

Tank and Petroleum Use Mishaps

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

USA CA SAN DIEGO

FEBRUARY 25 2008.

THE LONG ROAD TO RECOVERING MISSION VALLEY'S WATER

Rob Davis

Nearly every drop of fuel consumed by San Diego's cars, trucks and passenger planes is first piped from Los Angeles to an industrial site that sits in Mission Valley north of Qualcomm Stadium. More than a dozen rust-streaked white tanks along Interstate 15 store the fuel, which then gets trucked to the region's gas stations.

The 10.5-acre depot, owned by Houston-based Kinder Morgan Energy Partners, has served as the region's fuel warehouse since 1962. And sometime in the ensuing years -- no one is exactly sure when -- fuel began seeping out from the tanks there. It crept nearly a mile south, beneath Qualcomm Stadium's parking lot and down into a groundwater aquifer the city hopes to tap for drinking water.

Recovering the 'Lost Resource'

- **The Issue:** Cleanup on the gas that has leaked into a groundwater aquifer in Mission Valley was supposed to have been completed in 1996, but has endured consistent delays.
- **What It Means:** The city of San Diego has sued the owner of the source of the leak, a nearby tank farm; the city wants to begin tapping the aquifer for drinking water.
- **The Bigger Picture:** With the future of its water supply murky, the city has intensified its search for every drop of water it can find.

Much about the plume is unknown: Its exact volume, what caused it or when it started. But the sprawling streak of fuel is one of the region's largest pollution plumes and narrates a decades-long story that highlights the challenges of removing contaminants from the environment, the often-slow regulatory process that governs cleanups and arid San Diego's increased focus on finding every drop of water it can.

Ronald Reagan was still president when the leaking fuel was first discovered. The city estimates as much as 300,000 gallons of gasoline may have seeped beneath the surface. The pollution itself is not unusual. Thousands of gas stations across the country have leaked stored gasoline into the ground.

But the Mission Valley depot, which can hold 26 million gallons of fuel, was built atop an ancient streambed composed of gravel and sand -- porous soil that allowed the fuel to seep freely. And the gasoline stored there contained MTBE, methyl tertiary butyl ether, a chemical that was first added to gasoline in 1979 to help it burn cleaner.

Without the MTBE, bacteria in the soil would have contained the leak, says Dave Huntley, a geological sciences professor at San Diego State University. Toxic chemicals in gasoline such as benzene are typically devoured by bacteria.

"It's like a moving buffet," Huntley says. "And the bacteria are sitting at the edge of it. At the leading edge, they love it, they can keep up with it."

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But they don't eat MTBE. And MTBE dissolves in water. So by the time the leak was discovered in 1987, the groundwater around the plume had been contaminated.

Kinder Morgan, which bought the property in 1998, is responsible for cleaning up that toxic mix. The pollution should have been removed before Kinder Morgan made the purchase, but the cleanup was delayed as the previous owners -- Shell Oil, Mobil Oil, Powerline Oil and Santa Fe Pacific Pipeline Partners -- argued about who was responsible. The regional board, the county's water pollution cop, initially set a 1996 deadline for completion when it ordered the cleanup in 1992. That was pushed back to 1999, and again to 2010 (the deadline for soil to be clean) and 2013 (the deadline for groundwater to be clean).

That's much sooner than when Kinder Morgan once estimated it would finish cleanup: 2034.

Kinder Morgan won't say how much it has spent on cleanup, as vapor extraction wells -- giant straws that allow the gas to evaporate -- have been dug throughout the city-owned Qualcomm Stadium parking lot.

Company spokeswoman Emily Thompson says the cleanup is on time and has reduced the plume's size by 95 percent. John Serrano, a deputy city attorney, disputes that, saying the city believes as much as a third of the pollution, 100,000 gallons of gasoline, may remain.

