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"RELEASE 2009 – 558 NEWSY STUFF"

December 23 2009



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MERRY CHRISTMAS ALL !!!

USA, NC, LAKEVIEW, DECEMBER 17 2009. INVESTIGATORS PROBE CAUSE OF GAS STATION EXPLOSION



A gasoline vapor explosion on Tuesday, Dec. 15, 2009, caused some damage to the Short Shop gas station on U.S. Highway 1 in Lakeview.

State and federal investigators were at a Moore County gas station Wednesday to determine the cause of a Tuesday night explosion that injured two men. Two workers from Charlotte-based Law Petroleum were using a power grinder on an underground petroleum tank at the Exxon Short Stop, at 4936 U.S. Highway 1 in the Lakeview community, shortly before 7 p.m. when gasoline vapors apparently ignited and exploded, authorities said. Slabs of concrete buckled and caved into a crater near the gas pumps, and rocks and other debris rained down on a state Highway Patrol cruiser that was parked at the gas station. The state trooper told authorities that the fireball produced in the explosion was higher than the canopy over the gas pumps. The two Law Petroleum workers suffered minor burns, authorities said. Officials with

Law Petroleum and managers for the Exxon Short Stop declined to comment Wednesday. Station managers said only that the convenience store would reopen Wednesday afternoon, although the gas pumps will be out of service indefinitely. Authorities said the underground gas tank was empty and that gas vapors from the line connecting the tank to the gas pumps likely exploded. Frank Staples, safety officer with the Circle V Fire Department, which responded to the explosion, said Wednesday that the two workers were "extremely lucky" to be alive.

<http://www.wral.com/news/local/story/6630220/>

USA, WYO, CASPER, DECEMBER 17 2009. NATRONA CREWS RESPOND TO OIL TANK FIRE

Emergency crews from four Natrona County agencies responded Monday to an oil tank fire near Gas Hills Road, roughly 50 miles west of Casper. Crews found three 400-pound barrel tanks of oil with fire burning around their bases. A fourth tank had ruptured, with the explosion sending that tank airborne, landing "away from the other three tanks," according to a Natrona County Fire Prevention Bureau press release. Fire crews used water and foam to extinguish the flames and cool the remaining three tanks. A valve failure on an automatic flaring device that burns off dangerous gases caused the fire. No injuries were reported.

http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming/article_ba6f373e-e9ff-11de-8ef9-001cc4c002e0.html

USA, TX, HOUSTON, DECEMBER 17 2009. SHELL TRANSFERRING THOUSANDS OF JOBS TO INDIA, PHILIPPINES

In order to reduce costs, global oil major Royal Dutch Shell will soon transfer additional office jobs from Houston and elsewhere to India and the Philippines. Shell has also announced that it would slash 5,000 jobs by year-end, including hundreds in Houston as part of a sweeping reorganisation new CEO Peter Voser said is needed to make the company more competitive. According to internal Shell documents, the European oil giant has been transferring additional office jobs from Houston and elsewhere to India and the Philippines to reduce costs. The migration programmes affect employees in finance and other support functions, which are being consolidated in shared service centres in low-cost countries to fit the new company structure. It's unclear how many of Shell's 13,000 employees in Houston will be affected by the migration plans. Partly, that's because company officials are still deciding which jobs will stay or go abroad, and are rolling out the plans in phases that run into next year. But at least a few divisions in Houston are preparing to be downsized dramatically. Major oil companies including Shell, ConocoPhillips and BP have been cutting jobs, capital spending budgets and other costs in response to the global economic downturn that has sapped demand for petroleum products like gasoline and diesel fuel. But Shell's migration programmes could have broader implications for Houston. Shell, which is based in The Hague, with US headquarters in Houston, has been involved in a major downsizing since Voser replaced Jeroen van der Veer as CEO in July. By year end, the company plans to cut 5,000 employees, or 10% of its global workforce, under a reorganisation he calls Transition 2009. The process which merged the company's three upstream businesses into two, expanded its downstream group and added a new projects and technology division trimmed management ranks by 20% and has forced 15,000 Shell employees to reapply for a smaller pool of jobs. The company recently told employees within its finance division that some of their jobs are being relocated from Houston and Calgary, Alberta, to finance operations centre in Manila and Chennai. Spokesman Bill Tanner said foreign shared service centres are key to improving the finance unit's competitiveness.

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/news-by-industry/jobs/Shell-transferring-thousands-of-jobs-to-India-Philippines/articleshow/5346773.cms>

USA, TX, HOUSTON, DECEMBER 17 2009. A QUIET HELL

chris vogel

Thanks to lax enforcement by TCEQ, plants along the Houston Ship Channel launch tons of toxic gases into our air, and face little penalty even when they exceed pollution limits over and over again. It was just after dawn along the Houston Ship Channel when all hell broke loose inside the Valero oil refinery. What had begun as a small fire in a storage tank quickly sparked an explosion,

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sending 3,461 pounds of sulfur dioxide into the air and five workers to the hospital. None of the toxic pollutant, which can trigger a range of respiratory, heart and lung diseases and forms acid rain, was permissible under the refinery's state-issued permit. Shortly after the blast, television news stations broadcast images of burning equipment and charred debris. People living in the nearby [Manchester](#) neighborhood were ordered to close their windows and doors and stay inside. On that humid morning of August 4, 2008, Delia Del Valle was among them. The 68-year-old retiree had spent the majority of her days living and raising her now-grown children less than ten blocks away from the Valero plant. She has lymphoma, and believes that her cancer was caused by the toxins and carcinogens routinely belched into the air by the scores of refineries and petrochemical plants that dominate east Houston along the ship channel, seven miles from downtown. Del Valle, a petite woman whose wrinkled face is swollen from chemotherapy, remembers the explosion and being able to write her name in the ash that settled on top of her car afterward. Though that in itself was not unusual. Del Valle often found her car coated in debris, thanks to a never-ending drizzle of legal and illegal pollution. Within days of the Valero explosion, other nearby plants also unexpectedly spit up huge amounts of toxins. On August 8, a tank overflowed at an [ExxonMobil](#) chemical plant in [Baytown](#), releasing 3,623 pounds of benzene into the atmosphere. Benzene is one of the longest-known carcinogens and is used to make plastics, lubricants and rubbers. It also appears naturally in crude oil. The [EPA](#) requires that any accidental release of benzene greater than ten pounds must be reported, and doctors say there is no known safe level of exposure to any carcinogen. Nine days later, at the same ExxonMobil plant, an equipment failure caused the release of 16,325 pounds of pollutants in six hours, including carcinogens and other chemicals that can cause birth defects and damage the nervous system. That's the equivalent of eight toxic elephants stampeding into Houston. Two days after that, there was a valve malfunction at one of [LyondellBasell's](#) plants in [Channelview](#), sending 6,346 pounds of benzene into the air, exceeding the unit's yearly allowable benzene emissions in a single incident. On October 4, Houston Refining coughed 28,641 pounds of sulfur dioxide into the air, more than eight times as much as was released during the Valero explosion. And the day after Christmas, a gasket failure at another one of LyondellBasell's chemical plants in the Houston area emitted 11,542 pounds of a known carcinogen in less than five hours. Out of all of these emission events, most caused by some type of equipment failure, only the Valero explosion — the smallest and the one to make the afternoon news — received an enforcement citation from the state's regulatory agency, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. It penalized the plant \$20,900 but then reduced the fine to \$8,000, cutting the penalty by 62 percent. The other incidents slipped by, unnoticed by the public and unpunished by TCEQ. They represent just a small handful of the emission events that occur almost every single day of the year at the nearly 150 chemical and petroleum plants in [Harris County](#). The health and environmental costs of air pollution are not shouldered solely by people such as Del Valle who live close to the refineries and chemical plants. Once the toxins and carcinogens are air-borne, they know no bounds, and doctors say they can just as easily find their prey in River Oaks or Katy as they can in Manchester. During a four-month investigation, the Houston Press examined emission reports submitted to TCEQ over the past six and a half years by 20 facilities along the Houston Ship Channel (see ["Twenty Emitters"](#)). The Press looked at hundreds of thousands of data entries for individual pollutants that were emitted during non-routine operations. The Press found that:

- More than 20 million pounds of pollutants, 450,000 of which are known carcinogens, were emitted due to equipment breakdowns or unscheduled maintenance, startup or shutdown events;
- TCEQ rarely took enforcement action, and when the agency did, the fines were nominal and in most cases later significantly reduced;
- The plants with the most violations paid the lowest percentage of their fines;
- TCEQ is so understaffed that it can take years to finalize penalties, and some critics say it avoids assessing time-consuming violations altogether.
- And, as a matter of policy, TCEQ strayed from federal law by combining multiple federal permit violations into a single state violation, thereby giving industry a break by assessing fewer and less costly penalties.

TCEQ is run by three commissioners who are appointed by the state's governor, currently [Republican Rick Perry](#). Studies show that Perry (as well as other politicians throughout the state) has received more campaign money from the oil and gas industry than any other governor in the country, and critics say he has a vested interest in keeping air pollution regulation and enforcement at a minimum and appointing commissioners who share his pro-business agenda. See rest of article at:

<http://www.houstonpress.com/2009-12-17/news/a-quiet-hell/>

USA, ORE, UMATILLA, DECEMBER 17 2009. MUSTARD LEAK FOUND AT UMATILLA CHEMICAL DEPOT

karen hutchinson-talaski

Minute amounts of mustard agent fumes were detected yesterday within a storage igloo at the Umatilla Chemical Depot, the Hermiston Herald reported. Depot personnel discovered the vapor leak during the course of regular inspections of a structure used to store large containers of mustard agent. The fumes were thought to have come from a leak in one of the containers. The leak does not pose a threat to the public as the storage building has a filtering system that does not allow fumes to escape into the environment. An additional, powered system is added following the detection of any leak. The container with the leak is expected to be found, examined, fixed if warranted and then decontaminated.

http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20091216_8107.php

USA, VA, DRY FORK, DECEMBER 17 2009. DEQ TO HOLD MEETING ON GASOLINE CONTAMINATION IN DRY FORK

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality will hold a public meeting Thursday, Dec. 17, to discuss gasoline contamination in drinking wells in Dry Fork. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. at White Oak Grove Outreach Center on Dry Fork Road. DEQ

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representatives James Barnett and David Kirby will outline the proposed corrective action plan for gasoline contamination in wells in the vicinity of the former Meadow's Grocery at Route 718 and Route 835. The discussion will focus on extending a water line from U.S. Route 29 to areas impacted by dissolved phase gasoline contamination. Any home that was impacted or at risk of future impact from gasoline contamination or who has bad water is encouraged to attend the meeting. There will be time for questions and answers.

