

Dangerous Goods - Hazardous Materials Group & Network

Release 2010 – 610 Newsy Stuff

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June 11 2010

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USA, CA, LONG ISLAND, JUNE 4 2010. 23 LI WATER DISTRICTS OFFERED \$39.5M IN MTBE SETTLEMENT

deborah s. morris

Twenty-three [Long Island](#) water districts have been offered a total of \$39.5 million in a settlement from major oil companies concerning contamination of public water wells. The water districts sued the oil companies over the contamination of public water wells by the gasoline additive MTBE, the abbreviation for methyl tertiary butyl ether. The settlement funds are targeted at cleaning up the tainted wells. Seventeen districts have already accepted the offer, according to the attorney representing all 23 districts. Marc Bern, with Napoli, Bern, Ripka LLP in [Manhattan](#) and in Great River, said the settlement requires all districts to accept it and he expects the remaining six to respond by next month. The offer was made in April. "It's an excellent settlement," Bern said, and added that the MTBE contamination "is minimal, it would appear." Each district would receive a sum ranging from hundreds of thousands of dollars into the millions. The funds will be a "welcome relief for taxpayers and rate payers," Bern said. The defendants include Amerada Hess, [BP](#) Products, Exxon Mobile, Shell, [Sunoco](#), Texaco, Gulf and Valero. Bern said the following districts have agreed to accept the offer: Aqua NY of [Sea Cliff](#), City of [Glen Cove](#), [Greenlawn](#), [Hampton Bays](#), [Manhasset-Lakeville](#), [East Hampton](#) Village, [Dix Hills](#), [Southampton](#) Town, Southampton Village, [Garden City](#), Village of [Hempstead](#), [Mineola](#), [Westbury](#), [Carle Place](#), East Hampton Town, Town of [Riverhead](#) Water District, and [West Hempstead](#) Water District. Water providers still mulling the offer are [Garden City Park](#), [Oyster Bay](#), [Plainview](#), South Farmingdale, [South Huntington](#), and [Bethpage](#). The West Hempstead Water District would receive the largest award from the settlement, \$7.6 million. [Huntington](#) officials said the Greenlawn Water district would get \$3.566 million, South Huntington Water District \$2.237 million and the town-operated Dix Hills Water District just under \$1.1 million, all after costs and legal fees. Bern said the settlement was apportioned based on the number of wells that were contaminated or threatened by contamination. Huntington officials said Dix Hills had five wells where MTBE was detected and seven considered endangered. Greenlawn had 10 where MTBE was detected and 15 considered endangered, South Huntington had six where MTBE was detected hits and 14 considered endangered.

<http://www.newsday.com/long-island/suffolk/23-li-water-districts-offered-39-5m-in-mtbe-settlement-1.1978553>

SOUTH AFRICA, CAPE TOWN, JUNE 4 2010. MORE EXPLOSIONS POSSIBLE ON SELI 1

Seli 1 on fire off Bloubergstrand.



Several organisations will remain on standby throughout Thursday night after a fire broke out on the wreck of the Seli 1, lying off Bloubergstrand, the NSRI says. The cargo ship ran aground about nine months ago. A spokesperson for the NSRI, Craig Lambinon, said small explosions could occur throughout the night after the ship was swathed in an orange flame on Thursday afternoon. Earlier, bystanders were startled by several explosions, which the NSRI said could have been related to the type of cutting equipment used by salvagers. The fire and explosions reportedly posed no immediate threat. The drama started after the NSRI's Melkbosstrand unit was activated following reports that a fire had broken out onboard the Seli. Several organisations - among them disaster management, the police dive unit and helicopters - were activated. It was confirmed that 24 people

were onboard and the ports authority dispatched a vessel to the Seli. On arrival they transferred the men to an NSRI craft and they were taken to Table Bay Port. No one was injured and no one received medical attention.

Burn Out

It appears that the men onboard the Seli 1 were part of an authorised salvage team using cutting equipment to remove steel as part of the SA Maritime Safety Authority's ongoing efforts to strip the wreck. It is suspected the fire broke out while the crew were conducting their operation. After it was ascertained that the fire could not be controlled, the work crew moved out of harm's way. A contingent of emergency vehicles from Cape Town's fire and rescue services will continue to monitor the blaze, but no efforts were to be employed to fight the flames, said Lambinon. The wreck is expected to burn out naturally, but the situation will continue to be monitored by the authorities. There is reportedly no immediate environmental impact expected and only small amounts of coal are reportedly still on the vessel, which also poses no immediate threat. Sightseers have been asked to keep a safe distance and paddlers, boaters and surfers are requested to not approach the vessel while it continues to burn. The Seli 1 has been extensively battered by Cape storms and was structurally not sound enough to be refloated or salvaged in a conventional manner.

<http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/More-explosions-possible-on-Seli-1-20100603>

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USA, NY, QUEENS, JUNE 4 2010. BORO GARAGE LEVELLED IN FUEL TANK EXPLOSION

stefan singh



The wrecked remains of Justin Cohen's garage were strewn about the property.

Memorial Day weekend ended with a frightening explosion for some Flushing residents. Around 7 p.m. on Monday night, a massive explosion blew the roof off of a garage on 27th Avenue and Murray Street. Justin Cohen, 31, was critically injured in the blast. Police are unsure what caused the explosion, but high-octane fuel may have triggered it. The cause is still under investigation. Cohen was taken to Jacobi Medical Center in the Bronx to treat burns that covered 70 percent of his body. He was listed in critical condition and he may have permanent ear damage and some brain damage. Cohen's neighbors have been nothing but helpful. Many visited him in the hospital. Some gathered clothes for family members who were at the hospital. Michael Pancheri, who lives next door, does not believe fuel caused

the explosion. "The Daily News and the New York Times make him out to be like a terrorist," said Pancheri. "He has the same things in his garage that we all do – lawn and garden stuff." Much of the debris from the explosion landed on Pancheri's property. His mother, Graziella Pancheri, has no idea how it happened because no one was home. "He's the only one who can tell us what happened when he feels better," she said. "It was thunderous," said Brian MacDonald, who lives a few blocks away from Cohen. "It was raining so we thought the thunder hit nearby; we didn't know until we saw it on the late night news." MacDonald, who likes to play around with cars and engines, as he has a few Hot Rods in his garage, pointed to a blue fuel tank in the yard marked C16. "That's racing fuel used in a high compression car," he said. "If it's not contained properly, a spark from a light switch could have caused it [to explode]." Michelle Urena, who lives a little further away, said the explosion was pretty loud. "I live on 150th Street and Whitestone and I heard it all the way over there," said Urena. "It was Memorial Day so I'm thinking it's a celebration at Shea Stadium." Mr. Kim, a neighbor on Cohen's block, came home late on Monday night and the street was blocked off by police and firefighters. "The whole thing with an explosion right by your house is kind of scary," said Kim. Councilman Dan Halloran (R-Whitestone) was at the scene of the explosion later Monday night. In a post on his Facebook page, Halloran said Cohen was working on his motorbike when the explosion happened. Halloran also said that police found four tanks of highly flammable racing car fuel. "This looks like a real tragedy," said Halloran. "A real stupid accident."

http://www.queenstribune.com/deadline/Deadline_060310_TankExplode.html

USA, TX, PEARLAND, JUNE 4 2010. CONTAMINANT LEAK DISCOVERED AT BRIO

ivee sauls



An entry point to the Brio Superfund Site on Dixie Farm Road in southern Harris County. A representative with the Environmental Protection Agency has confirmed that a contamination plume is leaking from the site.

