fuel moves down through the soil, it leaves residues coating the mineral and organic particles. Viscous fuels move slowly down through the soil; gasoline moves more quickly. Fuel is lighter than water and does not mix easily with it. Some components of fuels, however, are water soluble so they will dissolve into the groundwater and be carried with it as it moves. If the groundwater discharges to surface water, the contamination will be discharged to the lake or stream as well.

Fuel residues in the soil move downward through the soil profile by rain and melting snow. Contamination of groundwater can continue for many years following a leak or spill. If the level of the water table drops, the fuel layer 'floating' at the top will also drop, leaving a thin coating on particles below the previous level. This spreads the contamination over a greater area.

Some species of bacteria can break down this fuel residue but low soil oxygen levels effectively limit this. The outcome of a fuel leak or spill can be a long lasting, complex problem. It can take years to clean up and tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars. Fuel leaks containing cancer causing chemicals such as benzene or ethylene dibromide (EDB) from years ago can still impact drinking water in the contamination zone. Prevention is far cheaper and easier than remediation.

[http://www.gthermal.com/columns/local\\_story\\_287075734.html?keyword=secondarystory](http://www.gthermal.com/columns/local_story_287075734.html?keyword=secondarystory)

### **USA, FLA, SEBRING**

**OCTOBER 15 2009.**

#### **COUNTY: EMPLOYEE TRIED TO COVER UP FUEL SPILL**

*Gary Pinnell*

The fuel spill at the Highlands County asphalt plant would not have gotten into the ground if an employee had not drilled into the catch-tank to hide the evidence of his mistake, a county official said.

On Wednesday morning, Solid Waste Director Ken Wheeler said two holes were drilled into the floor of the 375-gallon, galvanized steel tank for watering livestock to let about eight inches of diesel escape.

Only three employees were working on the Saturday when the fuel spill occurred, Wheeler said. None have been fired or disciplined yet.

That attempt to conceal the spill may have been a crime. The Highlands County Sheriff's Office is still investigating, said Maj. Mark Schrader. An arrest, if one is forthcoming, has not been made at this time, he said.

When Wheeler discovered the problem, environmental authorities were notified. Raquel Arias, a Department of Environmental investigator, was not in her office on Wednesday afternoon, but Wheeler said the DEP investigation is continuing.

Wheeler pointed to a stain near the bottom of the tank, which he has taken out of service and stored as evidence. The line is about 7.5 inches from the bottom of the 23-inch tall tank, or nearly one-third full.

Wheeler also calculated how much diesel was used by the asphalt plant in a four-day period, which is about 240 gallons. Since 370 gallons was actually consumed in that period, Wheeler thinks no more than 130 gallons was actually spilled.

The 130-gallon figure matches how much a 375-gallon stock tank will hold when it's one-third full, Wheeler confirmed.

On Tuesday, Clerk of Courts Bob Germaine said in a county commission meeting that reports of 17,000 gallons spilling onto the ground are wrong.

"At present, the audit division has no indication that there is a loss as significant as 17,000 gallons of diesel fuel," Germaine said.

<http://www2.highlandstoday.com/content/2009/oct/15/la-county-employee-tried-to-cover-up-fuel-spill/>

# Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

**USA, WYO, RAWLINS**

**OCTOBER 17 2009.**

**DEQ AWAITING SINCLAIR RESPONSE TO SPILL FINDINGS**

**FAULTY EQUIPMENT, OVERFILLING TANK MAY HAVE CAUSED MASSIVE GASOLINE SPILL**

*Ruffin Prevost*

The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality has released new information about the possible causes behind the spill of 2 million gallons of a gasoline-grade material in May at an oil refinery near Rawlins.

A number of factors may have contributed to the sinking of a floating roof on a storage tank at the Sinclair Oil refinery, according to a statement issued by the DEQ in response to a request by The Billings Gazette for more information on the spill.

The floating roof on a storage tank sank and punctured the tank floor, spilling approximately 2 million gallons of light virgin naphtha, a gasoline intermediate or blending stock, according to the statement.

Among the factors that the DEQ has found may have contributed to the roof failure were: leaks in the pontoon compartments that keep the roof afloat, possible accumulation of water and debris on the roof deck and overfilling the tank in the days prior to the spill.

The DEQ presented Sinclair representatives with the agency's findings on Tuesday, and the company will have a chance to respond before the DEQ issues a formal report on the incident.

The statement said that the agency "will pursue appropriate actions consistent with the evidence it has collected."

The company has released few details about the massive spill of highly flammable liquid since the May 3 incident, but officials have said containment berms kept the material from escaping the immediate area around the tank.

Monitoring wells installed inside the bermed area have detected contaminants in subsurface water, but the spill is not believed to be migrating outside the containment area.

The spill is one of several incidents at the refinery in recent months that have attracted public attention, prompting local officials to call for better communication between Sinclair and local emergency response workers.

A fire in March temporarily slowed production at the refinery, and a separate equipment malfunction in May resulted in the release of a toxic gas that included a mixture of sulfur dioxide and hydrogen sulfide. No one was hurt in any of the incidents.

Company officials and DEQ inspectors worked last month to locate and neutralize the source of odors coming from the refinery that had prompted complaints from nearby residents. A storage tank and a separate cleanup site where decades-old contaminated soil was being disturbed were identified as likely causes.

At a meeting last month, Carbon County Commissioner Terry Weickum and county Assistant Fire Chief Larry Trapp asked refinery representatives to notify local emergency incident managers of serious incidents, citing poor communication by Sinclair following recent events.

Company representatives did not respond to messages left seeking more information.