<http://www.wpcva.com/articles/2009/12/16/chatham/news/news60.txt>

USA, CA, UKIAH, DECEMBER 17 2009. COUNCIL OKS FUNDS FOR STORAGE TANK SPILL CLEANUP

tiffany reveille

The Ukiah City Council approved \$306,383 Wednesday night for cleanup of an underground storage tank spill the city has been working to clean up for at least five years. The amount is roughly a third of the estimated \$800,000 cost of the cleanup to date, according to City Engineer and Public Works Director Tim Eriksen - a fact that came to light after Councilman Phil Baldwin expressed concern about how much the public knew about the issue. Eriksen said while introducing the item that the amount approved unanimously Wednesday night, with Mayor Benj Thomas absent, was a proactive measure. "We had funding for this guaranteed by the state; the state has informed us that funding went away. We assume that it will be coming back, and all indications are that it will be coming back, but we want to get out in front of this plume and start being proactive about it, and so we are putting some funds ahead of that in the hopes to get them back from the state with our plan that's already been approved by the state," Eriksen said. "Under the heading, A stitch in time saves nine, I move that we proceed," Councilman Doug Crane said, less than a minute after Eriksen's comments began. Baldwin asked how much public discussion there had been on the issue. "A great deal," Eriksen said, explaining there had been monitoring, and the discussion was before the council "over quite a long period of time, as much as any other item." "The fact that we're going to deal with a \$306,000 cleanup in less than five minutes is a little bothersome to me, in that I'm not sure the citizens of Ukiah know what's going on, and why we're being proactive and taking this action right now," Baldwin said. He continued, "A lot of these discussions have been in closed session, and I think this is valuable enough, and it's expensive enough, that it merits more than five minutes." City Attorney David Rapport asked what Baldwin was hoping would be said that hadn't already been said. "What will we achieve with \$306,000, where are we going to be digging, what are we going to be doing, and why are we doing it?" Baldwin asked. City Manager Jane Chambers acknowledged the importance of the public understanding the city's spending, "since we're talking about money so much, and the lack of it." She said the cleanup had been under way for five or six years, and the city was going through a state grant process under state guidelines. The city got final approval for its cleanup plan about a year ago, at about the same time the state froze funding for its Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund program. "Since that time, we've been talking about what to do further, but we haven't taken the steps," Chambers said. "If the money hadn't been frozen we would have proceeded, because we would have been assured of getting paid back through the state program." She continued, "We are concerned about what the plume is doing; we're concerned about its impacts on our Airport Business Park area. We have some development that is being planned and taking place in that area, and the sooner that we can clean this up, the sooner we can resolve any impacts on future development in that important area for us." She added the city is obligated to clean up the land with or without help from the state. Rapport said the city could face legal liability if the spill wasn't cleaned up. "Any money we spend now to clean it up that prevents any future harm from occurring will save the city money in the long run," he said. Eriksen said approximately \$800,000 was approved in the city's budget hearings in June, but the city assumed at the time that the state would reimburse the cost. "Basically, we have complete approval for these monies to come back to us. Why this is a budget amendment is just because of the condition the state is in, but our consultants feel like the funding should be back on line very soon," Eriksen said. He said the state had pulled back the funding and reinstated it before. Crane said he had been concerned for years that the plume would grow, increasing the cost of cleanup. Councilwoman Mary Ann Landis said prior councils set aside money from which the current council could cover the cost. Baldwin asked if the public knew what caused the need for the cleanup. Rapport said three of the city's 10,000-gallon tanks leaked gasoline and diesel, despite steps taken at the time of installation to prevent leaks, which he said weren't legally necessary. Hydrocarbon and MTBE contamination resulted. Asked by Ukiah resident Linda Sanders if the plume were moving toward a nearby wetland, Eriksen said he thought its current movement would avoid the area. In other news, the council voted unanimously to continue a 5-percent pay cut for council members that has been in place since March. The salary reduction was continued through June 2011, the same date through which police and fire employees agreed to take a 5-percent salary cut. Council members earn an annual base salary of \$5,880. The cut, to come from the base salary, is expected to save the city about \$3,305 by the end of the specified time, an estimated 11 percent overall salary reduction. The council later ratified an agreement with Director of Public Safety Chris Dewey to implement the 5-percent salary cut he had earlier agreed to take.

http://www.ukiahdailyjournal.com/ci_14015915

INDIA, CHANDIGARH, DECEMBER 17 2009. CAR CATCHES FIRE AT CHANDIGARH PETROL PUMP

A major accident was averted at a petrol pump here Thursday morning when a car caught fire immediately after refuelling. No one was injured in the incident. The car was completely gutted in the fire that engulfed the vehicle hardly 8-10 feet from the petrol and diesel dispensers of the Sector 39 petrol pump. The occupants of the car, hailing from Kharar town, 15 km from here, immediately jumped out of the vehicle as they saw flames coming out. The petrol pump staff seemed at sea initially to put out the fire. The fire-fighting cylinders brought by them could not control the fire. The staff was forced to run with small buckets of water from a tap. The

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fire brigade reached after nearly 25 minutes. The car was completely burnt by then. "We got a call from the petrol pump and a fire brigade was sent. There was not much damage except for the car catching fire," a fire brigade official said.

http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/uncategorized/car-catches-fire-at-chandigarh-petrol-pump_100290814.html

USA, NORTH CAROLINA, VASS, DECEMBER 17 2009. GASOLINE TANK EXPLOSION IN VASS INJURES 2 WORKERS

Two workers for a Charlotte-based company suffered minor injuries Tuesday night when an underground gasoline tank they were inspecting exploded. The explosion happened shortly before 7 p.m. at the Exxon Short Shop at 4936 U.S. 1 in the Lakeview community, according to fire officials. Circle V Fire Chief Mike Cameron said the men were using a power grinder while inspecting an underground tank when gasoline vapors apparently ignited. The explosion created a 25-foot fireball, Cameron said. It caused slabs of concrete to buckle and cave in near the gas pumps, authorities said. The injured men, employees of Law Petroleum of Charlotte, were inside a hole standing on top of the tank when the explosion happened, Cameron said. He declined to release the men's names. The men were taken to FirstHeath Moore Regional Hospital in Pinehurst and have been released, he said. One worker was thrown at least 20 feet over a truck before landing in the parking lot, Cameron said. A second worker was thrown across the parking lot. The explosion also damaged a canopy over the gas tanks and the car of a state Highway Patrol trooper, Cameron said. Two other Law Petroleum employees were not injured. The station remained closed Wednesday while the Moore County fire marshal and the state Department of Labor investigate, Cameron said.

<http://www.fayobserver.com/Articles/2009/12/17/961180>

TANZANIA, DAR ES SALAAM, DECEMBER 18 2009. EWURA MOVES AGAINST MOBILE 'FUEL STATIONS' >> REGULATOR RECEIVES REPORTS THAT THE VEHICLES HAVE BEEN SPOTTED MOVING AROUND SELLING FUEL TO MOTORISTS

The Energy and Water Regulatory Authority (Ewura) is warning of stern action against errant fuel dealers following the seizure of two potentially deadly "mobile fuel station" tankers in Dar es Salaam. The authority said two major fuel dealers were being investigated over the illicit business, which involves the use by the wayward retailers of motor vehicles fitted with tanks and fuel pumps. Ewura moved swiftly after receiving reports that the vehicles had been spotted moving around the streets of Dar es Salaam, selling fuel to needy motorists, in contravention of the law on trade in petroleum products. Ewura also told The Citizen that they were aware that some oil companies were engaging in the illegal sale of petroleum products directly from petrol tankers. The Ewura principal communications and public relations officer, Mr Titus Kaguo, confirmed that the authority had seized the two "mobile fuel stations" in the city. Mr Kaguo said the trucks were fitted with hoses connected to metered-dispensing nozzles for easy delivery of the oil products to customers. He said Ewura acted after being tipped off by some good Samaritans. He said that after being notified about the illegal fuel business, Ewura dispatched inspectors to the Chanika and Sinza suburbs of the city, who spotted at least two mobile petrol stations, one in each of the residential areas. "We have issued a strong warning to all those engaged in this illegal business," he said, adding that the regulator would not issue such licences, though they had received some applications. "Some operators have applied for licences for the provision of mobile services but we find that it goes against both the environment protection and human health security guidelines." An ordinary petrol station has special infrastructure to accommodate a spillover of fuel, or contain an explosion. "This cannot be guaranteed in a mobile petrol station," the Ewura official said. He noted that such businesses were often conducted from sideways, posing a grave threat to people's lives and also risked damage to the environment, as the products are dangerously volatile and highly explosive. "Product spills and leakage lead to environmental degradation and can also cause fire outbreaks, which may result in loss of lives and property," he said. Mr Kaguo said one of the trucks spotted by the Ewura officials had been identified as allegedly belonging to Kobil Mandela Petrol Station. The truck, with Kobil markings, he added, was reportedly found selling fuel products to the public in Chanika, in the outskirts of the city. The other one was spotted, allegedly selling the products in the Sinza suburb in Kinondoni district in the city. But contacted for comment, the marketing officer of Kobil Mandela Petrol Station, Mr Daudi Kilimo, said the station did not own the mobile fuel dispenser. However, he acknowledged the existence of such a vehicle, but said it belonged to one of their dealers, who was using the company's logo. He said the dealer had been contracted to supply fuel to some companies in the city for their office generator use. But he said the dealer had later sold the truck after realising that the business was not profitable. "The truck is definitely not owned by our company, but is the property of one of our dealers," he said. On verification, Mr Kaguo said, the trucks had been found to be equipped with fuel delivery pumps, including the metered-dispensing nozzles. He, however, added that the meters were not calibrated, and though the vehicles had portable fire extinguishers, they were not powerful enough to contain a fire in case of such an emergency. After interrogating the drivers, Ewura officials found that they did not have the licences to carry out such a business. He said that according to Ewura rules and procedures, the operation of such "mobile" petrol stations is illegal and must be stopped immediately. "We are watching and should we establish that the business is still going on, we will take action immediately, according to the law," he warned. "While questioning the operators of the mobile fuel stations, we realised that the businessmen were not aware that they were conducting an illegal business. That is why we decided to warn them and issue public announcements to dissuade others from engaging in similar business," Mr Kaguo said. He said the proof that fuel dealers were not aware that the business was illegal were the applications sent to Ewura offices seeking licences. "After seeing those mobile fuel dispensers, other businessmen applied for licences. But we have turned them down because it is illegal," he said. Mr Kaguo said that besides being illegal and dangerous, those operations contravened the principles of fair trade. "It was not fair trade because some of the vehicles were found selling fuel near registered fuel stations," he said. Mr Kaguo said Ewura would conduct regular checks and inspections in various parts of the country and crack down on the offenders. Recently, the Ewura general manager, Mr

