



Dangerous Goods - Hazardous Materials Group & Network

Release 2010 – 604 Newsy Stuff

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May 22 2010



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USA, CA, ALAMEDA BEACHES, MAY 13 2010. SERIES OF ERRORS LED TO EAST BAY OIL SPILL

mike taugher



An oil spill in the fall that fouled Alameda beaches was caused by a series of errors that appears to have begun when an oil tanker valve failed to close during refueling near the Bay Bridge, investigators have found. The spill worsened, officials said, because no one noticed a fuel tank of the Dubai Star was overflowing until 2,000 gallons of toxic, sticky bunker fuel spilled onto the deck of the ship. In addition, alarms did not sound and the fueling company failed to get boom around the spill within an hour, which state law requires. The Panama-flagged Dubai Star promptly notified the Coast Guard but did not alert cleanup organizations for hours after the Oct. 30 spill, officials said. More than 400 gallons of bunker fuel spilled into the Bay and washed east, resulting in bans on shellfish harvesting in parts of Alameda for several weeks. Coast Guard officials hope to wrap up cleanup of Crown Memorial

State Beach in Alameda today. Cleanup work is still active at Crab Cove. Those were some of the preliminary conclusions provided by state and federal officials during a forum Tuesday in Oakland on the readiness to respond to oil spills in the Bay. The forum was sponsored by the Pacific Environment and the San Francisco Estuary Partnership, a coalition of government, business and nonprofit groups. "There will be penalties. They have not been finalized yet," said Capt. Paul Gugg, commander of Coast Guard Sector San Francisco. The Dubai Star spill was estimated to be from 400 to 800 gallons, but officials on Tuesday said the final number is about 422 gallons. Thirty-eight birds were either found dead or died after they were collected after the spill. That spill came less than two years after the Cosco Busan clipped the Bay Bridge and dumped 54,000 gallons of bunker fuel that fouled 69 miles of beaches in the Bay and on the Pacific coasts of San Mateo and Marin counties, killing thousands of birds. The Cosco Busan spill resulted in several changes to state law, including a law that is meant to make it easier for commercial fishermen and other volunteers to help out during a spill. But one speaker at the forum said no training has been planned to put those potential volunteers to work. "Since the legislation passed, nothing has happened," said Zeke Grader, executive director of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations, a commercial fishing group. "We don't know what's going on. We're still sitting there like deer in the headlights." When the Cosco Busan spill occurred, fishermen were eager to help out getting boom around the spill but were told they could volunteer by helping clean birds, Grader said. "A relatively minor spill in the Bay, and we were totally unprepared to deal with it," Grader said. Although response companies responded quickly to the spill, communication with local governments, environmental groups and others who wanted to help was poor and led to regrets that more oil could have been recovered and more beaches could have been protected. The state's top oil spill response official said Tuesday that plans now are in place to respond effectively to oil spills in the Bay. But Scott Schaefer, deputy administrator for the state Office of Spill Prevention and Response, said that after the Dubai Star incident, state officials may require companies that fuel tankers and cargo ships to demonstrate they can encircle a ship with 1,200-feet of boom within an hour, as required by state law. Others at the forum wondered whether ships in the Bay should be required to be surrounded with boom during refueling operations. Preventive booming is required in other ports, but the currents in the Bay are strong enough that it is not required here, Schaefer said. Schaefer said state officials are trying to find information to help them determine if preventive booming might be effective in the Bay. Although a faulty valve may be to blame for the spill, human errors allowed a mechanical problem to become a spill, Schaefer said. "There's a lot of discussion; did the valve fail or didn't the valve fail," Schaefer said. "Whether the valve failed or not, the person certainly didn't go back (to check the full tank). They didn't monitor what was happening in the tank."

http://www.insidebayarea.com/news/ci_15064964

USA, PA, SNYDER CO, BEAVER SPRINGS, MAY 13 2010. FOAM AVERTED POSSIBLE BLAST >> SECTION OF ROUTE 235 MAY BE CLOSED UNTIL TONIGHT

tricia pursell

Fumes following the western Snyder County accident of a fuel tanker Monday greatly exceeded the flash point at which an explosion could occur, an emergency official said Tuesday. The rig hauling 8,500 gallons of fuel crashed when its brakes failed while descending Shade Mountain on Route 235, about one mile south of Route 522 in Spring Township. As soon as rescue crews arrived shortly after the 3:30 p.m. accident, measurements showed the possibility of a blast "well exceeding the flash point" at 600 parts per million of gasoline fumes, according to Snyder County EMA Coordinator Derick Shambach. "That means it's time to get everybody out of there," he said. "There's a high probability of an explosion at that point." The tractor had failed to make a turn, flipped, skidded 60 feet, left the road, smashed into a utility pole and came to rest upside-down in a

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small stream. Its tank began to leak and caught fire, which spread to Mitchell Run, under a culvert, across the road and into a stand of trees. While no nearby residents were evacuated, Beaver Springs Fire Chief Erik Markley said Tuesday night, the 50 or so emergency responders kept their distance until the area was doused with foam that trapped vapors. It's not the gasoline that burns, Shambach said, but the vapors. The Tuckahoe Fire Company, from Point Township, Northumberland County, arrived in response to the HAZMAT call. Tuckahoe carries more foam than other companies in the Valley because of the large amount of industrial plants that store fuel in its coverage area on Route 11. According to Chief James Geise, Tuckahoe can carry more than 600 gallons of foam. Before Tuckahoe arrived, crews started to fight the fire with water and were hoping there would be no sparks. "It could've been a lot worse," Shambach said Tuesday. Monday's fuel spill was the largest he has seen in his 20 years with the Beaver Springs Fire Company, Markley said. The severity of an explosion, Shambach said, would have depended on wind direction, humidity and how far the vapors were off the ground. "I can tell you this. It wouldn't have been good," he said. The truck driver, Timothy Bussard, 34, of Manchester, Md., remained in critical condition Tuesday night in the Lehigh Valley Hospital burn unit. Part of Route 235 remained closed, more than 30 hours after the crash. Motorists may not be able to use the two-lane road near Beaver Springs until this evening, Markley said. The truck was hauling 5,500 gallons of gasoline and 3,000 gallons of diesel. About 1,000 gallons of each ended up in the creek. "A lot of it burned off," Shambach said. According to Craig Bingman, manager of the Snyder County Conservation District, Mitchell Run flows into Beaver Creek, then Middle Creek and then the Susquehanna River. The state Department of Environmental Protection did not respond to a phone call Tuesday requesting more information on how the spill might affect water quality. Crews were able to contain the spill within one-eighth of a mile of the site of the accident, Shambach said. On Tuesday, they were using vacuum trucks to "suck the product off the top of the water," he said. But rain wasn't helping by pushing the water around even more, he added. The remains of the tanker trunk were removed from the scene Tuesday, resulting in a small fire that was quickly contained, Shambach said. Emergency crews remained at the scene until about 3 a.m. Tuesday, returned at 7 a.m. and worked throughout the day and into the night to clean the site. "I was very happy with everything that took place," said Markley, the incident commander for the accident. "All the responding units did their jobs really well, and all the mutual aid departments were very happy." At that time of day, he said, response by volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians can be slim, so he was glad to see the turnout from all departments. Bussard's truck was leased by Shipley Energy Co., which did not return a phone call. The state trooper investigating the incident also was unavailable Tuesday to comment on whether the vehicle was properly inspected.

http://dailyitem.com/0100_news/x1414096984/Foam-averted-possible-blast

SOUTH AFRICA, DURBAN, MAY 13 2010. PETROL TRAIN SABOTAGED

A train transporting petrol and diesel has derailed between Durban and Johannesburg in apparent sabotage action by striking Transnet workers on Wednesday, a union official says. All indications are that it was sabotage... the concern is that striking workers are responsible for this," said United Transport and Allied Trade Union (Utatu) general secretary Chris de Vos. "The railway line had been fiddled with... three locomotives and four diesel tankers derailed." The railway plates had been loosened, causing the train to derail just outside Durban in the early hours of the morning. Nobody was injured in the derailment. Asked if commuters needed to be concerned about possible petrol shortages due to the strike, De Vos replied: "Things could get ugly. The corridor between Johannesburg and Durban has now been closed... "We [Utatu] have the biggest majority at pipelines," he added. De Vos also said 18 locomotives were damaged in the strike yesterday. This happened in Ermelo and Durban, when rocks were thrown at locomotives and some locomotives were set alight. Transnet's spokespeople were not immediately reachable this morning to confirm the reports. Utatu on Wednesday joined the SA Trade and Allied Workers Union (Satawu) whose members had been striking since Monday. Both unions rejected a Transnet wage increase of 11 percent, demanding 15 percent. "The last time we spoke to Transnet was yesterday afternoon when they told us to call them when we want to sign. "We replied that they must call us when they can improve the offer," said De Vos. Transnet employs nearly 54,000 people and Satawu represents 39 percent and Utatu 45 percent of these workers. An estimated 15 percent of workers were not striking. Transnet obtained a court interdict to prevent striking workers from "unlawfully interfering with business or activities of Transnet".