The gasoline has dissolved in an aquifer that could supply water for 2,000 to 5,000 families a year. And the city wants to begin tapping that water supply by 2010 -- not 2013. It has sued Kinder Morgan, aiming to expedite the cleanup process.

The lawsuit demonstrates the importance being given to region's miniscule groundwater resources. San Diego County gets 2 percent of its water from the ground, importing about 90 percent. The City Council authorized spending as much as \$500,000 on an outside law firm, Los Angeles-based Tatro Tekosky Sadwick, to pursue litigation. The two sides are still arguing pretrial motions in U.S. District Court and expect to continue doing so through the summer.

Before World War II, the aquifer beneath Qualcomm Stadium provided much of the city's water, Serrano says. Ken Weinberg, director of water resources at the San Diego County Water Authority, describes the Mission Valley aquifer as "the lost resource."

After the war, importing water from the Colorado River became cheaper, Weinberg says, and the pumping stopped. But as the region's water sources face increasing pressures from drought, climate change and the Endangered Species Act, the equation is shifting back, he says, at the same time that the filtration technology that converts salty groundwater into drinking water has gotten less expensive.

"This is a natural storage place," Serrano says. The aquifer "could hold a tremendous amount of water. It could make a big difference. It's a reserve and resource we want to have protected."

But some question the city's pursuit of groundwater from a source near a gasoline tank farm. Even if the pollution is cleaned up, the tanks that caused it will remain. And tanks and pipes are just as likely to leak today as they were 20 years ago, says John Robertus, executive officer at the regional water board.

"If the city is that focused on having pristine water in the aquifer -- yet the city is acknowledging the tank farm is going to stay there in perpetuity -- it doesn't make sense to me," Robertus said. "My concern is that it could be re-contaminated by a future spill from the same site. People are improving their management methods, but every year those facilities are another year older."

Huntley, the SDSU hydrologist, says he believes gasoline companies are more environmentally minded than they once were -- if only because it can be cheaper to prevent pollution than to clean it up.

The days have ended, Huntley says, when gas levels in storage tanks were measured by jamming a rod down into the tank like a massive dipstick to see where gasoline wetted the rod. That process punched holes in the bottoms of many gasoline tanks, he says.

Thompson, the Kinder Morgan spokeswoman, says routine inspections, which include pipeline pressure testing, ensure the tank farm runs safely. But she offers no guarantee about the site's long-term integrity. "You're asking me to predict the future, and who can do that?" she says.

<http://www.voiceofsandiego.org/articles/2008/02/25/environment/899kinder022508.txt>

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USA, OH, MILL CREEK TWP

MARCH 1 2008.

MILL CREEK DIESEL CLEANUP CONTINUES

Kathie Dickerson

Cleanup of diesel fuel continued Thursday in Mill Creek after members of Coshocton County's Hazardous Materials team spent several hours Wednesday trying to contain the situation.

A 3,000-gallon above-ground storage tank suffered damage when it was moved at Miller's Sawmill on Township Road 125, said Dina Pierce, of the public interest office of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency.

It's estimated about half of the fuel was carried away by a tributary into Mill Creek, Pierce said.

The company, Miller Mill, hired an EPA-approved cleanup specialist, SUNPRO Inc., which was on the scene again Thursday, Pierce said.

A crew from the Canton-based company arrived in Coshocton County about 4 p.m. Wednesday and worked until 1 a.m., then were back at it again Thursday and planned to stay until dark.

The creek level had dropped 3 to 4 inches, which would slow down movement of the water and the diesel fuel.

Diesel-soaked absorbent booms were removed from the water and bagged then placed into sealed barrels, and fresh booms were put back into the stream Thursday.

Jane Beathard, public information officer for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, said the local wildlife officer, Garth Goodyear, was also on the scene and had reported there were no apparent damage to fish or other wildlife as yet.

"He said if it gets contained there shouldn't be any long-term effects," Beathard said.

Pierce said diesel fuel is much like oil and floats on water, making it easier to clean up than some hazardous spills.