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Haruna Masebu, published a statement in the newspapers, alerting the public about the danger posed by illegal business in petroleum products. He cautioned that illegal vending might "increase the high risk of fuel contamination with all the undesirable effects". He appealed to the petroleum truck owners and operators to refrain from selling petroleum products directly from their vehicles. Ewura regulations state that petroleum business shall be carried out according to licence terms and conditions, which do not allow the delivery of petroleum products except at the authorised destinations, including wholesale, authorised consumer and retail premises. Any person contravening that will be committing an offence and shall be liable to severe punishment, including payment of fines and could face criminal charges. But the situation in formal fuel stations is not any better. Last September, Ewura revealed that more than 70 per cent of all the 900 petrol stations countrywide engage in illicit operations that endanger the safety of their customers. A countrywide survey conducted by Ewura found those stations to be operating below the prescribed standards.

<http://thecitizen.co.tz/newe.php?id=16341>

UK, LONDON, DECEMBER 18 2009. BBC SETTLES TRAFIGURA LIBEL CASE

[Article history](#)

[Today's case result can be read in full at this link.](#)

Apology and charity payout over allegations that Trafigura waste caused deaths is accompanied by combative BBC statement. The BBC today made what it presented as a tactical climbdown in its libel battle with the oil trading company [Trafigura](#). After negotiations with Trafigura director Eric de Turckheim this week, the broadcaster agreed to apologise for a Newsnight programme, pay £25,000 to charity, and withdraw any allegation that Trafigura's toxic waste dumped in Africa had caused deaths. But at the same time, the BBC issued a combative statement, pointing out that the dumping of Trafigura's hazardous waste had led to the British-based oil trader being forced to pay out £30m in compensation to victims. "The BBC has played a leading role in bringing to the public's attention the actions of Trafigura in the illegal dumping of 500 tons of hazardous waste" the statement said. "The dumping caused a public health emergency with tens of thousands of people seeking treatment." Trafigura had only brought the libel action against a single aspect of Newsnight's reporting, the BBC statement went on: "Experts in the [compensation] case were not able to establish a link between the waste and serious long-term consequences, including deaths." In a confidential out-of-court settlement earlier this year, [an agreed joint statement was issued by Trafigura and lawyers Leigh Day](#), representing almost 30,000 claimants in the [Ivory Coast](#). It described the consequences of the waste dumping as "low-level" illness, rather than deaths or miscarriages. This left an earlier Newsnight programme exposed to litigation: Trafigura claimed Newsnight had specifically accused them of causing deaths, and that they were therefore entitled to recover damages under British libel law. The BBC's decision to settle caused dismay among some journalistic staff today. One commented: "This result is very unfair. It is completely outrageous that Trafigura should never yet have been brought to a court verdict on their own behaviour, but the BBC should have been penalised for trying to report on it." BBC sources said one factor in the management decision to settle was the fear that Carter-Ruck, Trafigura's libel lawyers, could run up potential bills of as much as £3m if the issue came to a full trial, particularly in the uncertain climate of British libel law. A hearing would have to be conducted before controversial libel judge Mr Justice Eady. In a court statement before Eady at the High Court this morning, it was agreed that "The BBC accepts the conclusions reached by the experts in the personal injury action [and] acknowledges that the evidence does not establish that Trafigura's 'slops' caused any deaths, miscarriages or serious long-term injuries. Accordingly, the BBC has withdrawn those allegations and has agreed to broadcast an appropriate apology on Newsnight." The outcome represents a partial success on behalf of Trafigura for Carter-Ruck partner Adam Tudor. [Trafigura's attempts to enforce a "super-injunction" against the Guardian](#), preventing parliamentary reporting, led to political uproar. A reprimanding statement from the Lord Chief Justice followed, plus a parliamentary inquiry and the eventual collapse of an attempted ban on publication of the contents of a scientific report disclosing that Trafigura's waste was potentially highly toxic. De Turckheim issued his own statement this morning, repeating the contentious claim that "The slops were... dumped illegally by an independent company called Compagnie Tommy – a deplorable action which Trafigura did not and could not have foreseen." Internal emails published by the Guardian show that Trafigura executives were in fact aware of the hazardous nature of their waste, and the need for specialist expensive disposal. Trafigura is currently facing prosecution in Amsterdam, for allegedly lying about the nature of the waste during an earlier attempt to dispose of it cheaply.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2009/dec/17/bbc-trafigura>

USA, ID, MUD LAKE, DECEMBER 18 2009. GAS TANKS EXPLODE, CREATE HUGE FLAMES AT MUD LAKE GAS STATION

[Watch the Video http://www.kidk.com/news/local/79594817.html](http://www.kidk.com/news/local/79594817.html)

[Watch the Video http://www.localnews8.com/Global/story.asp?S=11696848](http://www.localnews8.com/Global/story.asp?S=11696848)

[Slideshow http://www.localnews8.com/Global/category.asp?C=180200](http://www.localnews8.com/Global/category.asp?C=180200)



Telephone service is out for nearly 150 telephone customers in the Terreton-Mud Lake area due to burned line behind the gas station. Crews say they hope to have it restored by late this afternoon. After two hours of battling 100 foot flames, fire fighters were able to extinguish a massive fire at a gas station in Mud Lake. The blaze was a result of a tanker that exploded early Thursday evening causing hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage. Jefferson County fire crews were called out to the explosion at Ike's Tesoro Gas Station, 1092 E 1500 N on Highway 33/28, around 5:30 p.m. Then one by one, more crews, mostly volunteer, from the surrounding area were called out within minutes of the initial report after more tanks exploded. A total of three tanks were destroyed. "The second

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explosion was kind of scary," stated Steve Shivley, 22. "We heard some people down there by the apartments screaming, people running trying to drive away as fast as they could." Miraculously, no one was injured. Onlookers say one point, it felt like the whole town was out watching the spectacle. The Shivley brothers were actually far way when they saw the sky turn orange and decided to join in. "We got done loading hay trucks and were driving home when we seen a big orange glow in the sky," described John Shivley, 19. "We look down here to Mud Lake and we seen the fire starting, so we came from there and drove down here." "The first explosion we saw was from two miles away, and it just kinda lit up the sky," said Steve Shivley. "A big orange glow and then you can see the flame. The next big explosion was like a huge mushroom cloud, an orange ball of flame." One woman said her grandson was working at the gas station when the explosion happened. Reporter: "Have you talked to him tonight?" Carol Mecham: "A couple of times." Reporter: "What did he say? What happened?" Mecham: "He said that, they told him to get out of there, and he called 911, and called on of his bosses. She said get out of there, and they got out of there." A friend of the gas station owner says the fire started after the tanker was filling three unleaded gasoline tanks behind the store. Deputies say the truck began experiencing problems, and soon burst into flames. The flames then caused one of the tanks to explode. Local News 8 spoke to the owner, but he did not want to go on camera. He was visibly distraught and said he more than likely lost his business. Fire officials said there was little damage done to the back of the building itself. Law enforcement evacuated several homes around the area. Residents were able to return to their homes before 9 p.m. Ambulance crews set up an emergency center at the Senior Citizen's Center. There the community rallied together and brought in food for the fire fighters. One woman who lives about two miles away from the gas station says she could see the flames from her home. Ryan McBride said he was heading home from work when he saw the flames shooting almost a hundred feet into the air. He says he has heard two explosions so far and there is a truck fully engulfed in flames. The explosion could even be seen from the Interstate. When our Local News 8 photographer was on his way, he saw one explosion while he was near Sage Junction exit at milepost 143. McBride saw the same explosion. He says he saw a huge mushroom of fire head straight into the sky. The flames were also reportedly seen from Menan.

<http://www.localnews8.com/Global/story.asp?S=11696848>

USA, VA, RICHMOND, DECEMBER 18 2009. TANKER FLIPS, SPILLS FUEL ON RIC PROPERTY

A tanker truck delivering 8,000 gallons of jet fuel overturned yesterday morning on Airport Drive within the Richmond International Airport property in Henrico County. The accident closed the main entrance to the airport and all lanes of Williamsburg Road between Lewis Road and Airport Drive for most of the day, according to Henrico police. The driver, who was trapped for about 45 minutes in the vehicle, was extracted in stable condition and taken to VCU Medical Center after the accident shortly after 10 a.m., police said. The truck failed to negotiate a left turn and rolled over twice before coming to a halt about a half-mile west of the airport's main entrance on Williamsburg Road, police and witnesses said. Emergency crews began pumping fuel from the truck about 4 p.m. A Henrico fire department spokesman said no drinking-water supplies were contaminated by the spill although some of the liquid entered Gillie Creek on the airport property. Initial estimates were that about 1,000 gallons spilled, according to Troy Bell, Capital Region Airport Commission spokesman. Flights were not delayed, and Bell said access to the terminal was gained from Charles City Road. The tank itself ruptured, Bell said. "We had a lot of [jet fuel] spill out." Bell said cleanup work could take weeks. Airport Drive was reopened northbound - headed away from the airport - but the southbound lanes into the airport remained closed late yesterday evening. Williamsburg Road opened to traffic yesterday afternoon. "I'm not seeing congestion issues out front," Bell said yesterday afternoon. "It wasn't a particularly busy travel day. If this had been a week later, it would have been a different story." Airport police and fire personnel responded to the accident, as did Henrico police, fire and hazardous-material units.

http://www.waterworld.com/index/display/news_display/138987412.html

MALAYSIA, BUTTERWORTH, DECEMBER 18 2009. PENANG CUSTOMS SEIZE FIRECRACKERS WORTH RM518,275

The Penang Customs Department seized 20,731kg of fire crackers, worth RM518,275 and duty of RM336,878.75 was not paid, which were smuggled from China. State Customs Director Datuk Matrang Suhaili said the seizure was made at 11am yesterday after a 10-day surveillance following a public tip. He said a 25-year-old Malaysian had been detained for further investigation. Matrang said the firecrackers were smuggled in a container addressed to a factory in Sungai Petani. "However, the factory denied the consignment was theirs," he told reporters here on Thursday.