<http://www.timeslive.co.za/business/article445878.ece/Petrol-train-sabotaged>

USA, N., NEWARK, MAY 13 2010. NEWARK OIL REFINERY FIRE BURNED FOR 90 MINUTES

More than 60 firefighters, including those from Fremont and Union City, were called to Evergreen Oil refinery in Newark early Wednesday to extinguish a three-alarm fire that was contained to the plant's five-story tall heater stack. Firefighters doused the flames at the Smith Avenue complex for nearly an hour and a half before they were fully extinguished. The blaze, which was

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reported about 12:45 a.m., damaged only the heater stack and did not require the plant to shutdown, said Aisha Knowles, spokeswoman for the Alameda County Fire Department. Refinery officials told firefighters during the blaze that a petroleum-based fluid appeared to catch fire inside the stack, Knowles said. Fire crews checked the air quality during the incident and determined that a "shelter in place" was not needed.

http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci_15071641

USA, ORE, BROTHERS, MAY 13 2010. DIESEL, GASOLINE FUELS TANKER TRUCK FIRE

 **Photo Gallery** <http://www.kptv.com/news/23536281/detail.html>



A tanker truck pulling a trailer drifted off a central Oregon highway Wednesday and rolled multiple times before 11,000 gallons of petroleum-based products caught fire, state police said. Troopers said the driver of the truck had passed another vehicle on Highway 20E about 10 miles east of the town of Brothers before losing control. The unidentified driver may have been ejected from the truck while it rolled off the highway. According to a state police spokesman, the tanker truck was hauling 6,000 gallons of diesel and 5,000 gallons of gasoline, which caught fire and burned the truck down to its frame. Firefighters were able to limit the blaze to the general area around the crash scene. The driver died in the crash. Highway 20E was closed for about six hours to allow for a police investigation and firefighting operations.

<http://www.kptv.com/news/23536281/detail.html>

USA, WYO, CHEYENNE, MAY 13 2010. WIND RIVER TRAIN WRECK DROPS 6,800 GALLONS OF FUEL

 **Watch the Video** http://trib.com/news/state-and-regional/article_e47af926-1021-5412-9d9c-c1560008fd03.html

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.kulr8.com/news/wyoming/93651394.html>

 **Photo Gallery** http://trib.com/news/state-and-regional/article_e47af926-1021-5412-9d9c-c1560008fd03.html



Two locomotives that derailed and crashed in the Wind River Canyon this week spilled up to 6,800 gallons of diesel fuel into the river and on its bank, officials said. Two locomotives and four freight cars left the tracks Wednesday when a southbound train slammed into a boulder that had tumbled from the rain- and snow-soaked canyon wall onto the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe track about five miles south of Thermopolis. One of the locomotives skidded down a 60-foot embankment, landing partly submerged in the river, and the other came to a rest on the bank. BNSF removed the engine from the bank Thursday and used six cranes on Friday to pull the other one out of the river, said company spokesman Gus Melonas. "We're collecting samples for further testing to determine what further

impact has resulted and what further steps to take," Melonas said. "BNSF is complying with the agencies and we're all working together to ensure environmental protection." There had been no reports of damage to fish or wildlife as a result of the spill as of Friday, said Joe Hunter, emergency response coordinator for the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality. He said most of the fuel that entered the water had been washed downstream and dispersed. BNSF was also using vacuum skimmers and absorption pads to clean up any visible fuel on the river. "They will be doing sampling in the river, both above and below where the accident happened," Hunter said. "When those results come in, we'll make a determination then if the cleanup is complete." Thermopolis and Hot Springs State Park have had their water intakes on the river shut since Wednesday. The town has been relying on well water while the park only uses river water for irrigation and hasn't needed to irrigate. Bill Gordon, emergency management coordinator for Hot Springs County, said townspeople were initially concerned about their water supply but settled down when they learned their water was safe and service would be uninterrupted. "Then it turned into a matter of curiosity," he said. "We had a lot of folks going out there and taking photographs and looking at it, and it was the topic of discussion all around town." BNSF has also used vacuums to clean up clay aggregate and barley that spilled from the derailed rail cars. Two crew members who were aboard the locomotive that slid into the water were not injured in the accident. Both locomotives that derailed are salvageable and will be repaired at a BNSF shop in Topeka, Kan., Melonas said.

<http://cbs4denver.com/wireapnews/wy/BNSF.says.Wind.2.1694966.html>

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USA, TX, JEFFERSON CO, MAY 13 2010. BENZENE CASE ENDS IN MISTRIAL

david yates

After three weeks of heavy testimony and evidence, jurors tasked to decide if a benzene supplier was responsible for a man's death retired on Tuesday, May 11, to begin deliberations. But before their verdict could be read, the jury was dismissed and the judge declared a mistrial. Defense attorney Robert Scott, who represented Univar USA throughout the trial, asked Jefferson County Judge Bob Wortham to declare the mistrial on the grounds that not all of his exhibits were in evidence. Judge Wortham, 58th District Court, honored his request. A date for a retrial has not been set and there is a possibility the case may be transferred back to its original court, Judge Donald Floyd's 172nd District Court. Scott told the Southeast Texas Record that he and the other attorneys had been discussing the absent evidence during the four hours the jury was deliberating. When it was announced that the jury had reached a decision, Scott said he asked for the mistrial before the verdict could be read and become official. Scott said the jury had voted 11 to 1 in Univar's favor. Despite defense objections that the case was not ready to go to trial, the plaintiffs successfully had the case transferred to Wortham's court in order to take advantage of an early trial setting. Jurors were charged to conclude if Univar USA, a chemical supplier, was responsible for death of John Thompson, who was stricken with acute myeloid leukemia. Thompson worked as an independent contractor at various local refineries during the 1960s and early 1970s, and routinely washed his hands in benzene - a habit which his widow, Carol, claims helped lead to his illness and eventual death. During the trial, Univar argued it was Thompson's employers, including DuPont, that were responsible for how workers handled and used benzene. However the plaintiffs alleged Univar had actual knowledge of the hazardous nature of its benzene products and negligently failed to warn industrial workers of the dangers in the '60s and '70s. Dr. Jay Shatner, an oncologist and Thompson's treating physician, testified he was the physician who first diagnosed Thompson's leukemia. He said the illness was treatable, and for a time Thompson had even gone into remission. However, the disease relapsed and Thompson died. He also said Thompson's type of leukemia is rare, with only about four cases a year diagnosed in the Golden Triangle area. Univar is the leading chemical distributor in the U.S., providing more chemical products and related services than any other company in the marketplace, according to the company's website. Carol Thompson was seeking damages for her husband's past and future medical expenses, lost wages and mental anguish. She is represented in part by Provost Umphrey attorney Darren Brown. Scott is an attorney for the Abrams, Scott & Bickley law firm in Houston.