Lynn Powelson, fire chief at Three Rivers Fire District, which was on the scene with Haz-Mat, said the material used is very absorbent and made to soak up petroleum products.

He said the first thing the Haz-Mat team did Wednesday was dig a hole around a catch basin where the fuel leak was making its escape into the tributary stream.

A resident of the area reported the spill to the Coshocton County Sheriff's Office just before noon Wednesday.

The Haz-Mat team placed oil absorbing booms across the width of the creek a couple of areas downstream in an effort to slow down the flow of the material, with the final containment area on Mill Creek at the intersection of county roads 12 and 126, about 1 1/2 miles from the origination of the spill.

When SUNPRO arrived, they got more absorbent material into the creek, Powelson said. SUNPRO will also take away contaminated soil from the sawmill site.

Pierce said no EPA violation notices have been issued.

It appeared no farm livestock drank from the creek in the area between the spill's origin and the area where containment efforts were centered.

Mill Creek empties into the Walhonding River near the Lake Park area.

http://www.coshoctontribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080229/NEWS01/802290311/1002&template=print_r

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USA, LA, SHREVEPORT

MARCH 5 2008. STATIC

ELECTRICITY BLAMED FOR FIRE AT GASOLINE PUMP IN ALEXANDRIA

Abbey Brown

A Sunday afternoon fire destroyed a truck and a set of gas pumps, but Alexandria Fire Department officials said it could have been much worse and was 100 percent avoidable.

A Woodworth man was pumping gas into a metal gas can in the bed of his pickup truck around 3:40 p.m. Sunday at the Kroger fueling station in Alexandria when a spark caused by static electricity ignited the gasoline vapors, quickly engulfing the truck and nearby gas pump, Alexandria Fire Prevention Officer Chad Parker said.

Flames from the fire reached the top of the canopy and completely engulfed the truck, he said.

"When the gasoline was being flowed into the metal can, it can cause a static charge," Parker said. "When that can is sitting on a plastic bed liner, the plastic liner prevents the charge from grounding. And as the charge builds, it can create a spark between the can and the nozzle, igniting the vapors. And on Sunday it did just that." If the gas can had been sitting on the ground, this fire never would have happened, Parker said. There are several notices on the pumps warning of the dangers of static electricity and gasoline instructing people to stay off their cell phone, to ground themselves before fueling and to always fill gas canisters on the ground, not in their vehicle. That advice, he said, is important to follow.

Although a fire caused by static electricity is very rare, the risk is still there, Parker said. And any kind of fire at a fueling station is extremely dangerous because of the amount of fuel there.

"If the conditions had been different, it could have been much, much more disastrous," Parker said. "The man was very lucky he wasn't hurt and the fire wasn't worse."

A few simple tips can prevent the discharge of static electricity while fueling gas, eliminating the risk altogether, he said. Most gas stations have a sticker of a handprint on the pumps instructing patrons to "Touch here" before pumping.

Parker said to follow those instructions, and if there isn't such a spot, you should touch anything metal but your vehicle before fueling. And if you go back into your vehicle while fueling, it is critical to once again touch something metal to ground yourself before touching the fuel handle, Parker said.

<http://www.shreveporttimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080304/BREAKINGNEWS/80304012>

USA, LA, GONZALES

MARCH 14 2008.

ONE INJURED IN GONZALES GAS STATION EXPLOSION

Wade McIntyre

A gasoline tank apparently ignited and exploded when it was cut open by a worker shortly after noon Thursday at the inspection station and car wash located behind Terry's Shop Exxon at Cornerview and Airline Highway in Gonzales.

The worker who cut the tank was transported to an area hospital with second-degree burns, Gonzales Police Chief Bill Landry said. There were no other injuries reported, he said.

Apparently the tank, which was one of three 10,000 gallon underground tanks at the station, was supposed to be empty, but had some gasoline vapors in it, the chief said.