<http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newsgeneral.php?id=463146>

USA, AKA, PORT MACKENZIE, DECEMBER 18 2009. THREE EXPLOSIONS AT POINT MACKENZIE GAS PLANT >> NO INJURIES, BUT FIREFIGHTERS STILL WORKING ON CLEANUP AFTER EXPLOSIONS LEVELS A BUILDING AT MAT-SU PLANT

 Photo's <http://www.adn.com/news/alaska/story/1059876.html>



Alaska-Crews are working to clean up the damage from three explosions at a Point MacKenzie natural gas plant this morning. An employee of Fairbanks Natural Gas, the company that owns the plant, reported the first explosion at 7:16 a.m., and Deputy Fire Chief Mike Keenan reported a second explosion as he was enroute to the scene before 8 a.m. The fire leveled one building. No injuries were reported, and only one person was working at the time of the explosion. A production building was close enough to the blaze that firefighters protected it by dousing the nearby flames with water. Firefighters also protected tanks that were near flames. The gas flow was turned off. Firefighters from the Central Mat-Su Fire Department responded, at the peak of

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the fire two engines, three tankers, a hazardous materials team, and a rescue team were on scene. The gas company is at mile 2.5 Ayrshire Road in the rural Point MacKenzie area. After 9 a.m. firefighters pulled back from the scene a quarter of a mile away when they witnessed a third explosion, possibly from a semi-truck or oil barrel that had been inside the burning building. The truck had been venting as the building burned and likely had vented all its gas. "It probably exploded because of its diesel fuel," Brodigan said. As of 10 a.m. the fire was burning the debris of the building, with temperatures of 7 degrees are keeping the fire in check.

http://www.ktva.com/local/ci_14018411

ABKHAZIA, SUKHUMI, DECEMBER 18 2009. ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER IN SUKHUMI: SOLAR OIL IS LEAKING FROM TANKER

Coast of Abkhazia is facing environmental disaster. Diesel fuel has already polluted about 200 meters of the Sukhumi beach and covered about 3 square kilometers of sea. This is a result of leakage of fuel from Turkish tanker MAG-1 that three days ago broke adrift and crashed into the Bay of Sukhumi. The vessel became deeply immersed in the coastal sand and pebbles. The Department of Emergency Situations of the puppet regime asked the Ministry of Emergency Situations of Russia for assistance. Abkhazians require equipment for pumping fuel and water from holds and engine room. "The situation is in limbo until arrival of Russian specialists" - said head of the Abkhazian DES Leo Kvitsinia. The leakage of diesel fuel from the tanker could have serious consequences for ecology of the sea, - the chairman of the Abkhazian environmental service Roman Dbar. He explained that amount of harmful emissions is up to two tons of diesel oil, which is coming from the engine room. As to 100 tons of gasoline in middle tank of the vessel, the container, according to available information, is not damaged. According Dbar, leakage from the fuel tanks of a tanker has been happening since the accident, but only now serious consequences of it became visible. Daily water tests show that level of oil in it many times exceeds maximum permissible concentration. "A spot of diesel fuel is spreading towards the open sea and this is due to the wind direction, - the chief ecologist of Abkhazia - but as soon as the wind changes the course and pollution of the shoreline will inevitably happen."

http://eng.expertclub.ge/portal/cnid_2794/alias_Expertclub/lang_en/tabid_2546/default.aspx

VIETNAM, HANOI, DECEMBER 18 2009. SHELL TO SELL LAOS RETAIL UNIT TO PETROVIETNAM OIL

Royal Dutch Shell Plc will sell its Laos retail unit to PetroVietnam Oil Co., a unit of Vietnam's state-owned oil monopoly, which plans to expand into neighboring countries. "Buying Shell's Laos business is the first step for PV Oil in its strategy of expanding market share in other countries in the region, including Laos and Cambodia," Hanoi-based PV Oil said in an e-mailed statement today. It didn't give a value for the purchase. PV Oil, which has representative offices in Caracas, Moscow and Singapore, is targeting "keeping pace with leading global oil trading houses," it said. The oil importer and distributor's parent company, Vietnam Oil & Gas, has stakes in ventures in countries ranging from Algeria to Angola. The company may also expand into southern China, Ho Tung Vu, PV Oil's deputy general director, said in an interview today in Ho Chi Minh City. "PV Oil wants to compete with other regional and global players in the downstream business," the statement said. Downstream is a term used in the oil industry to describe the refining, sale and distribution of petroleum products. Crude oil produced in Vietnam is exported by PV Oil, which also imports petroleum products to meet domestic consumption. It also processes and distributes oil products.

<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/business/6774837.html>

USA, TX, WACO, DECEMBER 18 2009. ETHANOL BLEND MAKES WAY TO WACO GAS STATIONS

j.b. smith

Click-2-Listen <http://www.wacotrib.com/news/content/news/stories/2009/12/18/12182009wacethanol.html>

Ethanol blends have quietly made their way to Waco-area gasoline pumps this fall, and that has Bob Potter fuming. Potter, a retired defense worker who lives in Hewitt, calls the 10 percent ethanol blend a "snake oil concoction" that hurts his gas mileage and maybe his engine. "I'm not getting my money's worth," he said. "I don't see any difference in price with the ethanol blend. I'm worried about damaging my vehicle, and I'm incensed that I'm paying the same price for less miles per gallon." Refiners have begun selling stations the 10 percent blend, called E10, because of federal laws that require them to ratchet up their ethanol sales nationwide over time. And E15, a 15 percent ethanol blend, may be on the way. Responding to requests from the ethanol industry, the Environmental Protection Agency this month said it was considering increasing the amount of ethanol that retailers could blend into gasoline to 15 percent. The final decision would come no sooner than May, when the U.S. Department of Energy is to complete tests of whether E15 damages cars. The blend would be recommended only for cars from the 2001 model year and later. The ethanol industry has sought the new standard, saying the ethanol market needs to expand to avoid overproduction. The industry argues that expanding the market would create an incentive for developing a new generation of ethanol plants that could use grass, corncobs and wood chips. In the meantime, refiners have been expanding their use of ethanol blends to meet Bush-era federal mandates on ethanol use. The E10 blend arrived at Waco gas stations in October and is becoming standard everywhere because of federal mandates, industry sources said. "That's federal law," said Bill Day, a spokesman for Valero, the refining giant that owns eight gas stations in Waco. "Eventually, everybody will be buying fuel with ethanol." Potter isn't the only one who doesn't like it. The ethanol backlash has brought together unlikely allies, including environmentalists, the American Automobile Association, and refining and small engine industry groups. The environmental group Public Citizen urged its members to oppose the E15 standard, saying ethanol causes ozone pollution and in concentrations of more than 10 percent can damage engines. Day said Valero has no official position on E15, but he said gas stations need to be able to accommodate older vehicles that aren't ethanol-compatible. "We

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would be hesitant to produce a fuel not warranted by engine manufacturers," he said. Ethanol advocates say the fuel cleans out engines and helps them run with fewer knocks without environmentally hazardous fuel additives. But some Waco businesses already have seen problems with engines run on ethanol blends. Mechanics at Freddie Kish's Complete Car Care Center said they recently have worked on three cars they diagnosed as having problems related to ethanol blend use. "None of them had lasting issues, but all had some expenses to get that fuel out," said general manager David Derosier. He said motorists might have filled up at stations that had fuel which wasn't adequately mixed, resulting in "hot spots" of concentrated ethanol. Mechanic Scott Snyder said the shop also has had to work on cars that were improperly filled with E85, a high-ethanol blend intended only for specially designed cars. "It does something horrible to the fuel tank and injectors," he said. Snyder said he has been looking for 100 percent gasoline to put in his bass boat, but he can't find it. He said he's had no trouble so far with his boat, though. Jim Yowell, who sells and repairs boats as owner of Yowell's Boat Yard, said ethanol blends can damage older boats, but those after 2001 should be fine with E10. Even owners of newer boats should add special treatments to counter ethanol's tendency to pick up moisture, he added. Yowell said his only experience with ethanol blend damage was two years ago, when an owner brought in a new Yamaha he had filled up at a South Texas gas station. Testing revealed that the fuel was 50 percent ethanol, and the fuel had ruined a power head. Yamaha's warranty covered the \$8,000 in damage, he said. Meanwhile, Potter, the anti-ethanol motorist, drives a 2001 Camry and a 2004 Silverado — model years that are supposed to run well on ethanol. Still, he worries that E10 in time will take a toll on his vehicle, and he's not convinced that it's any better for the environment than straight fossil fuel. "I'm not sure there's an environmental savings," he said. "They have to truck the ethanol here, and there's a lot of energy costs in producing corn." Potter said he's getting less from his money when he pays for E10, because it gets fewer miles per gallon and costs as much as regular gasoline. E10 gets about 3 percent fewer miles per gallon than gasoline, according to estimates by Consumers Union and other groups. Day, the Valero spokesman, had no definite answer as to whether E10 costs less than pure gasoline. "That varies based on market conditions," he said.