The Brio Superfund site on Dixie Farm Road in southern Harris County is leaking contaminants, a representative with the Environmental Protection Agency confirmed to The Journal Thursday morning. EPA Superfund Remedial Project Manager Gary Miller said the contaminant plume is not a threat to residents, but also said further testing is being done to determine the extent of the contamination. "It's my understanding that there aren't any water wells down in that area and our sampling so far has just been on

the site," Miller told The Journal. "But based on that now, we don't know how far it's gone. That's part of the investigation that's going to be done. Initial indications are that it hadn't moved very far, very fast." Miller said initial testing indicated the chemicals found are 1,2-dichloroethane and Vinyl Chloride. "Up until fairly recently, there wasn't any contamination detected. As a part of the regular monitoring, they started getting detections of those chemicals in the deeper monitoring wells. So what's been happening out there is a follow-on investigation to try to characterize that and see where it's going and what it's doing," Miller said. The 58-acre Brio site, located at 2501 Dixie Farm and Beamer Road, was declared a federal Superfund site as the result of a \$207 million court settlement for a 1992 toxic waste case. The case drew national attention and necessitated the demolition of an adjacent elementary school and the 670-home Southbend subdivision, forcing the relocation of thousands of residents. Brio was operated as an industrial facility from the late 1950s through 1982. During that span the site was used for copper catalyst regeneration, oil blending and refining, and hydrocarbon cracking. The site was also at one time the home of waste disposal plants. Inspections by the EPA during the 1980s indicated that shallow ground water was potentially

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contaminated with copper, vinyl chloride, fluorene, styrene, and ethylbenzene. In 1984 the EPA detected toluene, benzene, and other chemicals in the air. Residues of contaminants such as xylene, dichloroethene, vinyl chloride and trichloroethane were also detected, factors nearby residents blamed for a number of birth defects and other health problems. "The site, responsible parties or respondents are in the process right now of doing an investigation," Miller said. "They just recently completed some sampling out there and we got the preliminary results so they're in the process of preparing a follow-up plan to do some more investigation out there to see how far that plume has moved." According to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, 1,2-dichloroethane is a manufactured chemical used in the production of vinyl chloride. The chemicals are used to make a variety of plastic and vinyl products including polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipes, furniture and automobile upholstery, wall coverings, house wares, and automobile parts. It is also used to as a solvent and is added to leaded gasoline to remove lead. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has determined that 1,2-dichloroethane may reasonably be expected to cause cancer. The EPA has determined that 1,2-dichloroethane is a probable human carcinogen and the International Agency for Cancer Research (IARC) considers it to be a possible human carcinogen. Nervous system disorders, liver and kidney diseases, and lung effects have been reported in humans ingesting or inhaling large amounts of 1,2-dichloroethane. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has determined that vinyl chloride is a known carcinogen. Studies in workers who have breathed vinyl chloride over many years showed an increased risk of liver, brain, lung cancer, and some cancers of the blood have also been observed in workers. The ATSDR says the effects of drinking high levels of vinyl chloride are unknown, but if you spill vinyl chloride on your skin, it will cause numbness, redness, and blisters. Miller said that the levels of 1,2-dichloroethane found exceed the MCL drinking water standard. "It initially exceeded the MCL in one well, which is on-site in October of 2007, and it's been increasing since then," Miller said. "There were some intermittent samples that were non-detect, so it's been fluctuating, but overall, it's been increasing." According to ATSDR, the EPA allows 0.005 milligrams of 1,2-dichloroethane per liter of drinking water (0.005 mg/L). Vinyl chloride is also regulated in drinking water, food, and air. The EPA requires that the amount of vinyl chloride in drinking water not exceed 0.002 milligrams per liter (mg/L) of water. Miller said fixing the problem depends on how far it's gone and what the final concentrations are. "It could be an active pump and treat," he said. "It could be this process we call a monitored natural attenuation, which basically depends on natural processes. Until we get all the data in, it's really too early to say what the remedy might be." Superfund was created by Congress in 1980 after widely publicized toxic pollution at Love Canal in New York. The program was designed to provide federal funding for tracking down polluters and holding them financially responsible. If the responsible parties could not pay the site would be cleaned through Superfund resources. The EPA completed the Third Five-Year Review of the Brio site on April 25, 2008. According to EPA documents the review found that the remedy in place at the site is currently protective of human health and the environment. The site was deleted from the National Priorities List in December, 2006. The next Five-Year Review is scheduled for completion by April 25, 2013.

http://www.hcnonline.com/articles/2010/06/03/pearland_journal/news/6-10_pj_brio_superfund.txt

USA, MA, BOSTON, JUNE 4 2010. NEIGHBORS' FEARS OVER CHEMICAL FACILITY RESURFACE

john dyer

There's a familiar ring to recent complaints about the General Chemical Corp. on the south side of Framingham. For years, townspeople and officials have sounded alarms about the hazardous-waste facility. "If you look at Board of Health records into the 1980s, there have been discussions about General Chemical," said the board's director, Ethan Mascoop. "You see it popping up. Spills, even explosions." Pollution at General Chemical's site on Leland Street probably dates to the 1920s, when Gulf Oil built a gasoline terminal on the property, officials said. But government didn't keep extensive environmental records at the time. The company's facility and the neighborhood's homes almost certainly wouldn't be allowed to be built so close to each other nowadays, they added. "This is the story of a grandfathered facility in a neighborhood where, if you wanted to site the facility today, you wouldn't pick this area," said Steven DeGabriele, director of the state Department of Environmental Protection's Business Compliance Division. "You probably wouldn't site a school or residence in that location." The latest scare involving the company stems from the heavy rains that drenched the region in March and April. The downpours flooded the basement of Carrie Lyn Woodsum, who lives next to the company's plant. Knowing chemicals from the site had polluted the area's ground water decades before, she asked the town's Board of Health to test the flood water. Officials found elevated levels of dichloroethene and trichloroethene, chemicals in solvents that Mascoop said can harm the nervous system, kidneys, and lungs. "It felt like somebody had kicked me in my soul," said Woodsum, who lives with her husband and 9-year-old son. "Everything I had thought was OK was not OK. It was a feeling of unsureness. Should we stay here? Should we not stay here? It's something that weighs on my mind all the time." The Board of Health inspected General Chemical's facilities soon after, and allegedly found barrels of chemicals that weren't stored properly, water pumped outside from the company's basement,

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and potential structural problems with a laboratory floor, Mascoop said. Framingham officials forwarded their findings to state environmental officials. DEP inspectors visited the facility and opened an investigation into the alleged violations. DeGabriele said he couldn't discuss the agency's inspection because its results were pending. Then, on May 18, the Fire Department inspected General Chemical and ordered the company to stop putting water that contained toxic chemicals in its fire prevention system. General's Chemical's compliance manager, Roy Swartz, said the fears of Woodsom and others are overblown. "What they are saying is not correct; it is not accurate," he said. "This is a matter to be reviewed by the DEP, the state. Ask them." But after visiting General Chemical, the DEP ordered the company to clean up Woodsom's house. The company agreed to install a piping system under Woodsom's basement slab to divert the toxic water away from the house, said DeGabriele. At the same time, the department is now wrapping up an investigation into alleged violations at the company last year, said DeGabriele. He expected the results of that investigation to be made public soon. In 2008, DEP inspectors found fault with the company's storage methods and other violations, but managers fixed the problem and no fine was issued, DeGabriele said. The Board of Health had proposed meeting on May 24 to review General Chemical's town-issued permits, but board member Pamela Harris recently resigned from the three-member panel, prompting the other members to wait until the Board of Selectmen appoints a replacement before holding a hearing. Mascoop said the Board of Health could amend the company's permits, which haven't been revised since 1994, to force it to be cleaner. He said town counsel Christopher Petrini was also studying whether the board had the power to shut down the company. Because Framingham's Southside section hosts many contaminated sites and polluting industries, the fairest option for residents might be to shutter General Chemical, said Mascoop. "Because of its location and history of the area . . . there is a heavy burden of environmental abuse," he said. Woodsom is considering suing the company. Executives offered to buy her home, she said, but they wouldn't pay more than \$220,000, the house's assessed value. "They low-balled us, which totally made me feel I can't trust these guys," she said. Meanwhile, the company is trying to clean up the chemicals under Leland Street, but with little success. A plan to siphon off and clean water from an underground plume of chemicals and then re-inject the treated water into the soil backfired in 2007, pushing toxins closer to the Woodrow Wilson Elementary School on Leland Street, said DeGabriele. Now the company is preparing a new method of injecting an agent into the water table that it hopes will break down the toxins. DeGabriele said it's not clear whether General Chemical caused the toxic plume or if it was there when they purchased the site in the early 1980s. School officials didn't return repeated calls for comment, but Woodrow Wilson principal Robin Welch discussed the issue in the school's May newsletter. "This current situation with General Chemical does not involve our school at all," he wrote. "The underground water issue is on their property and flows west of the school. We have never had any issue with toxins in the school and what was under the ground could never be accessed by children due to its depth."

http://www.boston.com/yourtown/framingham/articles/2010/06/03/concerns_over_framingham_chemical_facility_resurface/

USA, LA, NEW ORLEANS, JUNE 4 2010. AS OIL SPREAD, DID BP BATTLE TO CONTAIN THE MEDIA?

Photo Gallery:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/gallery/2010/05/21/GA2010052104134.html?sid=ST2010060104078>

Watch the Video [Video of oil cap being placed over blown-out well](#)



A bird surfaces at East Grand Terre Island in Louisiana. Oil has been leaking in the Gulf of Mexico since April 20.