One witness said he saw the worker walking under the canopy of the Chevron gas station after the explosion, and that the man was very dazed and confused.

Chad Ledet, owner of the inspection station, was pulling a car into the station two bays away from the explosion.

"I never heard or seen nothing that loud happen before," he said.

According to Ledet, black smoke rose from the hole in the ground where the explosion occurred as high as the Western Sizzlin' sign on Airline Highway. Flames, he said, went up about half as high as the sign.

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He said the explosion sent a piece of pipe in the air which landed on the windshield of a Scion car waiting to be serviced in one of the bays.

Landry said Terry's Shop was "in a closure process" and renovation work was being performed.

"We evacuated the nearby area businesses and shut down Airline Highway," the chief said. He added his department then turned the investigation over to State Police and the Department of Environmental Quality.

The injured worker was working for R.L. Hall, a Baton Rouge company.

Billy McAdams, a worker at the car wash, said he was in the building cleaning the car wash when the explosion occurred.

"It's the loudest thing I ever heard," he said. "I looked up and didn't know what was going on."

Someone had to tell him what happened because he did not know what was going on, McAdams said.

"Yeah, it scared me," he said.

The explosion prompted several phone calls to The Gonzales Weekly Citizen offices, with callers describing a loud explosion and police cars and fire trucks blocking traffic at Airline and Cornerview.

<http://www.ascensioncitizen.com/articles/2008/03/13/news/news01.txt>

USA, PA, OIL CITY

MARCH 21 2008.

OIL SPILL LINKED TO FAMILY DISPUTE – TROY ANDERSON, 27, OF OIL CITY APPARENTLY WAS ANGRY THAT HIS WIFE WASN'T PAID ENOUGH FOR A TRUCK SHE SOLD TO HER STEPFATHER AND HIS WIFE.

Erin Schattauer-Yeykal

A family dispute over the sale of a truck appears to be at the bottom of a November oil spill in Cornplanter Township.

Troy Anderson, 27, of 346 Petroleum Center Road, Oil City, has been accused of tampering with an oil storage tank owned by Donald Coleman, resulting in the loss of about 40 barrels of crude oil. Some spilled into the nearby Cherry Run, which is classified as a wild trout water, according to court documents.

Anderson's case is now moving through Venango County Court. Coleman, a private lease holder, went to his oil lease on Christie Hill Road about 10:30 a.m. Monday, Nov. 5, and discovered the spill when he detected a strong smell of oil near the holding tanks. Coleman said he could tell immediately that someone had tampered with the tank.

The main line valve lock had been forcibly removed and a release plug had been removed as well. Most of the oil was cleaned up the day of the spill, but crews from the Department of Environmental Protection returned to the site in the following weeks to continue cleanup efforts and monitor the area.

Anderson was arrested after his wife, who is Coleman's stepdaughter, reported that her husband drained the oil because he felt Coleman and his wife, Tammy, did not pay her enough for a truck she sold them, according to court documents.

Anderson has waived a preliminary hearing and is awaiting arraignment in Venango County Court. He has been charged with tampering with waterways, theft by unlawful taking and criminal mischief.

At the time of the spill, Don Coleman said the oil loss was "just about enough to put (him) out of business." After recovery, it was determined that Coleman had lost about 40 barrels of crude oil at a price of \$88.25 per barrel, totaling \$3,530, according to court documents.

Most of the oil that had flowed onto the ground was recovered by a tanker truck that was used to vacuum up the oil on the day of the spill. Crews responded quickly to clean up on the day of the spill.

Among those on scene were the DEP, Fish and Boat Commission, Venango County Emergency Management Agency, Cornplanter Volunteer Fire Department and state police. Crews followed the line of oil to the creek and placed pads and booms to sop up the oil and keep it from spreading downstream.