<http://www.wacotrib.com/news/content/news/stories/2009/12/18/12182009wacethanol.html>

USA, NY, NEWPORT, DECEMBER 18 2009. HELIPORT'S PLAN FUELS CONCERN DOWNTOWN

The city is putting a 4,000-gallon fuel tank at the Downtown Heliport sometime next year. The goal is to reduce the number of flights from the heliport, as helicopters go elsewhere to refuel. About 10 percent of the heliport's flights are solely for refueling, which causes unnecessary noise for the community, said Janel Patterson, spokesperson for the E.D.C. The tank will be above ground, adjacent to the parking area inside the heliport fence at South St. near Broad St. Patterson said in an e-mail that the tank was designed in consultation with F.D.N.Y. to withstand vehicle and aircraft impacts, along with hurricanes, floods, fires and tornadoes. It will also be protected by bollards. Still, some Financial District residents are worried that the tank could become a terrorist target and want the city to more thoroughly screen the cars that will be parking nearby. The E.D.C. will make a second presentation to Community Board 1's Financial District Committee next month to address those concerns. The fuel tank installation is part of a \$640 million renovation of the heliport by operator Saker Aviation (formerly FirstFlight). The current location of the terminal flight operations room prevents staff from seeing the entire area around the heliport, but after the renovation they will have an unobstructed 180-degree view, Patterson said. Downtown Heliport serves corporate, sightseeing, government and emergency flights. Service to local airports has been suspended since earlier this fall because of operator U.S. Helicopter's financial problems. The New York Times reported that Saker Aviation is having problems as well, but Patterson said the E.D.C. is not concerned.

http://www.downtownexpress.com/de_347/heliports.html

AUSTRALIA, BRISBANE, DECEMBER 18 2009. MORETON BAY OIL SPILL HEARING SCHEDULED FOR JULY

The oil spill in March led to an extensive and costly clean-up of Moreton and Bribie Islands and Sunshine Coast beaches.

The captain of a cargo ship that spilled more than 270,000 litres of oil off the south-east Queensland coast, and his employer, face a five-day committal hearing next year. Bernardino Gonzales Santos, 47, from the Philippines is facing charges of disposal of oil in coastal waters, and failure to notify authorities. The charges were mentioned in the Brisbane Magistrates Court today. The oil spill in March led to an extensive and costly clean-up of Moreton and Bribie Islands and Sunshine Coast beaches. The charges against Santos and his employer, Swire Shipping, will be heard in July.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/12/18/2776145.htm>

USA, IS, DES MOINES, DECEMBER 18 2009. DES MOINES HAZMAT TEAM WORKS ON OILY EASTSIDE MESS

tom alex



The Des Moines Fire Department hazardous materials team is trying to sop up as much oil as possible as it flows down East Ninth Street this morning from a former service station at Guthrie Avenue. Officials received word of the spill about 8:30 a.m. A broken pipe in the building on the southwest corner of the intersection apparently filled the pit where workers changed oil in vehicles over the years. The water and oil ran out under garage bay doors. Firefighters had to pry open the front door to gain access to the building. Other firefighters were putting down absorbent pads to soak up as much oil as possible. They also were using sand as a barrier. Part of the oil slick was on the west-side East Ninth Street sidewalk and some of it was flowing through the snowbanks at the side of the road

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/article/20091217/NEWS/91217009/Des-Moines-hazmat-team-works-on-oily-eastside-mess>

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USA, CA, SANTA MARIA, DECEMBER 18 2009. GREKA OIL SPILL IS SECOND THIS WEEK

Santa County Fire crews responded yesterday morning to an oil spill at a Greka Energy facility on Dominion Road near Santa Maria. It was the second spill this week at a Greka-owned site on Dominion Road. Other than the time of the spill, 10:24 a.m., little else was known. Forty-eight hours earlier, on Tuesday morning, fire crews responded to a facility located on the same road where an estimated six barrels, or 252 gallons, of oil, and nearly 200 gallons of polluted water spewed onto the ground. Authorities said a rancher reported the spill.

<http://www.thedailysound.com/News/121809Greka>

USA, KY, FT. MITCHELL, DECEMBER 18 2009. DIXIE HWY. REOPENS AFTER ACID SPILL

Watch the Video http://www.wcpo.com/news/local/story/Dixie-Hwy-Reopens-After-Acid-Spill/ibK_K3JKDk6DbWiGqXbqUA.csp

Dixie Highway in Northern Kentucky has reopened after a chemical spill shut down the interstate ramp from I-75/71 on Thursday. A tractor trailer spilled 30 gallons of acid onto the ramp around 8:15 a.m. The truck company carrying the chemicals was Univar. There were no injuries and as a precaution, Central Trust Bank was evacuated. Dixie Highway near the highway was also closed as a result of the spill, but only as a precaution. There was no immediate danger to the public, but it was a corrosive solution that had to be cleaned up by professionals. The accident remains under investigation.

http://www.wcpo.com/news/local/story/Dixie-Hwy-Reopens-After-Acid-Spill/ibK_K3JKDk6DbWiGqXbqUA.csp

USA, MA, FRAMINGHAM, DECEMBER 19 2009. 2 SERVICE STATION BAYS DAMAGED IN FRAMINGHAM FIRE

Photo Gallery <http://www.metrowestdailynews.com/news/x1535676273/House-burning-on-Portmore-Lane-in-Framingham>

Photo Gallery

<http://www.metrowestdailynews.com/multimedia/x967379501/Firefighters-battle-blaze-at-European-Auto-Body-in-Framingham>

Watch the Video

<http://www.metrowestdailynews.com/multimedia/x967379501/Firefighters-battle-blaze-at-European-Auto-Body-in-Framingham?popular=true>

Two bays at a Waverley Street service station were destroyed this morning in a single-alarm fire, the fire chief said. Fire Chief Gary Daugherty said the cause of the fire at 324 Waverley St. was still being investigated. No one was injured. A police officer reported the fire when he saw smoke coming from the building. The exact name of the business is not known. A sign listed three different business names, K&P Gas, Framingham Auto Sales and Global Full Service. When firefighters arrived, heavy smoke was pouring out and could be seen from more than 1/2 mile away. Daugherty said an extra fire engine was summoned to the fire because of the extreme cold. Ice formed on several firefighters' boots and at least one firefighter had ice all over his jacket. Department of Public Works employees spread a gritty material on the water to keep it from freezing. "Some of the guys were slipping and sliding," the chief said. It took firefighters about 30 minutes to get the fire under control, although some stayed on scene until after 1 p.m. Crews from Wayland, Natick and Sudbury helped cover Framingham's calls.

<http://www.metrowestdailynews.com/multimedia/x967379501/Firefighters-battle-blaze-at-European-Auto-Body-in-Framingham?popular=true>


USA, TX, DALLAS, DECEMBER 19 2009. FATAL, FIERY CRASH CLOSES KEY BUSH TURNPIKE RAMP

Watch the Video <http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/dn/latestnews/stories/121809dnmettanker.3651bfe5e.html>

Watch the Video <http://planoblog.dallasnews.com/archives/2009/12/fatal-fiery-crash-closes-key-b.html>

Watch the Video http://www.the33tv.com/news/kdaf-bush-turnpike-raw-tanker-fatality-story_0_3309533.story

Watch the Video <http://www.kvue.com/news/state/Tanker-driver-killed-in-fiery-crash-on-Dallas-tollway-79609282.html>



The ramp from the northbound Dallas North Tollway to eastbound [President George Bush](#) Turnpike could reopen tonight after an overnight tanker accident that killed one person. NTTA crews cleaning up the last of the debris today said all that was left was to fix concrete that was damaged in the fiery wreck. "Most of the damage is because of the flames," said Eric Hemphill, assistant director of maintenance with the [North Texas Tollway Authority](#). Hemphill, who had been on the scene since 1 a.m., said he hopes to have the temporary repairs completed and the ramp reopened by 8 p.m. That means another messy rush hour for commuters in the northern suburbs. "We understand how important these ramps are in the next couple of hours and the weekend to boot," he said. Patches are needed in areas stretching 500 feet down the concrete ramp. A temporary guardrail will protect the 478 feet of concrete wall that was damaged. Once the patches are complete, engineers will inspect the site one last time to make sure it's safe so the ramp can reopen to traffic. Both northbound and southbound ramps were closed for hours early Friday as firefighters worked to clear the scene. The southbound ramp reopened Friday morning. The driver of the truck has been identified as Paul Scott Taylor, 38, of Denton. He was driving truck for Southwest Petroleum Transport of Denton. The Collin County medical examiner's office determined the cause of death to be burns and smoke inhalation. At about 12:16 a.m., the truck rolled over and crashed, causing a massive explosion and fire. The truck struck the concrete barrier and overturned on the eastbound ramp to the [Bush](#) Turnpike from the northbound side of the Tollway. About 8,000 gallons of burning diesel fuel spilled down the

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ramp. Witnesses said the tower of flames could be seen miles away. Police speculated that the driver was going too fast on the ramp and flipped the truck. "We looked up at the ramp and all you could see was sparks blaring," Omair Samjod, who witnessed the crash, told WFAA-TV. "It was actually the 18-wheeler on its side ... the next thing you know it blows up and there's this huge mushroom cloud right on top of us."