At first, it seemed that a British company might be trying to keep an American journalist off an American beach. Ted Jackson, a staff photographer for the Times-Picayune, drove two hours to Port Fourchon, La., to shoot photos of tar balls on public property but was stopped 100 yards from the surf by harbor police. After 30 minutes of phone calls to higher authorities, Jackson said, the police allowed him 15 minutes of obstructed photographing, out of view of workers who were taking samples from the beach. Last week, Jackson was also unable to book a flight over Grand Isle from a charter plane company in Belle Chasse, La., because the owner

could not obtain permission from BP's command center to enter restricted airspace. BP, the Federal Aviation Administration and the Coast Guard were refusing access to planes carrying media, according to Southern Seaplane's secretary-treasurer, Rhonda Panepinto, who fired off a three-page letter to Sen. David Vitter (R-La.) on May 25. "We strongly feel that the reason for this massive [temporary flight restriction] is that BP wants to control their exposure to the press," she wrote. "We are all at the mercy of BP, a British-owned company." This week, things got better. The FAA sent two special operations managers to the Gulf Coast on Tuesday to oversee flight access, according to Panepinto, whose company flew Jackson around Chandeleur and Ship islands on Wednesday and is fielding requests from other media outlets, with no grief from authorities.

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"It's almost like there's a new sheriff in town," Jackson said. Perhaps the gulf operation is smoothing itself out after a month and a half of oil gush and media crush. Authorities had weathered criticism for a series of minor run-ins that gave the impression that BP was calling the shots. Last week [a Mother Jones reporter was told](#) she couldn't see Elmer's Island without being accompanied by a BP representative, because it's "BP's oil." Two weeks ago Coast Guard officials cited "BP's rules" [when demanding that a CBS News crew leave a beach area](#). (Representatives from CNN, ABC and local CBS affiliate WWL-TV in New Orleans said last week that their journalists had not encountered significant obstacles while covering the oil story.) "Neither BP nor the U.S. Coast Guard, who are responding to the spill, have any rules in place that would prohibit media access to impacted areas and we were disappointed to hear of this incident," said Rob Wyman, a lieutenant commander for the Coast Guard, in a statement responding to the CBS episode. "In fact, media has been actively embedded and allowed to cover response efforts since this response began, with more than 400 embeds aboard boats and aircraft to date." On Saturday, a University of North Carolina [energy blog titled Powering a Nation](#) posted images of a BP contract that barred owners of vessels it chartered from making "public statements." A BP spokesman said the company has standard contractual language designed to protect proprietary information, and that it has allowed media to cover its Vessels of Opportunity program, which employs local boat owners in cleanup efforts. The FAA responded to initial criticism over air traffic restriction by citing security concerns and asserting that BP employees and contractors were not involved in those decisions. Hundreds of media outlets are demanding access to a highly mutable, complex situation, and local, state and federal officials say they are working together -- under the majestic heading of Deepwater Horizon Unified Command -- to streamline the responses to both reporters and the public. "With regards to media, we follow an incident command system, a tried-and-true way of responding to crises," said a spokesman for BP from the Unified Command's headquarters in Robert, La. "You have public information officers and you have a joint information center that includes the responsible party, BP, as well as government agencies who have involvement and oversight for this spill, the Coast Guard being the federal on-scene coordinator. We have state people, NOAA, representatives from Transocean [the company that owned the rig that created the spill]. We've had MMS. What we do is use information that comes in through our operations and create, if you will, the message to share." That message, right now, is that the authorities want to provide access to the story while maintaining the proper safety parameters for both cleanup workers and the environment itself. But there might be more obstacles down the road if the situation intensifies, according to Chip Babcock, a trial lawyer specializing in media and First Amendment cases at the Houston legal firm Jackson Walker, which brought suit against FEMA when it blocked journalists from covering the removal of dead bodies in the weeks after Hurricane Katrina. "There's going to be, I think, a natural hesitancy to let journalists show images of the horrific scenes that are going to happen purely in the next few weeks," Babcock said. "You'll see these beaches clogged with oil, and animals suffering, and I think -- human nature being what it is -- there's going to be some people who don't want those images shown."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/06/03/AR2010060300848.html>

NIGERIA, ZAMFARA STATE, JUNE 5 2010. LEAD POISONING KILLS 160 VILLAGERS IN NIGERIA'S NORTH

More than 160 poor villagers from Nigeria's north have died from lead poisoning while trying to leach gold from rock deposits, sparking evacuations as health officials try to come to grips with a crisis six months in the making, authorities say. Dr Henry Akpan, Nigeria's chief epidemiologist, said 100 of the dead were children from five villages in Zamfara state, a near-desert region of the Sahel that has seen a growing food crisis over recent weeks. Dr Akpan said the children either played near the leaching process or took part in it, swallowing the lead by putting their hands in their mouths or breathing it in. Dr Akpan said federal and state authorities, as well as the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, were taking part in the quarantine and clean-up efforts in the state. About 300 others in the area have fallen ill from lead poisoning since the illegal mining began in January, he said. Dr Akpan said authorities also had begun evacuating people from the contaminated areas. "What is happening now is the extent of the growth of illegal mining," the doctor said. "It is what they do in the processes that causes the lead poisoning." Dr Akpan did not say why it took Nigerian authorities six months to recognise the illness. Officials with the CDC in Atlanta did not immediately respond to a request for comment late on Friday (local time). If not detected early, high levels of lead exposure can damage the brain and nervous system, result in behaviour and learning problems such as hyperactivity, or cause slow growth. Lead also can cause reproductive problems, high blood pressure, nervous disorders and memory problems in adults. In severe cases, it can lead to seizures, comas and death. Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation with 150 million residents, is one of the US' top crude oil suppliers. But the West African nation also once supplied copper and other minerals to the world before oil took over as the top selling commodity.

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/breaking-news/lead-poisoning-kills-160-villagers-in-nigerias-north/story-e6frf7jx-1225875757196>

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AUSTRALIA, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, PERTH, JUNE 5 2010. TOXIC PLUME FORCES EVACUATION IN NEERABUP, PERTH

Toxic fumes have caused the evacuation of a factory and nearby buildings, and the closure of roads, in a light industrial area in Perth's north. The carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and hydrogen chloride fumes were caused by a chemical reaction at the David Moss plastic and rubber pipe factory on Turnbull Road, Neerabup this afternoon. Fire and Emergency Services Authority (FESA) crews evacuated the factory and nearby buildings, and closed roads into the area while they monitored the fumes. No one was reported injured but nearby residents were urged to stay indoors, close all windows and turn off air conditioners as the toxic plume blew west. They were also asked to stay away from the Neerabup light industrial area and see a doctor if they experience any unusual nose, throat or eye irritations. ChemCentre and the Department of Environment and Conservation's Pollution Response Unit were conducting air monitoring and analysis. FESA said the area was likely to remain closed for much of today.

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/breaking-news/toxic-plume-forces-evacuation-in-neerabup-perth/story-e6frf7jx-1225875589893>

USA, NY, NEW YORK, JUNE 5 2010. EXXON MOBIL ROLE IN CLEANUP FROM GASOLINE SPILL

carol frank

The Record was unable to reach Exxon Mobil for comment before press time last week, but this week Amy Blanchett, their public and government affairs spokesperson confirmed and amplified information provided to us from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). Various reports from groundwater testing had shown high concentrations of MTBE, methyl tertiary butyl ether, an oxygenate added to gasoline and later found to be a contaminant when it reaches water supplies, banned as an additive to gasoline by New York State in 2004. Ms. Blanchett reports that Exxon Mobil had installed a total of 5 on-site monitoring wells at the location of the gas station at 788 Middle Neck Road. In February of 2008, they installed three more testing wells in the Steamboat Road right-of-way. Exxon Mobil is still in negotiations with the Village of Great Neck to install more testing wells off-site, a plan approved by the DEC. Kleinfelder of Bohemia, NY is the engineering firm they are using for the work. In addition, Exxon Mobil proposes to use a field screening and sampling tool with the trade name, HydroPunch, which gives quicker "real-time" data that is useful in mapping the size, shape and depth of any plume of contamination. A series of 1-inch rods are drilled underground at regular intervals and the groundwater samples obtained will be submitted to a New York State Department of Health approved laboratory for 24-hour turnaround time analysis for benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylenes and MTBE. As reported last week, quicker "mapping" of a plume is essential for more effective remediation. The service station was closed and the dealer vacated the property in February of 2010. The station is currently on the market for sale. Ms. Blanchett wrote in an email, "Any sale of the property will not affect Exxon Mobil's obligations to remediate the property as required by the NYSDEC."