<http://www.setexasrecord.com/news/226719-benzene-case-ends-in-mistrial>

USA, N.Y, NANUET, MAY 13 2010. COSTCO FUEL MIX-UP SUSPECTED IN DAMAGED CARS

khurram saeed

More than a dozen drivers who bought what they thought was premium-grade gas at Costco in Nanuet between May 1 and 3 said their cars have been experiencing engine trouble.



Hundreds of drivers who thought they were buying premium-grade gasoline at Costco this month might actually have filled their tanks with ethanol, damaging some of the cars, Rockland County officials said. More than a dozen cars sustained some type of engine damage after owners bought gas at the Nanuet retailer. From May 1 to 3, hundreds of people may have filled up on what they thought was 93 octane gasoline but which is suspected of being E85, a mix of 85 percent ethanol, which is made of corn, and 15 percent gasoline. E85 is intended for flexible-fuel vehicles and is not supposed to be used in engines not designed to run on it. "A single bad delivery may have caused this problem," said Terry Grosselfinger, director of Rockland's Office of Consumer Protection and Department of Weights and Measures. The Consumer Protection Office has received eight complaints since last

week from residents about cars bucking and riding rough, Grosselfinger said. They blamed "bad gas" from Costco, and many were driving higher-end cars, such as Acuras and Audis, he said. Scott Silverstein said he filled his 2004 Acura MDX on May 1. The Nanuet man noticed the car was running poorly, and four days later the engine light came on. It's been at his mechanic since Saturday, and he's been told the fuel injectors are clogged. "It was running so badly I think my wife barely got it down there, and we're only a mile from the (garage)," said Silverstein, noting he spends hundreds of dollars a month on gasoline at Costco. Silverstein intends to file a complaint with Costco since the retailer has told customers it will reimburse them for repairs. A message left at company headquarters seeking comment Wednesday was not returned. Costco is one of the largest sellers of gas in the county, with prices typically 20 cents per gallon cheaper than other Rockland [gas stations](#). On May 4, the county tested the premium gas at Costco, which had stopped selling the gas following customer complaints, Grosselfinger

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said. Inspectors also went to dealerships and took samples from cars whose drivers claimed they were damaged by the fuel. The test results are due back any day. Costco also took samples of the gas around the same time and shared its test results with the county. No water or contaminants were found in the gas. Based on what Grosselfinger called an "eyeball and smell test," county inspectors suspect 7,500 gallons of E85 was pumped into the 10,000-gallon tank on the evening of May 1. Two nights later, another 7,500 gallons of what appears to be 93 octane gas was delivered, which might dilute the sample the county has tested. Cars experiencing engine failures began showing up at dealerships in the area last week, including eight cars at Ramsey Acura in New Jersey and five vehicles at Honda of Nanuet. Robert Cohen, service director of Ramsey Acura, said diagnostic testing and customer interviews indicated common attributes. "All came out of the same pump during the same time frame," Cohen said. Dominick Garretson, assistant service manager of Honda of Nanuet, said his mechanics have "had our hands full of vehicles." He said whatever is in the tanks has been "eating up" the engine. There is damage to catalytic converters, fuel systems and spark plugs. Repair costs could range from \$500 to \$5,000. "If you go start doing value work and engine work, that could get pretty costly," Garretson said. Some cars may have run rough for a while on an ethanol-heavy blend but sustained no damage, Grosselfinger said. They would have returned to normal after drivers put in a new tank of gas. Anyone who bought premium gas at Costco from May 1 to May 3 and has experienced problems is asked to call 845-708-7600

<http://www.lohud.com/article/20100513/NEWS03/5130371/-1/newsfront/Costco-fuel-mix-up-suspected-in-damaged-cars>

SOUTH AFRICA, KWAZULU-NATAL, BURLINGTON, MAY 13 2010. TRACK SABOTAGE LED TO DIESEL SPILL >> ABOUT 10,000 LITRES OF DIESEL SPILLED WHEN A FREIGHT TRAIN DERAILED IN A SUSPECTED SABOTAGE BY STRIKING TRANSNET WORKERS, THE RAILWAY SAFETY REGULATOR (RSR)

"Two locomotives and five wagons were affected resulting in the closure of the Natal main line to allow clearing up operations," the regulator said in a statement. "Preliminary indications suggest that there was tampering with the track, resulting in the spillage of approximately 10,000 litres of diesel." The derailment happened at 3.30am at Burlington near Mount Vernon in KwaZulu-Natal. "The operator, being Transnet Freight Rail, is investigating the incident and will present their complete report to the RSR as required by law," said the regulator. Transnet spokesman John Dlodlu said the circumstances "indicated a callous act of sabotage that required specialist rail knowledge and equipment". "Approximately 100 metres of rail track was sabotaged... suggesting very strongly that the perpetrators had intimate knowledge of the infrastructure." Nobody was injured in the incident. "Consequently, both lines have had to be closed until midnight today [Wednesday]. Our teams have been deployed to assess the environmental impact and inspect the rest of the line." He said Transnet was "shocked and dismayed" that the saboteurs risked the lives of others "to make a point". He urged striking unions to control their members and desist from acts of violence. The United Transport and Allied Trade Union (Utatu) on Wednesday joined the SA Trade and Allied Workers Union (Satawu) whose members had been striking since Monday. Both unions rejected a Transnet wage increase of 11 percent, demanding 15 percent. Utatu general secretary Chris De Vos said: "The last time we spoke to Transnet was yesterday [Tuesday] afternoon when they told us to call them when we want to sign. We replied they must call us when they can improve the offer." Transnet employs nearly 54,000 people and Satawu represents 39 percent and Utatu 45 percent of these workers. About 15 percent of workers were not striking.

<http://www.timeslive.co.za/business/article446663.ece/Track-sabotage-led-to-diesel-spill>

USA, CA, GRANADA HILLS, MAY 14 2010. DIESEL MIX-UP STALLS OUT GRANADA HILLS CARS

rob hayes

Watch the Video http://abclocal.go.com/kabc/story?section=news/local/los_angeles&id=7438648

Roughly a dozen cars and trucks were stalled Wednesday at the Thrifty gas station in Granada Hills. That's because the drivers all filled their gas tanks with diesel fuel instead of 87 octane after an apparent mix-up by the drivers of the fuel tankers who delivered the gas. Now the owners are facing some expensive repairs. "The cars aren't going very far. I guess there's some up the street. They are all over the place," said George Aball, one of the affected customers. Cars that are designed to take unleaded gas will stall with diesel in their systems. The Thrifty parking lot was clogged with dead cars Wednesday. Many of the vehicle owners said the driver of a fuel tanker made the really expensive delivery mistake. "I walked over to the tanker over there and I asked the guy, 'Hey, what's going on?'" He said, "I accidentally put diesel fuel in the regular drums," said Dennis Kirwan. The store clerk at the Thrifty store wouldn't confirm the claims and referred to the tanker truck driver for answers. The drivers had no comment. One customer said she tried to get her stalled car fixed but no one would step up. The gas station told her to talk to the tanker company, but the tanker company told her to fix it herself and seek reimbursements later. "I'm paycheck to paycheck, I don't even have a credit card to put it on there to get reimbursed," said Renee Ammann.