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Most of the oil was captured in a drainage ditch before it reached the creek. Firefighters dug holes to catch some of the oil. And more was contained by a dike around the 100-barrel stock tank.

The DEP estimated that less than half a barrel made its way to Cherry Run, located just a short distance from the tank. Although some of the oil did flow into wetlands, the area is clay-based and saturated with water, which caused the oil to float, which meant that not a lot of oil reached the soil, a DEP spokesperson said following the spill.

There will have to be long term monitoring of the area because of the amount of oil that spilled, the spokesperson said. Anderson is being represented by assistant public defender Erik Rutkowski.

<http://www.thederrick.com/stories/03202008-4004.shtml>

USA, FLA, ST. LUCIE CO

MARCH 26 2008.

MAN BURNED OVER 40% OF BODY AFTER FALLING INTO TANK OF CHEMICALS IN ST. LUCIE

Will Greenlee

A 56-year-old man sustained chemical burns over about 40 percent of his body Monday after falling into a tank containing "kosa caustic," according to a St. Lucie County Fire District spokeswoman and a Sheriff's Office report released Tuesday.

Jimmy Ray Martin was at Allied Universal in the 9500 block of Rangeline Road about 1:35 p.m. when the 24-foot ladder he was on fell, a witness told sheriff's investigators.

The witness said Martin, of the 100 block of Southeast Solaz Avenue, was climbing the ladder to hook a crane to a tank when the ladder slipped. The witness said he "heard cracking and the ladder leaning" and tried to grab the ladder but couldn't hold it upright and Martin fell.

Another witness told investigators the ladder was "no good."

A deputy was told the kosa caustic "would burn the skin immediately," the report states.

When the deputy arrived, Martin was in his underwear and an Allied Universal employee was hosing him off.

Martin was taken to a local hospital in serious condition.

<http://www.tcpalm.com/news/2008/mar/25/man-burned-after-falling-tank-containing-low-level/>

USA, MI, PORT HURON TWP,

MARCH 27 2008.

FUEL SPILL CLOSES WATER STREET - HUNDREDS OF GALLONS OF DIESEL FLOW TO STREET FROM OPEN VALVE

Bobby Ampezzan

Township fire Chief Craig Miller said he will begin working today to assess the cleanup costs of a massive Tuesday morning diesel fuel spill at the By-Lo gas station, 2020 Water St.

The spill happened about 4:30 a.m. after diesel fuel pumped from a tanker into an underground storage tank gushed from a ground-level valve, said Dan Wynn, vice president of By-Lo Oil Company in Kimball Township. Company officials have not determined if the second valve was left open or if it failed, he said.

Fire Lt. Eric Trexler estimated between 400 and 500 gallons of diesel fuel poured onto the station lot and ran into Water Street, where it was carried in both directions by passing cars.

Wynn said he believes Trexler's estimate on the spill is inflated. Several emergency crews, including the Port Huron Fire Department, the St. Clair County Hazardous Materials Response Team, the sheriff department and Port Huron police, responded to the spill. Water Street was closed between Yeager and Henry streets until about 10:30 a.m.

Trexler and Miller said they never have responded to a larger hazardous materials event. Jeffrey Friedland, director of the county's Office of Emergency Management, said most fuel spills happen as a result of traffic accidents and most diesel spills are between 50 and 150 gallons.

The By-Lo gas station was the site of a spill in 1998. A tanker dumped about 40 gallons of diesel fuel onto Water Street at about 4:50 a.m., closing the street for more than two hours.

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That spill was contained before it could enter a nearby sewer. Tuesday's spill was not.

Diesel fuel drained 'into a catch basin across the street from the' gas station, Trexler said, and from there made its way through a drain pipe to the river where a small amount was mopped up from the ice below the pipe that empties into the Black River.

Trexler said the amount of fuel that flowed into the sewer was nominal, and the amount that made it to the river could be contained in a drinking cup. What was left in the sewer was to be cleaned out by a Port Huron street crew.