<http://www.antonnews.com/greatneckrecord/news/8303-exxon-mobil-role-in-cleanup-from-gasoline-spill.html>

USA, KS, TOPEKA, JUNE 5 2010. 'HOT FUEL' SUIT GOES CLASS ACTION

A federal judge in Kansas City has granted class-action status to two lawsuits claiming companies are short-changing customers by selling them "hot fuel." U.S. District Judge Kathryn Vratil's ruling does not deal with the merits of the lawsuits, which were filed in 2007 after the Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation decided to centralize dozens of such suits filed by consumers in 26 states, Washington, D.C., and Guam, in U.S. District Court in Kansas City, Kan. The lawsuits focus on the oil industry's practice of pricing gasoline on a standard of 60 degrees. As temperatures rise above that, gasoline expands and consumers get less fuel per gallon. Vratil ruled on May 28 that the two lawsuits met the standards to represent consumers beyond those named in the suit who are affected by the sale of hot fuel, The Kansas City Star reported. The judge's ruling allows the cases to continue and could also spark discussions about potential settlements. "It's a great order, frankly," said Bob Horn, a Kansas City attorney. Defendants include several gasoline retailers, including BP, Casey's General Stores, Chevron, Wal-Mart, 7-Eleven and others. Attorneys for the defendants said they are disappointed in parts of Vratil's ruling, but aren't sure yet whether they will appeal. They said they are glad the judge's ruling was limited to liability and injunctive relief, and not for damages they said would be hard to pin down. "It also recognizes that it is an open question as to whether consumers receive a net benefit at all from the use of ATC," Kansas City attorney Martin Loring said, referring to the automatic adjustment to the volume of a gallon of gas to account for temperature differences. The industry uses temperature-adjusting technology at every step of fuel sales except retail. In Canada, many companies use temperature-adjusted pumps because when temperatures fall below 60 degrees, consumers get more for their money. Vratil said that if plaintiffs prevail in their liability and injunctive claims, she would consider whether to certify a class for damages. Chicago attorney George Zelcs said

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the Kansas cases are a bellwether that could signal how other hot-fuel suits that also seek class-action status could be decided.

http://cjonline.com/news/state/2010-06-04/hot_fuel_suit_goes_class_action

CANADA, N.T, YELLOWKNIFE, JUNE 5 2010. FUEL TANKS MUST BE DOUBLE-WALLED >> RULE CHANGES JULY 1 WILL SAVE MONEY IN THE LONG-RUN: FIRE MARSHAL

alyssa smith



As of July 1, fuel tank regulations will require that all new steel fuel tanks be of a double-walled construction to prevent leaking.

New regulations for heating oil tanks means homeowners could end up coughing up more for a new tank than they planned. But according to the NWT's fire marshal, this extra cost up-front, could save people big bucks in the long-run. Changes to the Fire Code of Canada, now adopted by the NWT Office of the Fire Marshal, will require all fuel tanks made of steel installed after July 1 to be double-walled, and to have a leak indicator. Fire marshal Steve Moss said the new regulation came after changes to the fire code, as well as the tendency for even new single-walled steel tanks to leak. He said these leaks create a number of issues which can lead to fire hazards, environmental problems, and extremely big clean-up bills. "It creates a life-safety issue," he said. "And we've got the spill to clean up." Moss said cleaning up after heating oil spills can carry a hefty price tag in the amount of about \$40,000 or more. "We definitely want to do what we can to ensure homeowners aren't saddled with this kind of extraordinary debt,"

he said. When asked about whether the extra initial cost of a double-walled tank was offset by the reduced risk of leaks, Moss said, "I really think it is. "Spending the extra cost to ensure that fuel is not spilt on the ground is going to save you the cost of a clean-up, and possibly a fire." Jason Langer, an employee of Hearth and Home Central Mechanical Systems who installs heating oil tanks, said the difference in price between a single and a double-walled tank is between \$1,000 and \$1,500. He said a single-walled steel tank costs between \$2,100 and \$2,300, while the double-walled varieties cost up to \$3,600. Langer added that these prices include installation. Moss said that homeowners who had their tanks installed prior to July 1, will not have to buy new double-walled tanks until they have to replace their existing ones. "We won't be forcing homeowners to change them out, unless of course they're leaking," he said. Moss added that he suggests people take the 'better safe than sorry' approach. "For comfort's sake, I would recommend they definitely consider looking at some form of secondary containment at their earliest convenience," Moss said. A GNWT publication entitled, Homeowner's Guide to Oil Tanks, suggests that to avoid spills, homeowners should regularly check their own heating oil tanks for signs of rust, drain accumulated water annually to minimize corrosion and have their tank inspected annually by a certified oil burner mechanic. Moss said he's heard of some single-walled tanks springing leaks only 11 months after installation. Moss said everyone has their own opinions about why tanks are starting to leak so early, but said he doesn't have concrete evidence of what's to blame for the short lives of single-walled steel tanks. "We don't know whether it's a tank problem or a fuel problem," he said. Moss added the dilemma has people pointing fingers. Heating oil now contains less sulphur, and Moss said some think this allows bacteria to grow in the water that accumulates in the fuel tank, causing early corrosion. He added the fuel companies are accusing the tank manufacturers of using cheap steel that doesn't stand the test of time. Either way, leaky fuel tanks cause a hazard, and his office is attempting to address the issue by requiring all new tanks to be double-walled, "so that people aren't losing their life's savings cleaning up a mess that was entirely preventable," said Moss. The double-walled rule only applies to tanks made of steel. Moss said single-walled tanks made of fibreglass would be acceptable under the new regulations. "We're open to options," he said. "We're just trying to eliminate spills from making it onto the ground." Moss said insurance companies are becoming active in the tank replacement process by not allowing homeowners to renew their policies until their tanks are up to its standards. An insurance broker at Norland Insurance in Yellowknife told Yellowknifer such requirements are determined on strictly a case-by-case basis, and would not speculate on which tanks might or might not be up to standard. The issue of an extra up-front cost of a double-walled tank had Yellowknife Centre MLA Robert Hawkins asking the minister of Environmental and Natural Resources about the possibility of government rebates. On May 18, Hawkins asked Minister Michael Miltenberger to look into the possibility of rebates for homeowners who purchase fuel tanks that are less likely to leak, like tanks constructed with double-walls. At that time, the minister said such a rebate "could possibly be considered," and that he would discuss the issue with department officials and told the assembly that he "commits by fall that we will have something on this item."

http://nns1.com/northern-news-services/stories/papers/jun4_10dw.html

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USA, N.C, HATTERAS, JUNE 5 2010. TWO GET MEDALS FOR WORK AFTER NC FIREWORKS EXPLOSION

andrew doud

 **Watch the Video** <http://www2.wnct.com/news/2010/jun/04/2/two-get-medals-work-after-nc-fireworks-explosion-ar-211604/>

It takes a special kind of person to run toward a dangerous situation while others are running away. Today, [the Coast Guard](#) honored two of its own for heroism when an truck loaded with [Fourth of July](#) fire works exploded on the Outer Banks last year. "We were at our station at Ocracoke and we heard a big explosion and it rocked the building that we were in and we're about three quarters of a mile away," said [Steven Atkinson, US Coast Guard](#). "We could see the blast cloud from the station where we were. We figured, you know, fireworks truck in town, loud blast, kind of had a feeling what happened," said [Michael Buchanan, US Coast Guard, Petty Officer](#) Second Class [Steven Atkinson](#) and [Petty Officer](#) Second Class [Michael Buchanan](#) immediately rushed to the scene. They hoped no one was injured and it was just the truck involved. What they saw when they arrived, [Buchanan](#) describes, as a war zone, "Probably like a roadside bomb in [Iraq](#) actually. There was a truck on fire, explosions, blast zones. I can't remember if stuff was still blowing up, people tell me it was." Despite the danger to themselves, [Buchanan](#) and [Atkinson](#) immediately took action. [Buchanan](#) administered first aid to victims while [Atkinson](#) helped coordinate response efforts, even helping to fight the flames with local volunteer firefighters. Friday, [Buchanan](#) was awarded [the Coast Guard Medal](#) and [Atkinson](#) received [the Coast Guard](#) Commendation Medal for their actions that day. Still, both men credit good training for their response efforts and are modest about receiving the awards.