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Kirwan said while people were still filling up with diesel, Thrifty employees said nothing to the customers. They just taped small signs on all the pumps and went back inside. "The employees are in there hiding out, the owner's hiding out and I'm out here telling people, 'Don't put that gas in your car.' And then I stopped and I thought about it and said, 'Wait a minute, why am I the one telling people not to put fuel in their car because it's diesel?'" said Kirwan. Customers said that when they went inside to talk to a Thrifty employee, they wouldn't even refund the money for the diesel that was put in their tanks. Thrifty is run by Arco, which is owned by British Petroleum. Calls to BP offices for comment were not returned.

http://abclocal.go.com/kabc/story?section=news/local/los_angeles&id=7438648

CANADA, SASKATCHEWAN, EDGELEY, MAY 14 2010. FUEL TANKER ROLLOVER, SPILL NEAR EDGELEY

A tanker truck overturned and rolled near the town of Edgeley on Tuesday evening, spilling some of the fuel it was carrying. The Fort Qu'Appelle RCMP detachment said its personnel and the Fort Qu'Appelle Fire Department were dispatched to the site of the incident northwest of Edgeley at approximately 6 p.m. on Tuesday. The tanker truck was carrying 1,000 litres of diesel fuel and 400 litres of gasoline, "and the tanker truck leaked some of its contents into the ditch," RCMP said. Police added that personnel from Envirotec were dispatched to the scene "to help contain the leak and drain the tanker truck of its remaining fuel." The driver of the truck was taken to the hospital with what were described as minor injuries. Edgeley is about 60 kilometres northeast of Regina. Spokespeople with the Rural Municipalities of North Qu'Appelle and South Qu'Appelle each said no immediate concerns about the fuel spill were brought to their attention. A spokesperson at the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment was contacted but didn't immediately respond with information on what, if any, environmental concerns resulted from the spill.

<http://www.leaderpost.com/news/Fuel+tanker+rollover+spill+near+Edgeley/3021706/story.html>

CANADA, WINNIPEG, MAY 14 2010. TANKER-CAR COLLISION PUTS 4 IN HOSPITAL

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.winnipegsun.com/news/winnipeg/2010/05/12/13928496.html>

 **Photo's:**

<http://www.winnipegsun.com/news/winnipeg/2010/05/12/13928496.html#news/winnipeg/2010/05/13/pf-13932701.html>



Four people, including a newborn baby, were sent to hospital Wednesday afternoon after their small sedan collided with a fuel tanker truck on Route 90. Witnesses said the westbound silver Honda Civic appeared to collide with the truck just after the light turned green for northbound traffic on Century Street at Wellington Street about 3 p.m. "It seemed like the car just came out of nowhere," said Brad Bowles, who was waiting at the light while heading north. "The truck hit the car on the driver's side and just spun it right around." Witnesses immediately called 911. An adult male and female were taken to hospital in stable condition, as were a child under five years of age and an infant. The male driver of the truck, from Paul's Hauling Ltd., did not appear to be injured in the collision. The intersection remained closed, with northbound traffic on Century rerouted to St. James Street, as emergency personnel cared for occupants of the car and police

investigated the incident.

<http://www.winnipegsun.com/news/winnipeg/2010/05/12/13928496.html>

NIGERIA, LAGOS, MAY 14 2010. THE MENACE OF TANKER DRIVERS

Accidents involving tanker drivers and articulated vehicles in Lagos and other parts of the country are now common. Hardly a day passes without some report of such an accident occurring. This should certainly concern the authorities. In late April, five people were burnt to death in Ibafo, along Lagos-Ibadan expressway when two tankers collided and burst into flames. The same month at Ilupeju in Lagos, a tanker conveying fuel tumbled off the ever-busy Ikorodu road and spilt the petrol it was carrying on the road. Five vehicles parked in front of a commercial bank as well as parts of the bank itself were consumed by the resulting inferno. It was the prompt response of the fire service that contained the fire and stopped it from engulfing the whole bank and trapping the workers and customers that were in the premises at the same time. In the same month, a tanker that was discharging fuel at a filling station situated in the densely populated Ojuelegba area of Lagos caught fire. Thankfully, a quick thinking motorcyclist got into the burning trailer and moved it out of the petrol station, thereby averting what would have been a complete disaster. The list of accidents leading to loss of lives and property involving heavy vehicles, especially those carrying petroleum products, is endless. However the blame does not lie with tanker drivers alone, those that drive heavy duty

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and articulated vehicles have also contributed to the horrific statistics on accidents. Many of these Lorries carry containers that are not latched to their bodies and at times these fall on other vehicles, leading to more deaths. It is time for those in charge to end the insane conditions that make these accidents happen. The Lagos State government and other states where these vehicles pose extreme dangers to citizens cannot idle on while road users are maimed and killed. The Federal Road Safety Corps and the Lagos State House of Assembly must step in to save citizens from these avoidable deaths. There has to be control on the time that these vehicles are allowed to ply our roads. At the moment, between the hours of six and ten in the morning when most workers are rushing to work, these vehicles seem to dominate some roads. The situation is the same during the evening rush hour when workers are returning from work. In other societies, these heavy vehicles are only allowed to ply the roads late in the night when there is little activity on the roads. In line with the much touted mega-city status of Lagos State, the authorities ought to implement this and other useful measures to mitigate the danger posed to road users by these vehicles. This would reduce the havoc - from obstruction of traffic to the death of people - caused by these vehicles. The cooperation of the road safety corps, Lagos State Traffic Management Authority and the police should be sought to help enforce these measures. Not only is this necessary because life is sacrosanct, it also makes economic sense.

<http://234next.com/csp/cms/sites/Next/Opinion/5567778-148/story.csp>

AUSTRALIA, NEW SOUTH WALES, SYDNEY, MAY 14 2010. CALTEX TO UPGRADE SYDNEY JET FUEL PIPELINE

Caltex Australia will invest more than \$20 million to significantly upgrade its jet fuel pipeline servicing Sydney's domestic and international aviation industry. The pipeline connects Caltex's Kurnell Refinery through Port Botany to Sydney Airport and delivers jet fuel from both domestic production and imports. "Caltex has made major commitments to Sydney regional fuel infrastructure over many years," Caltex General Manager Supply & Distribution Ken James said. "With the projected growth in tourism and trade in Sydney and NSW, this new investment will contribute additional pipeline capacity to help meet the fuel needs of Sydney Airport until at least 2019," James said. "The pipeline upgrade represents an investment to support growth in our jet fuel marketing business. "It will also provide efficient pipeline capacity which can be made available to other fuel suppliers operating at Sydney Airport." The upgrade will approximately double the capacity of the pipeline and is expected to be completed by late 2011. The project follows a successful first stage upgrade undertaken earlier this year.

<http://www.aviationbusiness.com.au/news/caltex-to-upgrade-sydney-jet-fuel-pipeline>

VENEZUELA, MAY 14 2010. VENEZUELAN GAS RIG SINKS IN CARIBBEAN, NO LEAKS

frank jack daniel & marianna parraga

A Venezuelan natural gas exploration rig sank in the Caribbean sea early on Thursday, but all 95 workers were evacuated safely and there was no leakage, the government said. The accident came less than a month after a rig owned by BP exploded and sank in the Gulf of Mexico, triggering one of the world's worst-ever oil spills. Venezuela's Energy Minister Rafael Ramirez said no gas was escaping from the Aban Pearl rig site after the platform disappeared beneath the waves near the northeast coast of the OPEC nation, close to the Trinidad and Tobago islands. "At 2:20 a.m. (0650 GMT) the rig sunk completely. I flew over it this morning and there is nothing to see," Ramirez told Reuters. The government had been proud of the Aban Pearl, which was the first offshore gas rig operated by state oil company PDVSA. State television frequently portrayed the platform as evidence of Venezuela's engineering prowess. PDVSA said the Dragon 6 oil field where the rig was working had been successfully sealed after the accident. Critics of President Hugo Chavez say he weakened state-oil company PDVSA by firing thousands of managers and technicians several years ago. The company is the main financier of his socialist revolution and has suffered cash flow problems on lower oil prices. Venezuela, one of the world's leading oil exporters, has endured a series of fires and maintenance problems at its network of refineries in recent years, although the nationalization of foreign-owned projects and higher taxes have bolstered PDVSA's coffers. Chavez broke news of the accident at the rig -- owned India's Aban Offshore in alliance with Singapore-based company Petromarine Energy Services Ltd -- from his Twitter account, @chavezcandanga. He said all the workers had been rescued at the exploration site, which is run by PDVSA. "They were evacuated and now two Navy patrols are moving to the area," the president tweeted at 3:11 a.m. local time (3:41 a.m. ET).