<http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/dn/latestnews/stories/121809dnmettanker.3651bfe5e.html>

USA, AZ, TUCSON, DECEMBER 19 2009. APACHE NITROGEN AGREES TO PAY UP TO \$5M FOR BENSON CLEANUP

tony davis

A federal judge has signed a consent decree ordering Apache Nitrogen Products to pay up to \$5 million to continue a cleanup of soil and water contamination near its plant just outside Benson, the Environmental Protection Agency said Thursday. The consent order, signed on Tuesday, also calls on Apache to pay another \$1.2 million to the EPA to cover its past costs for overseeing the company's cleanup activities and for investigation of the pollution. The order was signed by U.S. District Judge John Roll of Tucson. The \$5 million will cover the cost of pumping and treating contaminated ground water in a constructed wetlands system to remove nitrates that had put pollution levels above drinking-water standards, the EPA has said. Pamela Beilke, an Apache Nitrogen Products official, said the company's estimate of the remaining cleanup cost is more like \$3 million. "We have to keep pumping and treating until nitrates are removed, and the shallow aquifer is restored to drinking standards," said Beilke, Apache's director of compliance and quality. "You never know for sure how long that will take." The pollution of the aquifer near the San Pedro River was discovered in the early 1980s. The EPA put the site on the list of Superfund toxic-waste sites in 1990, a year after the company started investigation of the site. Various kinds of cleanup work had begun by the mid- to late 1990s, although the wetlands system wasn't finally operational until 2005 — eight years after it was built. Today it is treating nitrates in the groundwater to about 1 to 2 parts per billion, compared with drinking-water standards limiting nitrate levels to 10 parts per billion, said Andria Benner, an EPA remedial-project manager. The EPA estimates the entire cleanup could take another 20 years, said Janet Magnuson, an EPA attorney. Beilke said the progress in the cleanup work has been impressive, with maps showing that the polluted aquifer area has shrunk dramatically since 2007. "But you never know when that last drop is going to come out," Beilke said. "Water is a vital resource in Arizona," said Keith Takata, director of the Superfund program for the EPA's Pacific Southwest office in San Francisco. "By using cost-effective bio-remediation to clean up groundwater, Apache Nitrogen Products has saved money and protected an essential public resource." Under an earlier EPA administrative order, Apache had in September 2008 documented it had all the cleanup equipment and other materials in place to remove groundwater and soil contamination at the site. In September of this year, Apache and the EPA lodged the proposed consent order with the District Court.

<http://www.azstarnet.com/metro/321834>

TANZANIA, DAR ES SALAAM, DECEMBER 19 2009. MOBILE PETROL VENDORS ARE MERCHANTS OF DEATH

Reports that some traders have been selling petrol straight from oil tankers that are driven around Dar es Salaam streets are disturbing. But they are an indication of just how reckless some people seeking wealth can get, with little or no concern about the possible consequences! For years now, worries having been mounting in the urban centres about the numerous fuel stations located in residential areas, which is a scary situation, indeed. A fire outbreak at one such station could spread fast through a residential neighbourhood, posing a grave danger to residents and their property. This situation is rife in various parts despite warnings by the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (Ewura). And as if that was not bad enough, some fuel merchants are now taking this potential danger everywhere on wheels! In effect, they are playing dice with the safety of residents and properties. What is most disturbing is that the idea of selling petrol machinga-style did crop up in some peoples minds in the first place! One might understand the situation of vendors selling petrol from drums hidden in homesteads, for they are likely to be low class people struggling to eke out a living, and mostly dealing in stolen merchandise. But what can one say about traders who are wealthy enough to buy or hire a fuel tanker worth Sh40 million? These must be money hungry, big-time crooks out to get rich at the expense of other peoples lives. The Ewura crackdown on such merchants of death, is, in fact, overdue. Petrol is a most important, yet very volatile substance, that should be sold in properly designated locations, in specially constructed premises. The devious people masquerading as petrol dealers must never be tolerated.

<http://thecitizen.co.tz/newe.php?id=16367>

USA, TX, GALVESTON, DECEMBER 19 2009. JURY ORDERS BP TO PAY \$100 MILLION >> IT FINDS OIL GIANT EXPOSED WORKERS TO TOXIC SUBSTANCES

brett clanton



BP must pay more than \$100 million in damages for exposing contract workers to toxic substances at its Texas City oil refinery in April 2007, a federal jury in Galveston said on Friday in the latest setback for the troubled plant. The mammoth verdict arose out of a case brought by a BP contractor who claimed the British oil giant's failure to maintain equipment and provide adequate safety controls led to a poisonous chemical release that sent more than 100 workers to area hospitals on the evening of April 19, 2007. The company said it was "shocked and outraged" by the jury's decision and vowed to appeal. Though none of the 10 plaintiffs in the case suffered major long-term health effects from the incident, the jury decided to punish BP with one of the biggest penalties in recent memory from the Galveston court. The decision came as a sharp rebuke of a company that has been publicly called out many times for lax safety at the Texas

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City plant since a March 2005 blast there killed 15 workers and injured scores more. "The reason I brought the case is because BP's record is so horrific, and despite deaths and injuries that continue to occur, nothing's changed," said Anthony Buzbee, attorney for the plaintiffs. BP has maintained there is no evidence that workers were exposed to toxic substances above permissible limits set by federal regulators, and no proof the company was at fault. "The verdict, and punitive damages award in particular, is utterly unjustified, improper and unsupportable," the company said in a statement.

\$10 Million Each

The jury awarded the contract workers \$10 million each in punitive damages, as well as actual damages ranging from \$5,918 to \$244,386 for medical expenses, mental anguish and lost income. U.S. District Court Judge Kenneth Hoyt had instructed the jury it could award punitive damages if plaintiffs proved BP "acted with gross negligence, with malice or willfulness or with callous and reckless indifference to the safety or rights of others." Aaron Wilson Garner, a contract worker with Houston's HydroChem Industrial Services, first brought the suit against BP. He began in 2007 by pushing BP to release results of an internal investigation into the incident. Eventually, the case grew to include 143 plaintiffs from more than a dozen contracting companies. Buzbee also represents the remaining 133 workers. He said he is preparing for their cases to move forward and is intent on making sure BP pays for the incident, since government regulators can only do so much.

No Notices of Violations

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration looked into the 2007 incident, but investigations were closed without any conclusions or notices of violations, according to online databases for the two agencies. "They average \$3 million a day in profits, and the most TCEQ can fine them for a release is \$10,000," Buzbee said. "If you hit them hard enough, you force them to pull their head out of the sand." Plaintiffs alleged they were exposed to carbon disulfide, a harmful compound that made them feel like they had flu-like symptoms, while working on two refining units known as Pipestill 3B and CAT1. Monitors workers wore to detect toxic releases did not go off because they are designed to track different fumes, Buzbee said. Chuck Taylor, 30, one of the plaintiffs in the case, said he spent two nights in the hospital with chest pains and still had headaches, dizziness and fatigue after he was discharged. Now a part-time custodian for a different company, Taylor said he is glad the jury sent a message to BP. "I'm not looking at it, like, '\$10 million, Wooo! What am I going to do,'" he said. "I'm looking at it like it's making a difference in the future." BP's Texas City refinery has been under scrutiny since the blast in 2005 and continues to pay for that disaster. A division of the company paid a \$50 million fine and pleaded guilty to a felony violation of the Clean Air Act in connection with the blast. And in October, OSHA proposed \$87 million in fines against BP for failing to make safety upgrades required under a settlement agreement with the agency following the explosion. BP Products North America said it was formally contesting the citations.

<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/hotstories/6778021.html>

AUSTRALIA, VICTORIA, ALTONA, DECEMBER 19 2009. CORROSIVE CHEMICAL SPILLS AT DEPOT

Map: [Altona North 3025](#)

Emergency services have spent the night attending to a chemical spill at a transport depot in south-west Melbourne. About 500 litres of a highly corrosive disinfectant detergent spilt after 8:00pm (AEDT) at the McColls Transport depot in Altona North, forcing 20 people to evacuate. The chemical is used for killing bacteria in cooling towers and is dangerous to the environment. The Environment Protection Authority has been called in and fire crews are monitoring the next stage of the clean-up. Commander Frank Besanko from the Metropolitan Fire Brigade says the liquid has been contained. "We're cleaning up with the assistance of management," he said. "There's a private company that comes in and takes the waste away for it to get treated, so it can come back in the environment in a safe manner."

http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/12/19/2776482.htm?WT.mc_id=newsmail

SCOTLAND, DUNDEE, DECEMBER 19 2009. BITUMEN FIRE CLOSE TO OIL PLANT

Firefighters have been dealing with a blaze which broke out at a bitumen tank near an oil refinery in Dundee. Six appliances were at the scene close to the Nynus UK site on East Camperdown Street. It is understood water may have become mixed with the bitumen which began steaming and later caught fire. Tayside Police said fire crews were on the scene but that the fire was not believed to be a danger to the public or to the refinery.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/scotland/tayside_and_central/8421934.stm

US FIRE ADMINISTRATION – FEMA, DECEMBER 19 2009. METHANOL HAZARDS

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) examined the [Methanol Safe Handling Manual](#) (PDF, 918.7 Kb) published by the [Methanol Institute](#). According to the Methanol Institute, the manual was designed to be a resource for current information on methanol's properties, potential environmental and health and safety hazards, safe handling practices, emergency response procedures, fire safety, and risk communication. Known as "wood alcohol," methanol is a clear, flammable liquid with a faintly sweet pungent odor. Methanol occurs naturally and is produced synthetically. It is used in multiple products including plastics, paint, construction materials, as well as fuel in some race cars, monster trucks, go-carts, and model planes, boats, and cars. In addition, methanol is utilized for denitrification (i.e., nitrogen removal) in municipal wastewater treatment plants and can also be used as turbine fuel for electric power generation. Ingestion can cause irreversible injury to the nervous system, blindness or death. Methanol causes eye, respiratory system, and skin irritation. The manual explains that methanol fires generate less heat, have nearly invisible flames in daylight, and produces very little smoke. Considering the risks,

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first responders may find the [Methanol Material Safety Data Sheet](#) (PDF, 33.4 Kb) a quick reference and companion to the Methanol Safe Handling Manual. The EMR-ISAC confirmed that the Methanol Institute is offering a free [DVD](#) that can be another resource for training. The DVD discusses basic physical components, key risks of handling methanol, ways to minimize exposure, fire and release into the environment, and event response. For general operating procedures, first responders can also refer to the [Emergency Response Guidebook, guide #131](#).

<http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/fireservice/subjects/emr-isac/infograms/ig2009/49-09.shtm>

USA, FLA, CAPE CORAL, DECEMBER 19 2009. BOMB SQUAD CALLED OUT TO CAPE CORIAL HOME FOR PROPANE TANK REMOVAL

Watch the Video <http://www.abc-7.com/Global/story.asp?S=11701835>

4:39 P.M. - The regional bomb squad has been called out to supervise the removal of the leaking propane tank. Officials for the company that owns the tank, Ameri Gas, decided to take the precaution, said Connie Barron, spokeswoman for the Cape Coral Fire Department. Until the tank is removed, Southeast 23rd Terrace has been blocked off, she said.