Much more fuel would have collected in the catch basin but one of the first things By-Lo staff did was pile absorbent materials around the drain, Trexler said. Wynn said gas station staff are trained to take such action.

The weather helped crews working on the scene. Ice on the river prevented the fuel from spreading in the water and precipitation held out until crews could lay down a sand-salt mixture meant to prevent the street from becoming slick. Strong wind gusts moved the fumes from the spill north and east, away from the homes on the west side of Water Street.

Several residents who live within feet of the gas station said the fumes were not a problem.

"It's just annoying," said Dawn Baumgartner, 32, who is staying with her mother in the 1500 block of Campau Street.

Baumgartner and her aunt, Shirley Tiple, 51, walked up to the gas station for a cup of coffee even as three street sweepers were cleaning the parking lot and several blocks of Water Street.

No emergency calls were placed from people complaining of fumes or physical ailments, Miller said, and diesel fuel is far less flammable than gasoline. No residents were evacuated, authorities said, and no one was injured.

The spill mobilized several agencies and independent contractors, and St. Clair County and Port Huron Township have cost-recovery ordinances in place which means By-Lo will be billed for the work, Miller said. He expected to bill will be several thousands of dollars.

Wynn said the cleanup, not the cost, was the priority.

"We haven't even approached that yet," Wynn said. "Obviously, we run a business. We'll do whatever we're supposed to do."

<http://www.thetimesherald.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080326/NEWS01/80326003/1002>

USA, CA, LOS OLIVOS

MARCH 27 2008.

LITTLE OIL COMPANY CREATES BIG PROBLEMS

Noaki Schwartz

When a Firestone Vineyard employee discovered oil trickling down a creek in January in this wine country town, the source of the contamination was no surprise to firefighters.

Of 21 refineries in California, Greka Oil & Gas Inc. is the fourth-smallest producer, but the state's biggest inland oil polluter, according to state officials.

Broken pumps, busted pipes, overflowing ponds and cracked tanks at Greka installations have spilled more than a half-million gallons of oil and contaminated water since 1999, fouling the water, soil and air in the Southern California county many consider the birthplace of the nation's environmental movement.

Over the past nine years, the Santa Barbara County Fire Department has responded at least 400 times to oil spills and gas leaks at Greka, resulting in fines, citations, federal and local prosecutions and investigations by the Environmental Protection Agency and state Fish and Game.

"I've been in the hazardous materials business for 20 years and this is the worst oil company I've ever seen," said Robert Wise, who works at EPA's Superfund division.

The company says it is a victim of sabotage — a claim local and federal authorities dispute — and overzealous regulators.

380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386

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"To say that Greka is a major polluter is a joke," said President Andrew deVegvar. "To the extent to which we're being portrayed as some kind of Darth Vader of the oil industry is not appropriate."

While the company has been fined more than \$2.5 million over the years, authorities are losing patience with Greka. This winter the county Fire Department hit the company with stop-work orders against most of its operations.

Some conservationists and others suspect Greka's political connections — along with piecemeal regulation by overlapping agencies and weak inland oil spill laws — have allowed it to continue operating. Greka leases land from current and former county supervisors; another former supervisor is on the Greka payroll.

That the spills are happening in Santa Barbara County is perhaps the cruelest twist for environmentalists.

The mountainous coastal area dotted with boutique wineries and the ranches of President Reagan and Michael Jackson was a catalyst for the environmental movement. A disaster at a Union Oil Co. platform in 1969 coated miles of beaches with oil, killed thousands of birds and helped lead to the Clean Water Act and a moratorium on offshore drilling.

Greka set up shop in Santa Maria in 1999, taking over aging facilities from major oil companies and turning crude into asphalt and other products.

From 1999 to 2007, the Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District inspected Greka facilities 855 times and issued 298 violations. During that period, 203 Greka spills threatened or polluted state waters 20 times, according to Fish and Game.