Raft Problem Blamed

Venezuela sits on some of the world's largest offshore natural gas reserves, but fears of rule changes and pricing issues mean PDVSA has struggled to attract extraction investment from foreign companies with the right experience. It is not yet producing offshore gas. Ramirez said the football field-sized rig, which was built in 1977, keeled over in the night before finally sinking at about 2 a.m. The region is known for strong waves, a state television reporter said. The minister said the accident appeared to have been caused by a sudden surge of water entering one of the submarine rafts that the platform's legs float on, and a

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submersible robot was being used to investigate further. "There are several hypothesis about the cause but nothing has been proved yet. We are going to send underwater robots because divers cannot enter there," Ramirez said. He said safety valves and other security mechanisms meant the well was sealed and there was no risk of a gas leak. The rig owner would likely try to refloat the Aban Pearl, and two more exploration rigs are traveling to Venezuela from India, he said. Aban Offshore's shares fell by 1.51 percent to 1017.35 rupees on Thursday. The semisubmersible rig was drilling some of the 16 gas wells in the Mariscal Sucre offshore natural gas project, and just last week Ramirez visited the platform to celebrate the end of early tests at Dragon 6. PDVSA and Spain's Repsol announced last year that they had found a vast offshore gas field in Venezuelan waters. In April, Venezuela gave Chevron the go-ahead to extract gas from a 7 trillion cubic feet project off the Orinoco Delta, but Chevron says it will not extract gas from there in the next few years at least. Last year, PDVSA invited a group of companies to take part in Mariscal Sucre -- but failed to attract any bids and the auction was closed. PDVSA is hoping for a loan to develop the stalled, 14 trillion cubic feet project. Ramirez said the development plan for the project would not be affected by the accident and he expected the first gas production in 2012.

<http://planetark.org/wen/58018>

USA, N.Y, FORT DRUM, MAY 14 2010. US GOV'T OKS CONTRACT FOR NY FUEL SPILL CLEANUP

The federal government has approved a \$6.5 million contract to clean up most of the more than 350,000 gallons of jet fuel that leaked from airfield storage tanks at Fort Drum. Officials at the northern New York Army post say EA Engineering, Science and Technology of Syracuse will do the work at Wheeler-Sack Army Airfield. They say the fuel may have started leaking as early as 2001 or 2002. It wasn't discovered until April 2006. Investigators traced the leak to a faulty valve on a sump beneath a refueling area on the airfield's tarmac. An estimated 350,000 to 400,000 gallons of fuel leaked into the ground. The cleanup has already cost about \$2 million to recover 78,000 gallons.

<http://www.wcax.com/Global/story.asp?S=12475848>

USA, TX, MIDLAND CO, MAY 14 2010. OILFIELD WORKER BURNED AFTER TANK BATTERY INCIDENT IN MIDLAND COUNTY

A Midland oilfield worker ends up in the hospital with burns after an accident at a tank battery southeast of town. It happened just before lunch-time on a job site near Highway 158 and FM 1379. According to the Midland County Fire Marshal, a work crew was replacing a valve on a heater treater, when it flashed. One worker from Universal Valves, suffered burns on his hands, face and chest. He was taken to the hospital. He's expected to be okay.

<http://www.newswest9.com/Global/story.asp?S=12479729>

NEW ZEALAND, WELLINGTON, MAY 14 2010. A TOXIC LEGACY REVEALED

alice cowdrey

The Tasman District Council's fight to keep its secret contaminated site register under wraps has failed, with the Ombudsman forcing its release to the public. Released yesterday, the list reveals the region's most toxic land, which has been left contaminated by a history of heavy-handed chemical use as well as the dumping of chemicals. The council has continually refused to release the register publicly, but a complaint by the Nelson Mail led to the Ombudsman's ruling. The Nelson Mail's complaint was lodged last August and in the meantime Nelson City Council, the Hawke's Bay and Greater Wellington regional councils and Environment Canterbury released their lists. The TDC argued that releasing the register would ruin relationships with landowners, and said the information was available through land information memorandum reports. Of Tasman's 763 listed sites, 471 are pre-1975 orchard sites around Mapua, Waimea, Appleby and the Moutere Hills. Lead arsenic sprayed on the fruit trees is still likely to be found in the soil of the sites' 4000 hectares. Most of this land has not been tested, but four of the orchard sites have been remediated because levels of lead arsenic exceeded national guidelines. The level cannot exceed 30 milligrams of arsenic per kilogram of soil. The remediated sites are on Wensley Rd, Richmond, Old Coach Rd, Mahana, Waiwhero Rd, Ngatimoti and Nile Rd, Mahana. These sites were tested because the landowners wanted to change the land use. Council environment and planning manager Dennis Bush-King said it was important there was a "sense of proportion" around the release of the register. "People, including the media, can quickly jump to conclusions that anything to do with hazardous materials is bad. The incorrect and sensational use of terms like 'toxic sites' can have damaging implications," he said. However, a new contaminated site brochure published by the council on Wednesday says people should be concerned. People who live or work on contaminated sites "may be in danger" and many contaminants including arsenic can cause cancer and other illnesses, the brochure says. Another brochure for people living on sites where pesticides have been used says people should wash fruit and vegetables, wash hands after gardening and remove footwear inside. The council sent

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letters to landowners with sites on the register ahead of the register's release to "forewarn" them. About 50 people responded to the council and most felt negative about its release, Mr Bush-King said. He said the council's intention was to manage risks associated with hazardous chemicals in a "sensitive and proportionate manner to keep people and the environment safe from exposure to unacceptable levels of risk". Of the total number of sites on the register, 607 have not undergone any tests. About 50 sites are being managed, and 46 have been sampled and are suitable for their current land use. Property owners have to pay for their own tests. Mr Bush-King said the information was graded according to what was known about a site. Because a property was on the register did not mean it was contaminated. He said there would be no public access to the register as it was updated and people could not see the list at the council office. Green Party toxics spokeswoman Catherine Delahunty said the register should always be accessible to the public. "I don't want any more people unknowingly being exposed because they didn't buy a LIM report or they didn't know and it was really hard to find out," Ms Delahunty said. "We have to act collectively in terms of the public good." Council resource scientist Jenny Easton said the register revealed some "pretty appalling practices that you think people wouldn't do on their land" like burying chemicals in unofficial landfill sites. Annette Walker, who is Mapua's former Fruitgrowers Chemical Company site's closest neighbour said the community's need to know where contaminated sites were outweighed the council and landowners' desire for it to be kept under wraps. The register should be published by the council as it was updated, she said.

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/nelson-mail/news/3698131/A-toxic-legacy-revealed>

USA, N.H, COLEBROOK, MAY 15 2010. 2 KILLED IN EXPLOSIONS AT GUNPOWDER PLANT >> EXPLOSIONS AT MUZZLELOADER PLANT HEARD FOR MILES

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.thebostonchannel.com/news/23561659/detail.html>

 **Photo's** <http://www.thebostonchannel.com/news/23561659/detail.html>



Two people were killed in a series of explosions in Colebrook on Friday. Officials said the two were in a building when three explosions shook the town just after 1 p.m. Friday. Officials said the explosion occurred at Black Mag Industries, a subsidiary of MDM Muzzleloaders. The facility makes synthetic gunpowder for certain types of firearms. The material is less explosive than regular gunpowder. People said they heard the explosions from miles away and saw heavy black smoke coming from the area. Fewer than 20 people work in the office, according to the fire marshal's office. The building is on Gould Street and is part of an industrial park that includes a church and Codet Manufacturing. The condition of those buildings isn't known. A large section of the Black Mag Industries building was blown out, though much of the building was still standing. Border Patrol, state and local police, the Fish and Game Department and several fire departments

from the area responded. Officials said the fire was still burning hours after the blasts. Firefighters had difficulty controlling the fire for the first 90 minutes because ammunition kept going off. Chunks of foam debris and ashes were pushed out 200 feet or more from the building. About 40 people from surrounding homes and businesses were temporarily evacuated as a safety precaution.