<http://www2.wnct.com/news/2010/jun/04/2/two-get-medals-work-after-nc-fireworks-explosion-ar-211604/>


USA, WA, ABERDEEN, JUNE 6 2010. IMPERIUM BIODIESEL PLANT FINED FOR VIOLATIONS

The Washington Department of Labor & Industries has fined Imperium Grays Harbor \$11,700 for safety violations stemming from a Dec. 2 explosion at the biodiesel plant. The Hoquiam-based refinery was cited this week for 11 serious violations, defined as those with potential to cause death or serious injury. On Dec. 2 a 10,000-gallon glycerin tank exploded when increased levels of sulfuric acid created a reaction that overpressurized the tank. No one was injured in the explosion. Spokesman John Williams told the Daily World Friday that Imperium is reviewing the findings. CEO John Plaza said in January the company was taking steps to prevent accidents. State regulators found employees weren't properly trained or warned of certain chemical hazards. The company has 15 days to appeal the citation.

http://www.seattlepi.com/local/6420ap_wa_imperium_violations.html

USA, TX, HOUSTON, JUNE 6 2010. 2 INJURED IN FIERY TANKER TRUCK WRECK ON SAM HOUSTON TOLLWAY

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.khou.com/home/-18-wheeler-truck-explodes-on-North-Sam-Houston-Tollway-95666749.html>

 **Photo Gallery** <http://www.khou.com/home/-18-wheeler-truck-explodes-on-North-Sam-Houston-Tollway-95666749.html>



A fiery wreck involving an overturned 18-wheeler tanker truck injured two people and created a traffic mess just after 9 p.m. Friday on the North Sam Houston Tollway at Antoine, the Harris County Sheriff's office said. Witnesses said the tanker truck was headed westbound on the beltway's service road when a car ran a red light, striking the van and tanker's trailer, causing the tanker to turn over. Houston TranStar video showed the massive fire spread as some of the truck's fuel spilled onto the road and into the sewer system. "The 18-wheeler happened to have been full of gasoline, obviously you can tell that it has been turned over, at this point nobody can come near it due to the flames," Harris County Deputy Janie Wagner Harris said. The massive fire burned for over an hour before firefighters were able to fully extinguish

the blaze. The driver of the van was transported to Willowbrook Methodist Hospital and the driver of the car was taken to Houston Northwest Hospital, officials said. Both were listed in stable condition. The tanker truck's driver was OK and remained at the scene after the wreck. All of the tollway's eastbound lanes were open Friday night, but both service roads were closed in both directions, officials said. The westbound tollway lanes on the right side and shoulder were also blocked and the tolls on the westbound toll road were being waived because traffic was being forced onto the tollroad.

<http://www.khou.com/home/-18-wheeler-truck-explodes-on-North-Sam-Houston-Tollway-95666749.html>

AUSTRALIA, VICTORIA, RESERVOIR, JUNE 6 2010. VIC: DRIVER FINED OVER BOTCHED CHEMICAL DELIVERY

The Heidelberg Magistrates' Court has convicted a truck driver following a December 2008 chemical incident at packaging company in Reservoir. The driver pleaded guilty after being charged of causing an environmental hazard. He was ordered to pay \$6,700. The Court was told the man, who was a subcontractor, delivered 18,000 litres of sodium hypochlorite (hypo) to the

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packaging company's factory. Part of his task was to make sure the contents were pumped into the hypo tank. He connected his truck to a tank, not realising that it was not the hypo tank. Shortly thereafter a yellow plume developed, prompting the driver to stop the pumps and shut off the tanker's valves. The company's chemist then arrived at the scene and saw the delivered chemical was being pumped in the wrong tank. A cloud of chlorine gas was released from the tank and moved in a southerly direction through the company's premises. The Metropolitan Fire Brigade was alerted, and the people at the premises and surrounding buildings had to be evacuated. Fourteen people had to be taken to the hospital for eye and lung irritation. Everyone was discharged on the same day. Environment Protection Authority Victoria's chief executive officer John Merritt said the serves as a reminder to remain vigilant when dealing with dangerous chemicals. "It is imperative people handling chemicals understand the implicit danger they can present to human health along with the environment and always keep that front of mind."

<http://www.safetyculture.com.au/news/>

USA, TX, TEXAS CITY, JUNE 6 2010. BP: 500,000 POUNDS OF EMISSIONS RELEASED

t.j. aulds



A nighttime view of the BP Texas City ultracracker unit is shown in this undated photo. More than 400 pounds a day of benzene was released during a 40-day shutdown of an ultracracker subunit.

At BP's Texas City refinery, more than 400 pounds a day of benzene — 40 times the state reportable levels — was released during a 40-day period while a subunit of the refinery's ultracracker unit was offline, according to a company filing with the state's environmental agency Friday. In all, BP officials said more than 500,000 pounds of pollutants and nonpollutants were released while the company increased flaring as they tried to repair a compressor on the faulty unit. Refinery spokesman Michael Marr said in its follow up reporting with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, BP estimated 36,000 pounds of nitrogen oxides and 17,000

pounds of benzene were released in the 40 days. State law requires 10 pounds or more of benzene and 200 pounds or more of nitrogen oxide during a 24-hour period must be reported through the commission's air emissions database. Benzene is a carcinogen naturally found in oil that has been linked to some forms of cancer, according to U.S. Health and Human Services records. Nitrogen oxides react to sunlight to form ozone and can damage lung tissue and cause respiratory problems. However, neither of the levels of the emissions reached levels that required self-reporting to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Marr said. The EPA requires any nitrogen oxides release of more than 1,000 pounds a day be reported, while the federal agency does not require reports of benzene emissions. According to BP's filing with the TCEQ, the ultracracker's hydrogen compressor went offline April 6 and was not repaired or restarted until May 16. Because of the malfunction, the subunit was shut down, and materials were purged and gasses were rerouted to a flare, according to the company's filing. The ultracracker, which remained operable, can process 65,000 barrels of oil per day and mostly produces high-octane blending components for gasoline. The ultracracker also can produce ethane, propane, butane, pentane, hexane and distillate. The bulk of the emissions during that time included an estimated 189,000 pounds of carbon monoxide and 61,000 pounds of propane, according to the company's report to the TCEQ. "During this time period, the site's fence line monitoring did not indicate any excess readings," Marr said. "Also of note, the site performed modeling of the emissions using TCEQ-approved modeling methods, and that modeling did not indicate an exceedance of regulatory exposure limits to workers or the community at any time during the flaring." TCEQ spokeswoman Andrea Morrow said the filing starts a process that includes a review by the agency that could end up before the commission's enforcement division. She said depending on why and what caused the emissions, the agency could take enforcement action. But without knowing the specifics of the BP emissions, she could not comment on what action the agency could or would take. She did caution the figures BP included in its report likely were estimates that will be higher than what actually was released. She said companies that underreport emissions face penalties. So the companies often will "shoot high," Morrow said. According to BP's TCEQ filing, all of the figures were estimates.

Benzene Emissions

According to a 2008 report by the Environmental Integrity Project, BP's Texas City refinery was among four refineries in the nation that had the largest increases in benzene emissions even as overall benzene emissions among U.S. refiners decreased by more than 18 percent between 2000 and 2008. The environmental group claims refiners actually underreport how much of the carcinogen is released because of inadequate EPA standards. However, according to a report to the Texas City-La Marque Community Advisory Council by the Galveston County Health District's director of Environmental Health last summer,

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benzene emissions in Texas City decreased by 74 percent between 1993 and 2008. That report does not single out BP nor attribute how much each of the city's chemical plants or refineries reduced benzene emissions.

Source: Environmental Integrity Project, Texas City-La Marque Community Advisory Council

<http://galvestondailynews.com/story.lasso?ewcd=98cf5a2c858437b5>

VIETNAM, CHON-BURI, JUNE 5 2010. 20 WORKERS HOSPITALISED AFTER CHEMICAL LEAK IN CHON-BURI



A chemical leak at the Amata Nakorn Industrial Estate in Chon-Buri has forced the evacuation of an entire factory. Twenty workers required hospitalisation, complaining of respiratory difficulties, after potentially harmful gases were released into the factory atmosphere. Twenty workers from the Siam Keeper Mfg company in Amata Nakorn Industrial Estate Chon-Buri have been hospitalised due to chemical gas inhalation. The company, specialising in the production of O-rings and oil seals, closed after an extraction fan malfunction causing potentially harmful gases to be released into the factory. According to Dr. Marut Jirasetsiri (senior medical official), the conditions were not severe but precautionary measures had been taken after several workers complained of minor respiratory irritations. The

gases leaked into the atmosphere are believed to be xylene and methyl ethyl ketone (butanone). Both chemicals are highly flammable but are not considered to pose a health risk unless exposed to extreme quantities. Butanone has been known to cause minor respiratory irritation although it is not listed on the US Environmental Protection Agency's hazardous air pollutants list. Siam Keeper Mfg temporarily closed the factory as a safety precaution whilst repairs to the defunct extraction fan were being made. At the time of the incident approximately 100 workers were present on the factory floor with 20 complaining of minor breathing difficulties and eye or nose irritations. Thailand's Permanent Secretary for Industry Mr. Witoon Simachokedee, has released a statement to the public advising that the leak had been contained and an investigation had been conducted showing the malfunction to have been the result of human error. The evacuation of the factory was purely precautionary and a resumption of trade is scheduled for Saturday. Amata Nakorn is one of the largest industrial estates in Thailand, home to over 500 manufacturing projects involving local and international investors. The Amata group are renowned for creating community based 'industrial cities' that are self-serving and beneficial to the local population. Along with the park based in Chon-Buri a new development is currently being constructed in Rayong with over 100 investors already involved. Amata group also own a further two industrial parks based in Vietnam.