[http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming/article\\_d75eb434-b9ec-11de-a26b-001cc4c03286.html](http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming/article_d75eb434-b9ec-11de-a26b-001cc4c03286.html)

**PUERTO RICO, SAN JUAN**

**OCTOBER 24 2009.**

**STATEMENT FROM PUERTO RICO GOVERNOR LUIS FORTUNO REGARDING TODAY'S EXPLOSION AT A FUEL STORAGE FACILITY**

Early this morning, an explosion occurred at a fuel storage facility in Bayamon, Puerto Rico. A fire is currently burning in 14 of the facility's 40 storage tanks. First responders were on the scene within minutes, and have been closely coordinating with federal, state and local agencies to protect citizens and control the blaze. Currently, there are no known fatalities, and the cause for the explosion is unknown.

We are focused on containing the fire and ensuring everyone's safety. Working with federal agencies, we have established a unified command center grouping federal and state agencies in San Juan, and an information center close by to continuously monitor the situation.

As a precaution, 150 families in Catano, a neighborhood just north of the incident, were relocated soon after the fire. Public schools in five municipalities around the facility have been closed for the day. The rest of the public schools throughout Puerto Rico, as well as the University of Puerto Rico in San Juan, will operate on a normal schedule. The San Juan airport is operating normally, as are all tourism services.

# Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

With a 24 day supply of fuel located in other storage facilities in Puerto Rico, we do not expect any impact on fuel availability in San Juan or throughout the island.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/pressRelease/idUS198669+23-Oct-2009+PRN20091023>

## **PUERTO RICO, SAN JUAN**

**OCTOBER 24 2009.**

### **PUERTO RICO HAS FUEL SUPPLIES FOR 24 DAYS AFTER FIRE**

Andres R. Martinez and Paul Burkhardt

Puerto Rico has enough fuel to supply the island for almost a month after explosions and fire at a refinery and tank farm near San Juan in Bayamon.

The power authority has fuel to supply the island for about 24 days after 14 of the 40 tanks at Caribbean Petroleum Corp.'s farm were on fire today, Governor Luis Fortuno said in comments in a PR Newswire statement. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Coast Guard and others are coordinating efforts, Fortuno said.

"We will coordinate with wholesalers to ensure adequate fuel is supplied to all citizens," he said. "There is no problem in terms of supply."

A pair of explosions rocked the Bayamon facility at about 12:30 a.m. local time. Bayamon can process 48,000 barrels of crude oil a day, according to the company Web site.

The sour-crude refinery isn't operating, according to undated information on the Web site. The facility also houses a tank farm and oil-product import terminal.

Calls to the company seeking comment went unanswered.

Diesel, gasoline, No. 6 heavy fuel oil and jet fuel are all stored at the tank farm, Ricardo Castrodad, a spokesman for the U.S. Coast Guard, said in a telephone interview. Puerto Rican authorities have requested assistance from hazardous materials specialists in the U.S., he said.

Caribbean Petroleum markets the Gulf brand on the island.

Safety Zone Approval

Vessels must receive special approval to travel in a mile-long safety zone established by local authorities from the Punta Catano to the Puerto Nuevo Intership facility, Castrodad said.

More than 300 residents have been evacuated from nearby homes, said Ana Santos, a spokeswoman for the state emergency management agency. More than 100 people are working to extinguish the fire, she said.

There is concern of spillage from the facility, Fortuno said in the CNN broadcast. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has yet to find any fuel that has spilled, he said.

The U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board is sending a six-person team to investigate the explosion, said Daniel Horowitz, a spokesman. The board is an independent U.S. federal agency that investigates industrial chemical accidents. The cause of the explosion remains unknown.

"We don't have a lot of information at this time," Horowitz said in a telephone interview. "We're coordinating with the other agencies involved."

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601086&andsid=aB0Eiyuq49pY>

## **SOUTH AFRICA, DURBAN**

**OCTOBER 26 2009.**

### **OIL-TANK EXPLOSION INJURES FOUR WORKERS**

*Nivashni Nair*

Four men were injured when the 23000-litre oil tank on which they were working exploded in Amanzimtoti, south of Durban. The tank was on the premises of Sati Chemicals. "The injured men were rushed to Kingsway Hospital," said Netcare 911 spokesman Jeff Wicks. "One man sustained burns to his face and legs and has been admitted for treatment. The others sustained inhalation burns and will be discharged later." The explosion shook nearby factories and neighbouring suburbs. Firefighters on the scene said the smoke was not hazardous but they had to work fast to contain the blaze before it spread to other chemical containers at the plant. eThekweni fire chief Mark te Water confirmed that the blaze had been contained by late yesterday afternoon.

<http://www.timeslive.co.za/news/article166118.ece>

# Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

**USA, ILL, BELLEVILLE**

**OCTOBER 28 2009.**

**WRONG FUEL EXPLODED, FAMILY SAYS**

*Joe Harris*

A couple suffered severe burns and their home was destroyed by an explosion after they got the wrong fuel from a gas station, they claim in St. Clair County Court. Robert Haas Jr. says he filled two kerosene heater fuel tanks with a liquid the Circle K store labeled as kerosene on Feb. 11. He delivered the tanks to his father, Robert Haas, who hooked them up to a kerosene heater. A short time later, the Haas' home was destroyed by an explosion and Haas and his wife, Jennifer, were injured. The explosion was caused by the kerosene heater tank being filled with gasoline that was put into the wrong storage tank at Circle K and was sold as kerosene, the Haases says. They sued Froesel Oil, Mac's Convenience Stores, Circle K Midwest and Gail Pierce, and are represented by Thomas Keefe.

[http://www.courthousenews.com/2009/10/27/Wrong\\_Fuel\\_Exploded\\_Family\\_Says.htm](http://www.courthousenews.com/2009/10/27/Wrong_Fuel_Exploded_Family_Says.htm)