<http://www.thebostonchannel.com/news/23561659/detail.html>

USA, MA, BOSTON MAY 15 2010. BAMA TAKES OIL FIRMS TO TASK >> DOUBTS EXPRESSED ABOUT GOVERNMENT 5,000 BARRELS A DAY ESTIMATES >> IT MAY BE MORE THAN FIVE OR EVEN 10 TIMES THIS RATE

karen tumulty & juliet eilperin



This photo, released yesterday, shows the Deepwater Horizon oil platform leaning on its side before sinking into the Gulf of Mexico more than three weeks ago.

The spreading environmental disaster in the Gulf of Mexico threatens to become a crisis of public confidence for President Obama, who stepped forward yesterday to declare that "the system failed and it failed badly," and included the federal government among those who "share that responsibility." He saved his most withering criticism for the oil companies involved, whose executives came up short on everything but evasiveness when they were called to account on Capitol Hill this week. "I did not appreciate what I considered to be a ridiculous spectacle during the congressional hearings into this matter," Obama said. "You had executives of BP and Transocean

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and Halliburton falling over each other to point the finger of blame at somebody else. The American people could not have been impressed with that display, and I certainly wasn't." What is making an impression, a deepening one, is a display of frustration and impotence on the part of those on the front line. New questions are also being raised about whether this disaster might have been avoided if Washington had done its job right in the first place. Effort after effort has failed to contain the oil spill that began with the April 20 explosion of the Deepwater Horizon rig under a mile of seawater more than 40 miles off Louisiana. This week, scientists and environmental groups expressed doubts about the government estimate of the size of the leak, saying it may be more than five or even 10 times the rate of 5,000 barrels a day that has been cited for weeks. And now, playing almost continuously on cable news, there is video of what those fighting to contain the leak are up against: a furious plume of oil and gas from the Gulf floor. As officials come to grips with what lies ahead in stopping the leak and cleaning up the damage, they are also looking over their shoulders at what might have prevented it. "For too long, for a decade or more, there has been a cozy relationship between the oil companies and the federal agency that permits them to drill," Obama acknowledged. "It seems as if permits were too often issued based on little more than assurances of safety from the oil companies." Interviews with former Minerals Management Service employees, and reviews of key documents, suggest that the agency of the Interior Department charged with managing the natural gas, oil, and other mineral resources on the outer continental shelf regularly made decisions that favored industry interests over environmental protections. When the agency conducted environmental assessments in the region in 2001, officials put forward spill scenarios that did not show the worst case, according to a former agency biologist who asked not to be identified. The former official also contended that when MMS officials consulted with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service about how to develop regulations that would protect marine mammals and endangered species from the disruptions to their environment that go along with oil exploration and production, MMS fought to water down NOAA's proposal. Obama lauded Interior Secretary Ken Salazar for having recognized and addressed the problems, and said that he has asked Salazar to conduct "a top-to-bottom reform of the Minerals Management Service." In an effort to avoid an in-house conflict of interest, Salazar has announced a plan to separate the part of the agency that issues drilling permits and collects royalties from the part that inspects and enforces safety regulations. Lawmakers such as House Resources Committee Chairman Nick Rahall, a West Virginia Democrat, have nonetheless ramped up their scrutiny of the administration's possible contribution to the accident. Rahall has sent letters to Salazar and Nancy Sutley, who leads the White House Council of Environmental Quality, asking them to provide him with "all documents" that would explain the circumstances under which the federal government has granted the kind of waivers that exempted BP from having to conduct a detailed environmental analysis. The disaster poses a sensitive political challenge for the president. As a candidate he decried the influence of "big oil" on a Republican White House. Obama's political exposure has been increased by the fact that, to the anger of many liberals, he called for an expansion of offshore oil and gas drilling. He has put his plans for more drilling on hold, until officials find the cause of the Gulf leak. But he maintained yesterday that domestic drilling continues to be part of his energy strategy.

http://www.boston.com/news/science/articles/2010/05/15/obama_talks_tough_on_oil/

NIGERIA, LAGOS, MAY 15 2010. SHELL BLAMES SABOTAGE FOR 2009 OIL SPILLS IN NIGERIA >>SPILLS 14,000 TONS OF CRUDE OIL INTO CREEKS

Royal Dutch Shell spilled nearly 14,000 tons of crude oil into the creeks of the Niger Delta last year, the company said Tuesday, blaming thieves and militants for the environmental damage. The amount of oil spilled by Shell's Nigerian subsidiary was more than double what poured into the delta in 2008, and quadruple what was spilled in 2007 — highlighting the worsening situation the oil major faces in Nigeria. The oil giant faces regular attacks by militants who have targeted pipelines, kidnapped petroleum company workers and fought government troops since 2006. Its chief executive officer has even hinted that the company can no longer depend on Nigeria as a profit-maker, despite its 50-year history in the country. Shell blamed the majority of last year's spills on two incidents — one in which thieves damaged a wellhead at its Odidi field, and another where militants bombed the Trans Escravos pipeline. In all, some 13,900 tons spilled into the swamps, but Shell said it was able to recover nearly 10,000 tons of that.

<http://www.energytribune.com/articles.cfm/4035/Shell-Blames-Sabotage-for-2009-Oil-Spills-in-Nigeria>

USA, TX, DALLAS, MAY 15 2010. OFFICIALS: TEXAS REFINERY FIRE APPARENTLY ACCIDENT

Officials say the fire at a small San Antonio refinery last week appears to have been an accident, but the cause remains under investigation. San Antonio Fire Chief Charles Hood said Friday all signs point to accidental ignition of the fire that began when a tanker truck blew up at the AGE Refining Inc. facility. The fire destroyed three loading tanks filled with jet fuel, gasoline and other petroleum products, but it threatened to spread throughout the site until firefighters successfully cut off the fuel supply.

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Hood says the department's response went "by the book," but the incident will be used for further training. The one person critically injured in the blast remains hospitalized in critical condition.

<http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/APStories/stories/D9FMN8N00.html>

USA, CA, L.A, MAY 15 2010. LAPD: ILLEGAL FIREWORKS OPERATION BUSTED IN LOS FELIZ

Police called to a Los Feliz-area home to investigate a pre-dawn explosion discovered illegal fireworks were being manufactured, and one person was arrested, officials said Friday. Police arrived at the home in the 3400 block of Lambeth Street about 3 a.m. after receiving reports of at least one explosion, said [Los Angeles Police Department](#) spokesman Richard French. The discovery of materials involved in the illegal manufacture of fireworks prompted police to summon the hazardous-materials team and bomb squad to the scene, said [Cecil Manresa](#) of the [Los Angeles Fire Department](#). Two people apparently exposed to nitrates were taken to a hospital for treatment of unspecified injuries, Manresa said. One person was arrested, French said. A few nearby homes had been evacuated as a precaution, but the order was lifted early Friday afternoon, French said.

<http://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local-beat/Los-Feliz-Fireworks-93809249.html>

USA, CA, SACRAMENTO, MAY 15 2010. GAS STATIONS SUED FOR STORAGE TANK VIOLATION

The state Attorney General's Office is suing TravelCenters of America LLC and affiliates for violations related to preventing leaks from underground fuel storage tanks. The suit, filed Thursday in Alameda County Superior Court on behalf of the State Water Resources Control Board, charges six TravelCenters fueling stations in Merced and Kern County with violations that threatened the environment. Calls to TravelCenters were not immediately returned. Charges include having an inoperable line leak detectors and failing to maintain adequate overfill prevention. The stations operate under the brand names "TravelCenters of America," "TA" and "Petro." The Attorney General seeks a permanent injunction, civil penalties, and other relief which could add up to millions of dollars.

http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci_15089175?nclick_check=1

CANADA, B.C, BURNABY, MAY 15 2010. FAMILIES FILE LAWSUIT IN 2007 BURNABY OIL PIPELINE RUPTURE

wanda chow



Oil coats an excavator at the site of the July 2007 oil pipeline rupture in Burnaby's Westridge neighbourhood.