<http://www.pattayadailynews.com/en/2010/06/05/chemical-leak-in-chon-buri-20-workers-hospitalised/>

INDIA, MADHYA PRADESH, JUNE 6 2010. BHOPAL COURT TO PRONOUNCE HISTORIC JUDGMENT IN GAS LEAK CASE ON MONDAY

mahim pratap singh



AP Activists and victims of the Bhopal gas tragedy shout slogans during a protest march to mark the 25th anniversary of the disaster in Bhopal on December 3, 2009.

At midnight on December 2, 1984, Bhopal became a living manifestation of disastrous corporate negligence leading to the death of over 20,000 people and causing injuries to over 5 lakh, according to official and unofficial figures combined. Twenty-five years, six months and four days later, the people of Bhopal eagerly anticipate what is being called a "historical" judgment by the City Judicial Magistrate (CJM). On 7th June, i.e. on Monday, the CJM will pass judgment in the "Union of India through CBI versus Keshub Mahindra and others" case, probably the longest running criminal case of this magnitude in terms of the number of people it affected and continues to affect. As the

first judgment in any case related to the Bhopal gas disaster, it will indeed be historic. Another reason for it to be historic is the involvement of Keshub Mahindra, former Chairman of Union Carbide India Ltd, who, after Warren Andersen, is the prime Indian accused in the case. Mr. Mahindra is now chairman of the Indian automobile giant Mahindra and Mahindra. The case, based on a charge sheet filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on December 1, 1987 against 12 parties, was originally to be tried under Section 304 Part II (culpable homicide not amounting to murder leading up to 10 years imprisonment) of the Indian Penal Code. This, however, was challenged by the accused in the Madhya Pradesh High Court but the court upheld the charges. Subsequently, the accused approached the Supreme Court which, in a September 1996 order passed by Justice A.M. Ahmadi, diluted the charges against the Indian accused to Section 304 A — causing death by

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negligence with maximum imprisonment up to two years. There have been 178 prosecution and eight defence depositions before the court since 1996. Several activists working with Bhopal victims do not consider significant the two-year maximum punishment possible under 304A.

Victims Sceptical

"It is the first judgment in the Bhopal gas disaster and so in a way it is going to be historic," says Balkrishna Namdeo of the Gas Peedit Nirashrit Pension Bhogi Sangharsh Morcha. "But even if the judgment does pronounce them guilty, what punishment would it be? Just 2 years against the 26 years of misery by the victims? And the accused can appeal against the judgment to higher courts," says Namdeo with apparent scepticism. Activists have also questioned the CBI's role in the matter as it has not been able to produce Warren Andersen, the then CEO of Union Carbide India Ltd and prime accused in the case, even after two arrest warrants were issued against him, the last one in July last year. "The CBI seems to have been acting on an unsigned directive of the Central government," says Abdul Jabbar, of the Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Udyog Sanghathan, who has been working with the Bhopal victims since the tragedy struck. Mr. Jabbar's organisation had filed an application to the CJM court to amend the charges against the accused and charge them under Section 304 Part II of the IPC based on new oral and documentary evidence (e.g. February 2010 deposition of defence witness T.R. Raghuraman who stated that Warren Woormer, the then works manager of UCIL, had ordered the shutting down of refrigeration systems on January 7, 1982). The application was, however, rejected by the CJM on April 26, 2010 on the ground that it was not supported by the Public Prosecutor of the CBI and that no court had the power to go beyond the apex court and change the charges to 304 part II. "A judgment such as this one, with a high-profile accused, has the potential to shape the future of how big business operates in the country," says Mr. Jabbar.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article447628.ece?homepage=true>

USA, CT, DANBURY, JUNE 6 2010. NORWALK BUSINESS OWNER FINED FOR SOIL CONTAMINATION SCHEME

The owner of a Norwalk environmental remediation company was given a suspended jail sentence and fined \$80,000 on Friday at Danbury Superior Court for his role in a scheme to defraud homeowners by making them think that their soil was contaminated by underground fuel tanks. Michael Zubarev, 41, president of the Norwalk-based Brooks Laboratories, was given a five year suspended prison sentence and five years of probation after he pleaded guilty to multiple counts of larceny, attempted larceny and conspiracy to commit larceny. His co-conspirator, Ronald Passaro, 45, president of Envirotech of Fairfield County, pleaded guilty to the same charges as Zubarev and he received the same sentence. Both men paid \$81,817 in restitution to their victims at the time of their sentencing and will pay another \$80,000 for their misdeeds. They are also prohibited from participating in certain, unspecified business practices. Zubarev and Passaro were arrested in February 2009 after investigators discovered that the men doctored lab reports to show high readings of contamination in the soil after the removal of oil storage tanks. The pair allegedly scammed three homeowners, billing them for thousands of dollars in unnecessary services.

<http://www.thehour.com/story/487382>

CANDA, MONTREAL, JUNE 6 2010. EAST END TO LOSE 500 SHELL JOBS >> REFINERY TO BE CONVERTED THIS FALL. WILL BECOME STORAGE TERMINAL AS BID TO SELL PLANT COMES UP SHORT

lynn moore

As Shell Canada's Montreal East refinery is converted into a fuel terminal this fall, about 470 permanent jobs will be lopped off its payroll. The local landmark - which currently provides meaty pay-and-benefit packages to about 500 people, employs myriad contractors and injects about \$200 million annually into the local economy - will continue to operate as a refinery until early September. Then, company spokesperson Larry Lalonde said from his Calgary office, work will begin on converting the refinery into a storage facility. "That process will take us to the end of November. The reality (then) is that we will require far less people (about 30) for the terminal than for the refinery," he said. Lalonde wouldn't detail the future status of the Montreal East employees, saying only that "there are different things for different people," including the possibility of early retirement for some. Built in 1933 and modernized and expanded several times, the Shell refinery has a 130,000-barrel-a-day capacity. When it closes, only Suncor Energy Inc. will remain in the east end of the city, which was Canada's largest refining centre during the 1960s and 1970s. Feeding the refineries with raw materials then - as now - was an underground pipeline that runs between Montreal and Portland, Me. Lalonde said that Shell will continue to supply its customers and retail stations with products, relying on both domestic and "global" sources. He wouldn't detail supply contracts, but said the Montreal East terminal will be supplied via the pipeline and ships. Larry Hughes, head of the Energy Research Group at Dalhousie University, said the refinery closing will probably increase Quebec's dependence on foreign oil. In recent years, Enbridge Inc.

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has proposed using the Montreal-Portland pipeline to export Alberta oilsands crude to the U.S. The Alberta crude would arrive in Montreal by pipeline via Sarnia, Ont., and then be sent through the pipeline to Maine. Last summer, amid industry rationalization, Royal Dutch Shell PLC announced a review of its refineries around the world. In January, Shell announced it would convert the Montreal East plant into a storage terminal for gasoline and diesel and aviation fuels. Employees' hopes were buoyed by two recent expressions of interest in the refinery along with Quebec's pledge to entertain requests for funding from prospective bidders. Yesterday, the company said that there was a significant valuation gap, and Shell would no longer pursue discussions with the interested parties. "While we will not get into details about the expressions of interest or parties involved, we have informed the parties, the government and our employees that we will not be continuing discussions for the reason that we are too far apart on some of the terms put forward to realistically reach an agreement on the sale of the refinery," Lorraine Mitchelmore, Shell Canada president and country chair, said in a statement. In Quebec City, Economic Development Minister Clement Gignac said he was disappointed by the decision. The minister spoke with Shell yesterday morning to ensure the company would live up to its obligations to the refinery workforce. Gignac also told the company it had a responsibility to explain its action.