"Right now I can't think of anybody that is worse than Greka," said Steve Edinger, assistant chief of Fish and Game. "They are the biggest inland oil pollution problem we are dealing with across California. Nobody has our attention like Greka does."

Authorities say Greka employees have been spotted covering up oil contamination with fresh dirt and were once caught plugging a corroded storage tank with a tree branch — accusations the company rejects. The district attorney cited Greka for 104 violations in 2004 after employees were allegedly caught trying to tamper with old pollution-belching engines. Greka settled with the county for \$675,000.

DeVegvar has said the number of incidents is not out of line with those of other producers when looked at on a per-well basis. But the EPA's Wise said that is true only if Greka wells that aren't in use are counted, too.

Greka has spent tens of millions of dollars in upgrades, deVegvar said. The company recently said it was tightening security, and in January announced an environmental initiative dubbed Greka Green. But just a day later, it was hit with an 8,400-gallon spill.

Brooks Firestone, whose family leases land to Greka, was one of two members of the county Board of Supervisors who blocked an emergency hearing on Greka in December. He said the staff needed more time to prepare, and warned board members not to become hysterical.

"To me, a huge event involving oil was the Kuwaiti oil fields that were fired by the Iraqi army in the first Gulf War, the 1969 oil spill in the channel, the Valdez tanker and the Normandy tanker," Firestone said at the time. "What is the meaning of this incident?"

Days later, on Jan. 5, Greka spilled more than 190,000 gallons of oil and contaminated water on the land it leases from the Firestone estate. Since that spill, Firestone has withdrawn from deciding matters related to Greka.

Firestone, an heir to the tire fortune, said it would be too difficult to calculate how much income he receives from Greka. On political disclosure forms, he said he owns only 9 percent of the vineyard land on which the Greka installation sits. Officials have to own at least 10 percent of a business to disclose income from it.

A former county supervisor, Mike Stoker, has served as a Greka spokesman and said he was hired last year as a consultant to improve the company's relationship with local regulators and help Greka become a "better corporate citizen." He would not say what Greka pays him. Stoker is also the \$60,720-a-year district representative for state Sen. Tom McClintock.

After a series of spills, including the incident at the Firestone estate, the fire department issued its stop-work orders; the EPA launched an investigation and threatened Greka with tens of thousands of dollars in fines per

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day; a state lawmaker began working on legislation that would beef up enforcement, impose higher penalties and provide more resources to clean up inland spills; and the county government, which issues various permits, began looking into increasing its penalties, too, and making companies reimburse emergency cleanup costs.

"I believe in giving people and businesses more than one chance, a number of chances if they're trying to make things right, but I don't believe in 400 chances," said Doreen Farr, a former planning commissioner running for a seat on the board.

Greka officials have mounted an aggressive defense, threatening to sue the county for \$100 million if it isn't allowed to reopen and offering a \$25,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of saboteurs.

Meanwhile, even with operations largely shut down, firefighters responded to five incidents at Greka installations last week.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080327/ap_on_re_us/chronic_oil_spiller&printer=1; ylt=AhcCb7OP.WERKOO5nvK8OtZH2ocA

USA, MD, BALTIMORE

APRIL 1 2008.

CITY FIREFIGHTERS RESPOND TO ASPHALT TANK EXPLOSION

Crews are keeping an asphalt tank cool after it ruptured today in South Baltimore, a Baltimore Fire Department spokesman said.

Fire spokesman Kevin Cartwright said fire officials received reports about 4:15 p.m. of an explosion near the 20 foot by 60 foot tank in the 6000 block of Pennington Ave.

Cartwright said no fire, injuries or spill were reported. Firefighters are keeping the tank cool while asphalt is transferred into another tank on site.

The tankers have arrived to start the transfer process. He said firefighters are using a mix of foam and water to keep the tank temperature regulated.

http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/baltimore_city/bal-tanker0331,0,5392679.story