A North Burnaby family is suing those involved in the pipeline rupture that showered their Belcarra Drive home with crude oil on July 24, 2007. The Siniscalchi family—Mario and Sabrina and their four sons—have filed a lawsuit against Kinder Morgan Canada, the City of Burnaby, Trans Mountain Pipeline, engineering consultant R.F. Binnie & Associates and contractor B. Cusano Contracting, claiming damages to their property and personal injury. The family's lawsuit is one of several filed by residents living near Inlet Drive where the pipeline was ruptured by an excavator during work to upgrade city storm sewers. The rupture released 234,000 litres of crude oil, much of it into Burrard Inlet, of which 210,000 was

recovered. It sprayed 11 homes, emergency crews and members of the public, and caused the evacuation of 250 area residents. The Siniscalchi family's statement of claim says that as a result of the incident, Sabrina Siniscalchi suffered "headaches, dermatitis, conjunctivitis, post-traumatic stress, depression, sleep disturbance, tension and anxiety." Their son Stefano, who media reports described as being 11 months old at the time, suffered "conjunctivitis stress, anxiety and sleep disturbance" while all other family members experienced similar stress-related symptoms and ailments. The Siniscalchis are seeking unspecified damages for that and for the losses incurred in the remediation of their home and property and the loss of market value for the land. Their lawyer, Trevor Armstrong, said a judge has ordered that all such cases involving the pipeline incident are to be heard or tried at the same time and venue which has led to something of a flurry of activity recently to move and consolidate all the court actions. People usually must file claims for injury or damages within two years from the date of the incident, Armstrong explained. And while he did that, he believes many have been watching and waiting to see the outcome of the major lawsuit between those directly involved in the oil spill—who are also defendants in the smaller lawsuits filed by affected property owners. In March 2009, the Transportation Safety Board produced a report on the causes of the spill that blamed it on poor communication, out-of-date maps and federal regulations not being followed. "If you read that you sort of get a sense of maybe fault being shared around amongst all of the parties," Armstrong said. The key will be for the major

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lawsuit to sort out how liable each party is, then all the smaller lawsuits will likely be resolved on the same liability split. "It's conceivable, I guess, that you could have 30 to 40 parties at one trial on the issue of liability and you can imagine what 30 or 40 lawyers in the same room would do with making it last forever. "So I think there will be a real significant effort to streamline things so that that issue can be sorted out without putting everybody through the cost of the liability trial." Asked how the Siniscalchi family is doing and whether they're still living in their home, Armstrong declined to comment without consulting his clients. In media reports after the incident, their home was described as one of the hardest hit. At the time, the family was putting the finishing touches on their dream home, and the crude oil covered their property just days before they planned to move in. Sandra Siniscalchi ran to the front door to see what was happening and was drenched by the geyser of oil that erupted from the pipeline rupture just meters away. The kids were also hit by the oil, which still clung to their skin days later. So far, only one of the defendants have filed a statement of defence. R.F. Binnie & Associates denies being at fault, saying it produced its drawings of the project based on the maps and information he was provided by Kinder Morgan and city hall. A Kinder Morgan representative inspected the site just before the incident and also did not raise any concerns, the statement says.

http://www.bclocalnews.com/greater_vancouver/burnabynewsleader/news/93787999.html

SERBIA & MONTENEGRO, BELGRADE, MAY 15 2010. DIESEL SPILL CONTAMINATES RIVER

A large amount of diesel fuel has leaked from a tank truck carrying 14,238 liters on the Belgrade-Obrenovac road. The nearby ground is now saturated with the fuel, and some has reached the Sava River. The truck overturned yesterday around 15:30 CET near Mala Moštanica and the fuel leaked through a 300-meter long concrete canal, the Environmental Ministry has announced. The truck, belonging to NIS Petrol OD Promet company, was transporting fuel to a gas station. Obrenovac Fire Department and Rescue teams, traffic police and the inspection for Environmental Protection were at the scene. The remaining fuel was transferred into another truck. "A clay barrier was set up which stopped further spreading of the contamination, while appropriate solvent was poured over the asphalt surface," the announcement concluded.

http://www.b92.net/eng/news/society-article.php?yyyy=2010&mm=05&dd=14&nav_id=67139

AUSTRALIA, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, PORT AUGUSTA, MAY 16 2010. DRIVER TRAPPED IN FUEL TANKER

[Map: Port Augusta 5700](#)

A crane is being used to free a truck driver who is trapped in his fuel tanker which rolled on the Eyre Highway near Port Augusta. Police say a car crashed into the truck as it rolled just before 6:00am about 11 kilometres south-west of the city. The three occupants in the car were not injured. Police say there will be delays on the Eyre Highway until about 5:00pm.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/05/15/2900289.htm?section=justin>

USA, CA, MERCED CO, MAY 16 2010. LAWSUIT ALLEGES GAS LEAKS AT TRAVEL CENTERS TRUCK STOPS >> THREE MERCED COUNTY SITES ARE NAMED IN COURT ACTION.

danielle e. gaines

Diesel tanks at three large truck stops in Merced County may have been spilling fuel directly into the ground over the past several years, violating state health and water laws. The charges came in a lawsuit filed Wednesday against Travel Centers of America. The suit was brought by the state Attorney General's Office and announced in a state Water Resources Control Board news release Thursday. The lawsuit alleges that six Travel Centers of America locations -- which also operate under the names TA and Petro -- in Merced and Kern counties have been operating without proper leak protection for their underground diesel fuel storage tanks. The locations in Merced County are 435 Winton Parkway, Livingston; 12310 S. Highway 33, Santa Nella; and 28991 W. Gonzaga Road, Los Banos. The Kern County locations are in Buttonwillow, Arvin and Lebec. The eight-page complaint against TA was filed in Alameda County Superior Court and includes 24 allegations against the Ohio-based company. According to the initial complaint, the company failed to install leak detectors on underground storage tanks; didn't install secondary spill containment structures; didn't monitor the tanks; or keep records of their maintenance. It wasn't clear if there have been any large-scale fuel leaks or contamination of groundwater Friday because water board employees were furloughed and unavailable for comment. The attorney general is seeking civil penalties that could add up to several million dollars if the minimum daily penalty of \$500 for each violation is enforced. TA has recently come under fire in several parts of the state, according to the news release. The Tehama County District Attorney's Office won a \$300,000 lawsuit against the company in April, after improperly maintained fuel tanks released 900 gallons of diesel into the Sacramento River. In San Bernardino County, the company had to pay \$980,000 for leak prevention violations. Another case is pending in Riverside County, according to the news release. A representative from TA couldn't be reached Friday for comment. TA's travel centers

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operate under the "TravelCenters of America," "TA" and "Petro" brand names and offer diesel and gasoline fueling services, restaurants, truck repair facilities, stores and other services. The company has travel centers in 41 U.S. states and Canada.

<http://www.mercedsunstar.com/2010/05/15/1423346/lawsuit-alleges-gas-leaks-at-travel.html>

USA, LA, NEW ORLEANS, MAY 16 2010. SCIENTISTS FEAR BP SPILL FAR WORSE THAN THOUGHT



The scientists say the plumes are depleting the oxygen in the gulf.