<http://www.montrealgazette.com/East+lose+Shell+jobs/3116159/story.html>

USA – OIL SPILL RESOURCES CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL & PREVENTION

Oil spill response workers may be exposed to many different chemical, physical, biological, and psychological hazards. These hazards vary depending on the type and location of the oil spill, type and stage of response, degree of coordination between entities involved in response and recovery, and the workers' specific tasks. Therefore, occupational and environmental hazards need to be identified, assessed, and monitored in each oil spill response.

More At: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/oilspillresponse/>

USA – OIL SPILL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR - OSHA

Keeping workers safe during oil spill response & clean up operations

More At: <http://www.osha.gov/oilspills/index.html>

USA, TX, HOUSTON, JUNE 6 2010. RESIDENTS STILL SHAKEN FROM FIERY TANKER WRECK

sonia azad

• Watch the Video <http://abclocal.go.com/ktrk/story?section=news/local&id=7480785>

• Photo Gallery [10] <http://abclocal.go.com/ktrk/story?section=news/local&id=7480785>



It was a big explosion that lit up the night sky in northwest Harris County. A tanker truck blew up in a crash Friday night, injuring 3 people and causing a big gas spill. People who live nearby are shaken, thankful it wasn't worse. Thousands of gallons of gasoline spilled out of the crash that closed parts of the Sam Houston Tollway near Antoine. "We heard the boom, boom, boom," said Coddie Smith, who owns a hair salon in the area. Smith's salon was filled with customers when they were rocked by the explosion. She says the blast shook her windows and blew out the lights. "I shut all the dryers off. I shut the TVs off," she said. Nervous about what was happening, the women inside rushed outside to check out the commotion.

"Flames just started shooting out, hitting cars, hitting cement blocks, hitting grass, just burning up, burning up flames," she said. Investigators say a car and a van collided with a tanker truck that was hauling 8,700 gallons of gas. The accident caused the tanker to tip, sending gasoline into storm drains. The vapors ignited, sparking a huge blaze and a series of subsequent explosions. John Marsden lives in the neighborhood bordering the blast. He was one of the first on the scene and recorded video on his camcorder from across the street. Marsden says the gas fumes grew so strong, they burned his eyes. The odor, he says, is still infused in his clothes. "You could actually smell it, inhale it in," he said. "You could pretty much taste it in your mouth, pretty much I'd say." While her hands might still be shaky, Smith says her heart is calm. It's incredible to her that everyone came out of the fiery scene alive. "Not amazing," she said. "That's a miracle. Whoever was in that tanker is truly blessed, Truly, truly, truly blessed." The fire did damage a section of the road, which TxDOT will have to fix in the weeks to come. We called the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, or TCEQ, about the gas that leaked. They tell us there is no immediate threat to human health from it.

Related Content [Story: 18-wheeler explosion causes traffic nightmare](http://abclocal.go.com/ktrk/story?section=news/local&id=7480785)

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NETHERLANDS, AMSTERDAM, JUNE 7 2010. TOXIC WASTE MADE IN MALTA: DUTCH PROSECUTORS ARGUE TRAFIGURA KNEW OF TOXIC CARGO AS TRIAL BEGINS

david Lindsay

Dutch prosecutors accused Trafigura AG of putting profits ahead of safety at the start of the company's criminal trial on Tuesday, saying the oil trader hid hazardous waste in a ship that docked in Amsterdam in 2006 and then exported it illegally. The waste was later dumped in Ivory Coast in what became a major environmental scandal. Toxic waste caused thousands to fall sick in the African country in August 2006, though Trafigura insists the waste from its ship, the Probo Koala, could not have caused serious illness. Last November, The Malta Independent on Sunday revealed how the toxic waste in question had been produced just months earlier when the gasoline blending and storage tanker, the Probo Koala, had been anchored off Malta, according to internal company documents. The walls of a courtroom in Amsterdam were plastered with maps of Malta, Gibraltar and the European coasts this week, as prosecutors explained the complex process of how the Trafigura toxic waste had been produced on board the Probo Koala, and how it later ended up in Amsterdam before being shipped to and dumped in Ivory Coast. The internal documents, and others published in the wake of the scandal, show how the oil trading firm bought gasoline from the Mexican state refinery PMI through a US oil terminal at Brownsville and then processed it at sea offshore Malta and Gibraltar on a chartered tanker, the Probo Koala, using a process known as 'caustic washing'. The gasoline blending activities that produced the spent caustic waste took place aboard the Probo Koala off Malta in April 2006 and in the Straits of Gibraltar up to June 2006, before the toxic residue was dumped in Ivory Coast in August after Dutch authorities refused to allow the offloading of the toxic cargo in Amsterdam. Now being charged before the Dutch courts, the multi-national, based in Lucerne, Switzerland, has denied any wrongdoing. But despite the denial, it still paid €157 million to Ivory Coast to help clean up the waste and another €40 million to victims in a British settlement this year. Under the British settlement, lawyers agreed that the waste could only have caused minor ailments. But the UN's top expert on toxic waste, Okechukwu Ibeanu, said in 2009: "It is clear that there is a direct and indirect connection" between the waste and 100,000 cases of illness and 16 deaths that Ivory Coast attributed to the pollution. The Dutch criminal case focuses only on the docking of the oil tanker in Amsterdam in June and July of 2006, and will not address details of what happened after the ship left port. The ship had begun unloading waste "slops" from one of its tanks in Amsterdam, but then had them pumped back onboard after a dispute over processing costs. An investigation into the composition of the slops was still under way when the ship was granted permission to leave, which prosecutors say violated Dutch law. Prosecutor Luuk Boogert said Trafigura, Amsterdam Port Services BV and the city authorities had all put "self-interest above people's health and the environment" when they allowed the ship to depart with a hazardous cargo that had been manufactured off Malta. Boogert said Trafigura first tried to conceal how dangerous the waste was, then "dumped it over the fence" in Africa to save €400,000. "Cheap, but with consequences," he added. But while the incident appears so far to be relatively isolated, at least from the Maltese point of view, what is of concern is the presence of a virtual fleet of similar tankers that has been berthed in the vicinity of Malta this year. Fifteen such tankers were anchored at Hurd Bank, some 22 kilometres east of Valletta, on Friday. The tankers are speculative storage facilities awaiting the go-ahead to weigh anchor and deliver their extremely valuable, and dangerous, cargo at the right time and at the right price. Trafigura is charged with intentionally exporting hazardous waste, concealing the nature of the waste when it arrived in Amsterdam, and fraud. It risks a large fine, though Boogert has not yet made sentencing demands. Trafigura lawyer Aldo Verbruggen said the charges were based on an "unfounded moral judgment". Trafigura is a company that takes responsible entrepreneurship very seriously," he said. Trafigura CEO Claude Dauphin argued successfully that he should not be part of the case, though prosecutors have appealed against that decision. The ship's Ukrainian captain, Sergiy Chertov, is accused of assisting the company in fraud. He was not in court, and is expected to testify remotely. Individuals found guilty of breaking Dutch environmental law face a maximum sentence of six years in prison. Amsterdam Port Services director Evert Uittenbosch, and the city itself, are charged with "leaving dangerous waste in the hands of someone not qualified to process it." They argue that they acted correctly. The Dutch case is expected to last around two months. Trafigura eventually paid Compagnie Tommy, a contractor in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, to dispose of the ship's waste. On the night of 17 August 2006, Tommy used trucks to dump waste furtively at 17 sites in the city. Tommy's owner, Nigerian Salomon Ugborugbo, was sentenced in Ivory Coast to 20 years for poisoning. Trafigura says it is not responsible for Tommy's actions. Internal company documents reported by this newspaper last year explain, in detail, the gasoline blending process that creates the toxic waste, a process that was occurring just offshore Malta. The documents show that the Probo Koala had been chartered by Trafigura since October 2004 for use as a floating storage/gasoline blending facility "strategically located offshore first off Malta and subsequently in the Straits of Gibraltar". The company documents the gasoline blending process that took place off Malta, and the loading of almost 29,000 metric tonnes of gasoline blendstock delivered to the ship on 11 April 2006 when it was anchored off Malta. It was then also blended offshore Malta, in the process creating the toxic waste that was eventually dumped in Ivory