3:11 P.P. - Update

Cape Coral firefighters responded to a fire in a garage at a house at 1422 SE 23rd Terrace. The fire was caused by a leaking propane tank that is used to power fork lifts, Operations Chief Tom Tomich said. The tank was in the garage and Yapur Velazquez came out into the garage and lit a cigarette, igniting the propane that had leaked out. The tank itself did not explode. Velazquez was treated for superficial burns at the scene. The explosion caused \$25,000 damage to the garage. Ameri Gas is coming to pick up the tank. Tomich said had the tank exploded it would have destroyed the house, the houses on each side and the city's firetruck out front.

<http://www.news-press.com/article/20091218/NEWS0101/91218033/1075/Bomb-squad-called-out-to-Cape-Corial-home-for-propane-tank-removal>

USA, CA, OAKLAND, DECEMBER 20 2009. HOW TO REMOVE BIODIESEL STAINS FROM CLOTHING



Handwashing with a strong degreaser is the best way to remove biodiesel stains from clothing.

When you spend lots of time working around biodiesel, you inevitably end up ruining much of your wardrobe. My rubber-soled sneakers have melted, most of my clothes are stained, and everywhere I go, people tell me I smell like biodiesel. Is there anything to be done? Recently, a member of our Bay Area biodiesel community posed a question over email about what the best ways are to remove biodiesel stains and smells from clothes. Here is a summary of the responses from the biodiesel stations and suppliers that we know:

If you are able to catch the stain right away, use an absorbent like cornstarch, baby powder or salt to pull the biodiesel to the surface. Let it sit for two minutes on the fabric and then brush it off and wash with very

hot water-- first by hand and then machine wash. If you are unable to catch the stain before it can settle in, hand washing with pure glycerine (a biodiesel by-product), Goo-gone (available at most hardware stores), or "Purple Power" degreaser from Walmart and rinsing with hot water should help. If all else fails, just wear black clothes whenever you're

<http://www.examiner.com/x-33054-Oakland-Alternative-Energy-Buzz-Examiner-y2009m12d18-How-to-remove-biodiesel-stains-from-clothing>

USA, RI, PROVIDENCE, DECEMBER 20 2009. TANK TRUCK OVERTURNS, SPILLING HEATING OIL

bruce landis

A vigorous cleanup effort avoided what could have been a substantial oil spill on the city's East Side yesterday after the axle of a tank truck carrying 1,800 gallons of heating oil broke, dumping the truck on its side and poking holes in its tank. "It's very confined," said Jill Eastman, an emergency response official with the state Department of Environmental Management. She said the cleanup limited the amount of oil spilled and kept what did spill from going far. Most important, "It's not going into a water body," she said. The spill happened while a Scituate Oil Co. truck was driving on Rochambeau Avenue down the hill leading to North Main Street. It was nearly full. When the axle broke, near the Camp Street intersection, the truck's right rear wheels tore away. The truck itself tipped over on its right side, landing with its tank partly on the curb in front of Congregation Beth Shalom. The tank also landed over a storm drain. The crash punched small holes in the tank, and red-tinted oil began to drain out, down the storm drain and into a catch basin a few feet farther down the hill. From there, the storm sewer leads to other catch basins and into the city sewer system. "We can see it running into the catch basin," said acting Battalion Chief Michael Javery of the city Fire Department. His firefighters stuffed "pig pillows," pillow-shaped devices for absorbing oil, down a manhole and into the catch basin, to soak up oil and try to keep it from going farther. They also tried to patch the holes in the truck's tank, a difficult job because they were under the truck. Eastman estimated that 200 to 300 gallons of oil leaked from the truck, and said it traveled to a few other catch basins but apparently no farther. The rest of the oil was pumped into other tank trucks. The spill drew more than a dozen pieces of equipment and many workers from the Fire Department and from several environmental cleanup firms. The cleanup crews used one of them, a tank truck fitted with a pump, as a giant vacuum cleaner, to suck oil from the catch basin nearest the spill and keep it from overflowing and going farther. They also pumped the remaining oil out of the truck and into other tank trucks. The police said that the truck's driver, Robert Powell, of East Providence, was blameless. "There's nothing he could have done to prevent this," said police Sgt. Kevin Ziegelmayer. "It was beyond his control." Powell wasn't hurt but was clearly upset as he paced around the wreck.

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A bystander said that the first thing Powell said when he climbed out of the cab was that "he had to stop the oil." The capsized truck was righted with a pair of massive tow trucks sporting booms that can swivel to the side. John Martins, the owner of Sterry St. Towing, of Providence, said the bigger of the two can lift 60 tons. That's much more than an oil truck weighs. With the oil truck moved, the cleanup crew picked up pieces of broken springs and other debris and cleaned up the small amount of oil on the road. Eastland said that the DEM would follow up by putting material that absorbs oil but not water into the storm drains near the spill. When it rains, she said, the water will float the remaining oil, which will be absorbed. "We let Mother Nature work with us," she said. http://www.projo.com/news/content/Dumped_Truck_12-20-09_HFGRQ8L_v11.36f8660.html

NORTHERN IRELAND, CO DOWN, CARRYDUFF, DECEMBER 20 2009. HOUSES DESTROYED IN HEATING-OIL TANK FIRE

Two houses have been destroyed after domestic home heating-oil tanks caught fire in Co Down. Forty fire fighters battled the fire, which started at the rear of adjoining detached bungalow homes at Brackenwood Crescent in Carryduff. A 14-year-old boy, who was asleep in one of the houses, was rescued from the blaze by neighbours. No-one was injured in the fires, but the families lost all of their possessions. A PSNI spokesman said the cause of the fire was not being treated as suspicious.

<http://www.rte.ie/news/2009/1219/carryduff.html>

USA, AKA, ANCHORAGE, DECEMBER 20 2009. BP SPILL MAY LEAD TO 3RD CRIMINAL VIOLATION >> PROBATION: OFFICIALS NOT SURE IF PIPELINE SPLIT VIOLATES COURT TERMS.

lisa demer

As cleanup continues on one of the biggest oil spills ever on Alaska's North Slope, criminal and civil investigations are under way into the circumstances of the pipeline's rupture. The criminal investigatory arm of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency joined with the FBI and others to examine what led the pipeline to split open in late November, officials said. An estimated 46,000 gallons of crude oil and water poured from a 2-foot-long gash onto the snowy tundra, cleanup officials say. "The (EPA) Criminal Investigation Division is continuing to work in concert with our federal and state partners, and British Petroleum, to assess the situation associated with the Nov. 29 rupture," said Tyler Amon, the division's acting special agent in charge for the Northwest. "This matter is under investigation." BP Exploration (Alaska) Inc. runs most of the North Slope's oil fields on behalf of itself and other oil companies and it operated the 18-inch flow line that ruptured. "We always cooperate with regulatory agencies," BP spokesman Steve Rinehart said. "We have no comment on specific legal questions or specific investigations." The EPA is working alongside the FBI in the investigation, Amon said. It's not yet clear where the federal investigation is headed, he said. FBI spokesman Eric Gonzalez, the chief division counsel for Alaska, declined to comment. Meanwhile, the state Department of Environmental Conservation is conducting a civil investigation to determine what happened and if BP violated any state rules or laws. This spill comes at a difficult time for BP, which is on probation after pleading guilty in 2007 to a misdemeanor violation of the federal Clean Water Act. That charge stemmed from a spill of more than 200,000 gallons of oil in 2006 from a corroded pipe that BP had failed to maintain. The corporation paid \$20 million in fines and restitution and is in its third and final year of probation under a plea deal. That was BP's second criminal conviction in Alaska for an environmental crime. In 1999, BP pleaded guilty to a single felony count of failing to immediately report hazardous materials dumping by a contractor at the Beaufort Sea's Endicott field. BP eventually agreed to pay \$15.5 million and serve five years of probation to resolve that case. Whether the circumstances of the new spill amount to a violation of its current probation hasn't been determined. "Everyone is in a holding pattern right now," said Mary Frances Barnes, BP's federal probation officer. "We're waiting until all the players have conducted their investigation. That would be state, BP, EPA, FBI -- everybody who's investigating."

Overpressured Pipe

The pipeline that ruptured hadn't been in use for a few weeks before the spill because of ice plugs, though a companion flow line cross-connected to it continued to operate. The breach at the bottom of the pipe was jagged and about two feet long, bigger than a state regulator said he had ever seen. Ice plugs had formed on either side of the leak site, and officials believe the area between the plugs became overpressured before the pipe split. The oil spilled over about three-quarters of an acre. The wind carried an oily mist over much of that area, with a smaller area of snow-covered tundra more heavily contaminated. The line carried a mix of oil, water and natural gas from the wells to the Lisburne Production Center, where the materials were separated. About 25 percent of the substance was oil, according to BP. The mix comes out of the ground hot and the pipeline is insulated. Usually North Slope pipes don't freeze. So what went wrong? That's what investigators are trying to find out. "It's obviously a highly technical process to assess this specific rupture and do it appropriately in light of the evidence that might be present," Amon said by phone from Seattle.

Cleanup Winds Down

The cleanup now is in its third phase, with 95 percent of the work complete, according to a DEC report last week. The unified command of BP, the DEC, the EPA and the North Slope Borough has dissolved. State and federal officials say they are continuing to monitor the cleanup. "They were essentially jack hammering the ice out and taking it over to the snow melter," Matt Carr, EPA on-scene coordinator for cleanup response, said after visiting the site again last week. Contaminated snow and ice has been hauled to a processing area where the material will be melted and measured. The oil will eventually be reintroduced into the pipeline system for sale. Crews also flushed out the area with water and vacuumed up what was released. They recovered about 58,000 gallons of oily liquid, but that includes the water used for flushing as well as melted snow. Mechanical problems with the snow melter have slowed the work but cleanup will continue until all the contaminated snow and ice is liquefied, according to the DEC. Crews used a mechanical trimmer to scrape away ice and embedded oil from the tundra. "You get bits of organic material,

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plants essentially, and a lot of ice as well," Carr said. That material will be ground up and injected under the surface, he said. Samples of soil scraped up are being tested for oil, DEC spokeswoman Weld Royal said. Crews had been working 24-7 hauling away contaminated snow and ice. The last overnight crews worked Wednesday as the cleanup winds down. "We will probably go up there again in the spring when things start to break up to see if there's any residual that's being released from melting snow or ice or the tundra," Carr said.