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Coast. While, according to the ship's classification, the Probo Koala can carry both gasoline blendstock as well as the caustic soda used in the process of cleaning the ship's tanks, it is not known exactly what happens in the murky waters offshore Malta, and the potential threats to the Maltese population by such seemingly loosely regulated or unmonitored activities. The Minton Report, a scientific study commissioned by Trafigura itself about its waste dumping in West Africa – a report the company unsuccessfully attempted to block publication of in the UK, concluded that the blending and refining process on board the Probo Koala contained a "considerable quantity" of mercaptide, sodium sulphide, and sodium hydrosulphide, in quantities "possibly far greater than found in refinery produced caustic waste". It also found that "...the slop/residue waste (created in part off Malta and) discharged from the vessel is likely to have contained very high concentrations of noxious sulphur compounds..." The report was penned in September 2006 when Trafigura's lawyer at the time commissioned scientific consultants Minton, Treharne and Davies to produce a confidential study of exactly what had caused hundreds of people in Ivory Coast to run to hospitals claiming they had been poisoned. Scientist John Minton wrote the report with confidential data about an apparently cheap and dirty chemical process that Trafigura had used to try to reduce the sulphur content of a consignment of contaminated gasoline it had bought cheaply. The report said the process had been so amateurish that it had probably left a high quantity of noxious sulphur compounds in the vast quantity of stinking black waste. The report listed nine potentially unstable chemical compounds that could burn or poison people who came into contact with them. Some of them could also generate the killer gas hydrogen sulphide under certain conditions. Mr Minton said such waste could never have been dumped legally on a landfill in Europe and should have been subject to specialist and expensive chemical treatment called "wet air oxidation" to make it safe. Among the effects of the sludge, Minton listed severe burns to the skin and to the lungs; permanent ulceration; corneal damage; vomiting, diarrhoea, loss of consciousness and death. One of the chemicals was branded "very toxic to humans and dangerous to the environment".

<http://www.independent.com.mt/news.asp?newsitemid=107230>

USA, WA, GRAYS HARBOR, JUNE 7 2010. IMPERIUM FINED OVER EXPLOSION

Jacob Jones

After completing its investigation, the state Department of Labor & Industries has fined Imperium Grays Harbor \$11,700 for several "serious" violations in the wake of a glycerin tank explosion in December. L&I spokesman Hector Castro said investigators found deficiencies in the areas of employee training, emergency planning and hazard communication. The Hoquiam-based biodiesel refinery received citations this week for one general and 11 serious violations. "Serious violations are those in which there is a possibility of serious injury or death," Castro explained in an e-mail. "General violations are those where there is not a possibility of serious injury or death, and typically they do not carry any financial penalty." The investigation did not find any "willful" violations, which are characterized as known issues the company failed to correct or ignored. On Dec. 2, a 10,000-gallon glycerin tank exploded when increased levels of sulfuric acid created an "exothermic reaction" that overpressurized the tank. The blast sent pieces of the tank flying and echoed for miles. About 500 gallons of sulfuric acid also leaked into a containment basin. No one was injured in the explosion. "We are taking steps to make sure this cannot, and does not, ever happen again," CEO John Plaza said in January. Imperium restarted production earlier this year after releasing a report on the incident and repairing the damaged facility. Imperium spokesman John Williams wrote in an e-mail Friday that the company is reviewing the findings. "Given that Imperium just received the letter, it is premature for company officials to address each point," he wrote. "But Imperium takes the input from L&I seriously. We will follow up directly with L&I to address their findings once we have had a chance to thoroughly review them, as well as the adjustments we have already made, and will continue to make, to ensure the safety of our employees." L&I investigators found Imperium employees were not given proper warning of the danger of mixing in too much sulfuric acid. Castro said operators introduced 21 times more acid into the neutralization mix than the process was designed for. "We found there were operators that weren't properly trained," he said. The L&I citation stated Imperium's hazard training and communication failed to warn employees of the potential for reactions during the neutralization process and how to prevent dangerous mixes. The violation resulted in a \$2,600 fine. "In this instance biodiesel plant operators were not aware of the hazards of mixing excessive amounts of concentrated sulfuric acid with organic materials in the glycerin neutralization tank," the L&I citation stated. "They were not aware of methods to be followed to avoid creation of a runaway exothermic reaction." Castro said the mixing tank also suffered from "design issues." The system cannot detect high levels of sulfuric acid or block them from the mix. The glycerin tank was not built to contain high levels of pressure and the system did not include relief valves to bleed off pressure. "With nowhere for this energy to go, it exploded," he said. Imperium spokesman Williams acknowledged some of those issues when the company released its incident report on the explosion in January. "Personnel were unaware of the potential for such a reaction," he wrote in a release, "and the processing equipment itself was not designed with physical or mechanical

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safeguards to prevent an oversupply of sulfuric acid." While local emergency officials praised Imperium's speedy response and cooperation, the L&I citation criticizes the company's emergency plan for failing to address all required elements. "People didn't exactly know what to do," Castro said. But Castro also noted Imperium has offered assistance throughout the L&I investigation. He said the \$11,700 in fines is based on a number of factors. "We take into account the severity of the violation," he said, in addition to the company size and cooperation. Castro pointed out the complex nature of the investigation, which used up almost all of the six months allowed by department standards. The citation stated Imperium has until July 4 to correct the issues listed in the findings and report back to the department. The company can appeal the citation within the next 13 days. Castro said an appeal would halt any mandatory corrections the company would have to make until the matter is settled. He has not been notified of an appeal at this point. "We kind of have to wait to see what they do," he said.

http://www.thedailyworld.com/articles/2010/06/05/local_news/doc4c09f1cf79f0c419027721.txt

OMAN, MUSCAT, JUNE 7 2010. CYCLONE HALTS OIL AND GAS IN OMAN



Workers play in flood waters brought about by cyclone Phet in Muscat June 4, 2010.

Cyclone Phet, despite weakening to a Category 1 storm, pummeled Oman's coastline on Friday, killing two and halting the small oil-producing country's oil and gas production, officials and state media said. Phet's first confirmed casualties were an Omani man who died trying to cross a flooded area in Oman's northern al Dhahira region and a Bangladeshi woman who was electrocuted in Qurayyat village near the capital Muscat, state television said. "Some of the rescue operations are being hampered by poor visibility and strong winds," inspector general of police and customs Malik bin Suleiman al-Maamary said on Omani television. "There is bound to be damage but it is too early to assess it." Oman's meteorological office said that wind speed was 120 kph near the Omani island of

Masirah, and the cyclone was expected to move away from Oman on Saturday, leaving the country relatively unscathed compared to Phet's predecessor. "This is not as bad as (Cyclone) Gonu and people are better prepared," said Ali Rashid, a resident of the capital Muscat. Cyclone Gonu, which battered the country in 2007, killed 54 people swept away by flood waters in Oman and Iran. Despite Phet's downgrade from a Category 3 to a Category 1 on Friday, the cyclone brought fierce, heavy rains with winds peaking at 138 kph (86 mph). "I saw two cars dive into the valley one after another as the drivers tried to go around a bend," Mustafa Suleiman, of the eastern al-Ashkharah region, told Reuters.

Oil & Gas Production Halted

In the United Arab Emirates' eastern Fujairah port, Phet brought bad weather and rough seas, the port's central command office said. Fujairah is one of the world's biggest operations for bunkering, the process of supplying a ship with fuel. "The port is not officially closed, it is up to the master of a vessel whether or not to bunker now," an official from the port's central command said, adding that only a few ships had come to the port to load. The latest storm path forecast on tropicalstormrisk.com shows Phet downgrading to a tropical storm before it hits the Pakistani coastline near Karachi. Pakistani authorities had already evacuated nearly 1,000 people and were on standby for more. In a worst-case scenario, up to 50,000 people could be affected on Pakistan's coast, said Commander Salman Ali, a spokesman for Pakistan Navy in Karachi. Oman halted its oil and gas production due as Phet hit the small country's coast, but no facilities have been damaged, DPO and Oman LNG spokesmen said. "We won't load any oil because no ship is able to anchor at our facility due to rough seas," said a spokesman for state-controlled Petroleum Development Oman (PDO), an affiliate of Royal Dutch Shell. Phet hit Sur, where Oman's three LNG production facilities, known as trains, are located, but no damage has been reported. Oman produces around 8 million tonnes of LNG per year. Oman LNG shut down one train on Thursday and was shutting down its remaining trains on Friday, Oman LNG spokesman Nasser al-Kindy said, adding that Qalhat LNG, which supplies Spain and Japan, would also be shutting down its trains. Omani state television said heavy rains were expected on Friday in Muscat, located near the port of Mina al-Fahal, where Oman's crude is exported. But Busaidy said the port had not been damaged. "The Mina Fahal exporting facility is fine," he said.

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