<http://www.adn.com/prudhoe/story/1063296.html>

SOMALIA, MOGADISHU, DECEMBER 20 2009. HUGE FIRE DEVASTATES FUEL TANKS IN MOGADISHU

hassan osman abdi

Huge fire has devastated more fuel tanks and properties in the Somali capital Mogadishu after a business centers at KM5 was set to a fire in the south of the capital, witnesses and officials told Shabelle radio on Saturday. Reports say that the inferno started at a garage around KM5 as it was set to a fire devastating all fuel tanks, barrels and more other properties around the area where it had started spreading to further buildings in the area. The real reason of the fire is unclear so far. More government and AMISOM troops with fire fighters had reached at the scene instantly and put it off. The troops were reportedly opened fire to a crowd of people who gathered at the site to disperse the people who were including the business owners and more others who reportedly committing banditry actions, killing a civilian and wounding four others at the scene. Wilo Hashi Nahar, one of the businesswomen whose property lost in the fire told Shabelle's Mohamed Bashir Hashi that the fire caused more casualties including loss of properties adding that it had started as something exploded. Sources said that burning area was very close to Amira hotel around KM5 which is a house for government officials adding that parts of the hotel had been affected by the huge fire. We contacted with the deputy governor of Banadir region Abdifatah Abdisalan to know more about the fire saying that they called for AMISOM's fire fighters and achieved to put it out disproving that looting happened at the area. It is not the first time that fire starts in Mogadishu and cause loss of properties in the Somali capital Mogadishu.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200912190046.html>

UK, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, DECEMBER 20 2009. THREE ARRESTS IN ILLEGAL FUEL RAIDS

Three men have been arrested in a dramatic swoop on their Northampton home as police, Trading Standards and Customs & Excise officials stormed the property in search of gallons of suspected stolen petrol and diesel. The raid, which took place in Baker Street, Semilong, was orchestrated as part of the latest Operation Guardian high impact day and involved several agencies including Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service. A team of about 10 police officers forced entry to the terraced home to surprise the suspects and stop them from having any opportunity to pour flammable liquid into the drains. In the pre-raid briefing at Campbell Square yesterday morning, Sgt Dale Hilyer, who led the operation, said residents at the home had been spotted taking gallons of fuel into the house. He said: "We suspect they have been storing large quantities of either petrol, diesel or red diesel. "People have been seen carrying fuel into the property, and then cars have regularly been stopping off at the house to fill up their cars from the containers. "This wasn't being done safely. They have been seen filling cars up and then letting fuel overflow onto the road. "We don't know exactly where they have been storing it, it could be in one of the rooms, the cellar or they may be taking it back out into the garden. But clearly if there is hazardous or flammable fuel being kept in the property this represents a health and safety risk. "On the advice of the fire service we will be forcing entry. We don't want to run any risk of the fuel being disposed of." After getting into the house, several gallon containers of what is believed to be petrol were found stacked up in the garden, with more fuel found in the cellar. Officers were also on the lookout for any syphoning or cutting equipment which could tie the suspects to bilking offences, where fuel is stolen directly out of cars. Sgt Hilyer added: "It may be the case that they have been involved in drive-offs from petrol stations, although at the moment there is no intelligence linking this property to drive-offs." As well as searching the house, officers also scoured Baker Street for as many as nine cars which had been linked to the address. The fuel in the cars was then tested to establish whether it was illegal red diesel.

<http://www.northamptonchron.co.uk/news/Three-arrests-in-illegal-fuel.5926074.jp>

USA, AL, ATHENS, DECEMBER 20 2009. BP: LIGHTNING CAUSED LEAK; SITE CLEANUP CONTINUES

jean cole

Lightning has been identified as the cause of a pipeline break off Alabama 99 last December, which caused 2,000 gallons of xylene to spill into a ditch and pond, a BP official said. BP, which owns the multi-state pipeline, had the damaged pipe microscopically tested to determine the cause so the company could try to prevent it from recurring, said Ronald Rybarczyk, BP government and public affairs spokesman. The results of that study were released Friday. "The metallurgical analysis of the damaged section of pipe shows that the most likely cause of the damage was an electrical discharge, consistent with an event such as lightning striking the line at another location, and the charge exiting the line at this point in Limestone County," Rybarczyk said. To safeguard against future strikes, BP has installed more anode protection along the pipeline, he said. "BP's top priorities remain the safety of our nearby neighbors and the safe operation of the pipeline," Rybarczyk said. The xylene leak in the western Limestone County community triggered fear in many residents. One cattle owner who lives across the road from the spill site was worried about selling his livestock without a written assurance of safety from BP. Other residents, including students at West Limestone County High School, worried about inhaling xylene, which they said smelled like paint thinner. And many worried whether the chemical had contaminated the groundwater. As for water safety, testing shows the xylene levels in the pond are well within state quality standards — even for drinking water, Rybarczyk said. Alabama's limit for xylene in drinking water is 10 parts per million. The latest

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sampling at the Alabama 99 site shows the level in the pond to be 0.4 parts per million or less that 1/20th of that level, Rybarczyk said. Sampling shows there have never been traces of xylene in area drinking water wells, he said. With the cause of the pipe rupture identified, BP is now moving from the initial cleanup phase to further remediation at the site. "We are further characterizing the site to determine what cleanup measures will be most effective from this point forward," Rybarczyk said. "Trenches are still in place, but during this evaluation period we are not actively pumping water from the site. Thus, captured liquid and recovered xylene totals remain roughly where they were earlier this year — about 200,000 gallons of total liquid recovered, 99 percent of which is ground and surface water from rainfall." BP has installed two additional monitoring wells at the site, he said. "This will help us better understand the impacted area and determine what further measures to take, including the placement of further wells and evaluation of cleanup methods," Rybarczyk said. The Alabama Department of Environmental Management approved the company's work plan for the site.

http://www.enewscourier.com/local/local_story_353184604.html

USA, NH, DECEMBER 20 2009. FORTY GALLONS OF DIESEL SPILLED INTO RIVER >> COAST GUARD INVESTIGATING TUG INCIDENT

adam leech

The Coast Guard is investigating a spill that occurred Saturday afternoon when a tugboat operator accidentally dumped approximately 40 gallons of diesel fuel into the Piscataqua River off Bow Street in downtown Portsmouth. The incident occurred at approximately 12:30 p.m., according to Coast Guard Petty Officer Tim Steele, while a Moran Towing tugboat was transferring diesel fuel from the company's main tank to a smaller tank. Steele said the operator "lost track" of what he was doing, turned away and the tank started to overflow. Most of the fuel went into the water, but a portion went onto land. Steele said the spill should not have a negative effect on any marine life. Piscataqua River Cooperative workers were the first responders and used booms to contain the spill throughout the afternoon, as well as remove some of the fuel. An environmental recovery team was scheduled to be on the site to finish the cleanup Saturday evening at Moran Towing's expense. The manager at Moran Towing would not comment on the incident. Steele said the Coast Guard is investigating whether the spill violated any laws.

<http://www.seacoastonline.com/articles/20091220-NEWS-912200340>

SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH, DECEMBER 20 2009. SEPA ASKS IS YOUR OIL TANK COMPLIANT WITH NEW SCOTTISH REGULATIONS?

Every year in Scotland there are hundreds of water pollution incidents involving oil and [The Scottish Environment Protection Agency \(SEPA\)](#) is highlighting new Regulations which have been designed to minimise the impact of oil upon the Scottish environment. [The Water Environment \(Oil Storage\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2006](#) were introduced in three stages. New tanks installed after 1 April 2006 had to comply with the regulations by 1 October 2006 and existing tanks within 10 metres of surface water and 50 metres of a borehole had to comply by 1 April 2008. The deadline for all storage tanks in Scotland to comply with these regulations is approaching on 1 April 2010. The regulations set design standards for new and existing above-ground oil storage facilities, which includes fixed tanks, intermediate bulk containers, and drums or mobile bowers whether inside or outside a building. The regulations also cover domestic oil tanks with a capacity of more than 2500 litres. Water pollution incidents involving oil are particularly damaging because oil is toxic and poisons watercourse plants and animals. In November 2009, Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution Plc was fined £20,000 for causing the pollution of Loch Carnan following a spill of approximately 45,000 litres of red diesel. The incident had a devastating impact on the water environment, including the death of invertebrates and an impact on fish life. Colin Bayes, SEPA's Director of Environmental Protection and Improvement, said: "SEPA's main aim is the protection of the environment. Just one litre of spilled oil can result in almost 4,000 square metres covered in an oil film, and even a small amount can have a devastating impact on the local environment. "Of course prevention is better than cure; a tank that is bunded and complies with the regulations will minimise the effects of any oil spill by enabling better containment. The Water Environment (Oil Storage) (Scotland) Regulations 2006 set out conditions for tanks to better protect our water and SEPA is highlighting the regulations, and what they mean for businesses and individuals. "It is the tank owners responsibility to ensure the tank complies fully with the regulations by 1 April 2010. However if anyone is unsure how the regulations will affect them we encourage them to contact SEPA so we can explain what they need to know and we will work with tank owners to ensure that tanks are made compliant with the requirements of the legislation." Information on the regulations and how they affect businesses and the general public is available at www.sepa.org.uk/water/regulations/regimes/pollution_control/oil_storage.aspx, whilst further advice and guidance can be obtained by contacting your local SEPA office or our 24 hour Communications Centre on 01738 448414, where staff will be able to advise fully on the regulations. Details of SEPA's offices is available at www.sepa.org.uk/about_us/contacting_sepa/regional_offices.aspx

<http://www.oilfiredup.com/site/news/item/934>

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