US scientists say they have discovered enormous plumes of oil in the deep waters of the Gulf of Mexico, suggesting that the leak from the blown-out well operated by BP could be far worse than previously estimated. They are quoted in the New York Times as saying one of the plumes is 16 kilometres long, nearly five-kilometres wide and 91 metres thick. The scientists say the plumes are depleting the oxygen in the gulf, prompting fears that the process could eventually kill much of the nearby sea life. The Interior Secretary Ken Salazar says the public has a right to know that the leak will be capped soon. "That cancer has got to be stopped and so we have been working relentlessly in... [assembling] the best group of scientists around the world, working with Secretary Chu and myself, that are providing an oversight to BP and

making sure that everything that can be done that holds the well down is being done," he said. But BP earlier said it was confident it would soon be able to stop the flow of oil. The US government has now approved the use of dispersants under water near the source of the leak and BP says they are starting to work. Engineers are also using underwater robots in an attempt to reinsert a tube surrounded by a stopper into the broken pipe. They hope this will help them siphon the oil to the surface. Doug Suttles from BP says the operation is continuing and he is confident it will start working in the next few hours. "We're in the process of setting up the riser insertion tube," he said. "This is the method to contain the flow. This doesn't stop the flow but it contains the flow. "We hope to have that tool inserted by some time late tonight (local time). It's back on the seabed." The White House is calling for immediate clarification that BP will pay for the whole clean-up operation. In a letter to BP, the interior secretary Ken Salazar and the homeland security secretary Janet Napolitano say the public has a right to know the company's true intentions. The letter from the Obama administration effectively asks BP to make clear how much it will pay for the Deepwater Horizon disaster. Last week the chair of BP's American operations said he believed that statutory \$75 million cap on a company's liability for oil spills was irrelevant. He added that BP will pay for all clean-up costs and legitimate damages claims. Meanwhile, BP's chief executive appears to have dismissed the massive oil slick caused by the gusher as being blown out of proportion. In an interview in Britain's Guardian newspaper, Tony Hayward described the Gulf of Mexico as "a very big ocean", saying the volume of oil and dispersant going into it is "tiny" compared to the total volume of water.

http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/05/16/2900684.htm?WT.mc_id=newsmail

USA, LA, VENICE, MAY 16 2010. SIGNS OF OIL SPILL POLLUTION MIGHT BE HIDING UNDERWATER

bettina boxall & alana semuels



Cleanup workers search the beach for tar balls in Dauphin Island, Ala.

The signatures of such a disaster — grimy beaches and dead seabirds — haven't materialized, but the oil may be affecting the bountiful sea life below the surface. Biologist Dennis Takahashi-Kelso peered into the cobalt waters of the Gulf of Mexico 20 miles off the Louisiana coast. The only sign of pollution was a plastic bag floating beneath the surface. More than three weeks after the Deepwater Horizon rig exploded, resulting in a leak spewing 210,000 gallons of crude per day into the gulf, the fouled beaches and dead seabirds that are the hallmarks of catastrophic spills have yet to materialize. But Takahashi-Kelso, who was Alaska's commissioner of Environmental Conservation at the time of the Exxon Valdez

disaster, warned: "It's going to be bad." Even as the spill breaks into separate strands, a nasty environmental storm is brewing below the surface, in deep columns of water teeming with life, from shrimp and fish eggs to dolphins and whales. Last week, researchers from the National Institute for Undersea Science and Technology reported on their website that they had found what they believe are large plumes of oil far beneath the surface. Experts don't know what the oil is doing to the complex web of offshore life. Most of their experience is with shallow-water spills that quickly bleed black goo onto beaches that are cleaned up relatively quickly. The BP well blowout, 48 miles off the Louisiana coast, is different. Oil is gushing from a tangled, broken pipe lying on the seafloor nearly a mile beneath the surface. The leak will be a month old this week, and if it is not stanchied by

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then, it will have spilled about 6.3 million gallons. "We have no idea where the oil that isn't reaching the surface is going," said James Cowan Jr., an oceanography professor at Louisiana State University. "It could go everywhere." Tar balls have washed ashore in three Gulf Coast states, strips of slick ribboned Louisiana's Chandeleur Islands, and the whiff of petroleum has permeated the morning breeze. But most fishermen and residents haven't seen any signs of the spill, aside from the media trucks parked in marinas and military helicopters whirring overhead. They sit in dark bars and talk about possible solutions to the disaster, or fix parts of their boats, waiting for oil to reach land or go away. "Everybody's just waiting," said Daniel Camargo, who was hanging out with friends on his boat, the Christian Louis, moored on a canal in St. Bernard Parish, La. Red and yellow crab traps were stacked nearby, unused. The rust-tinted light crude, meanwhile, sloshes around a part of the gulf that is a major pathway for marine life, where the nutrient-filled waters of the Mississippi River mix with the ocean. "It's a significant ecosystem that goes from the bottom to the top waters," said Roger Zimmerman, a marine biologist who directs the Galveston Laboratory, part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Fisheries Service. "This is a rich area in terms of biological productivity and diversity of animals. There's a lot of reproduction." Red snapper, red drum, gulf menhaden and other fish use offshore waters east and west of the Mississippi Delta as nursery and spawning areas. A big part of the country's commercial shrimp catch comes from the waters on either side of the undersea Mississippi Canyon, the site of the BP blowout. The canyon, which cuts through the continental shelf, harbors deep sea coral. Pelicans and other seabirds that dive into the slick to catch prey will bathe in the oil and carry it back to their nests, where eggs can absorb it, possibly killing the chick developing inside. Sea turtles and dolphins, which surface twice a minute to breathe, will inhale harmful fumes as they swim through the slick. "This is such sticky oil in its emulsified and dispersed form that there are mechanisms of harm that we don't usually look at," said Charles Peterson, a professor of marine sciences at the University of North Carolina who studied the effects of the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill on Alaska's Prince William Sound. The oil might clog the feeding organs of species such as jellyfish, he speculated. What happens on the surface also affects the deep-sea creatures living far below, where they are nourished by the rain of plankton particles from above. "If that productivity is eliminated or if it's contaminated, all of that will go to the seafloor," said Gilbert Rowe, a professor of oceanography and marine biology at Texas A&M. The light nature of the crude spouting from the leak is both good and bad. Rather than the thick, viscous pancake of oil that Takahashi-Kelso remembers floating on the ocean in the Exxon Valdez spill, the BP oil is rising to the surface as a mousse. That means it could decompose more quickly. But it also floats through the water in snow-like bits that increase exposure to the oil's toxins. "That's all suspended in the water column where the organisms are found," Peterson said. "You have real potential for long-term exposure to organisms, and that induces a very different mode of toxicity, which...can be very serious indeed," he added. "These chronic exposures affect the fitness of the organisms that are exposed. They don't necessarily kill outright but create organisms that are slow to react, often slow to grow." The widespread spraying of chemical [dispersants](#) on the surface slick may be compounding exposure and speeding oil uptake into the food chain, scientists warned. The problem, said George Crozier, executive director of the Dauphin Island Sea Lab, is that it is easier for particle-munching microorganisms to ingest the broken-up bits of oil. "They're not very discerning about what they're eating. They were less likely to chew on a big glob than if it was broken down to a particle size." Crozier described the marine community just below the surface as "remarkable" in variety. It includes plankton, small animals and floating fish eggs and larvae — including those of commercially valuable red snapper and grouper. Federal officials say the dispersants are a tradeoff. More than 500,000 gallons have been sprayed on the gulf so far, more than has ever been used in U.S. waters. And on Saturday, BP began releasing dispersants deep underwater, near the leak, after receiving Coast Guard approval. "We didn't cross this threshold lightly," said U.S. Coast Guard Rear Adm. Mary Landry. "This is a tool that will be analyzed and monitored." It's not just the depth of the leak that distinguishes the Deepwater Horizon accident, but the size and duration. "The first few days I was willing to look at it as an episodic event, which ecosystems are pretty good at dealing with," said Cowan of Louisiana State University. "But the longer it goes, it's quickly approaching a chronic stressor, which can be much more deleterious. "A chronic stressor keeps pushing and pushing the system until it reaches a tipping point," he explained. "It may never recover to a state like it was previously." No one knows for sure how much crude the mangled riser pipe is disgorging into the gulf. Government and BP officials have estimated the daily flow at 210,000 gallons. But officials and outside experts agree that estimating the flow rate is an inexact science. A Purdue University engineer who analyzed a video of the leak last week said the rate appeared to be in the range of 2.9 million gallons a day. That would mean more than 75 million gallons of oil have poured into gulf waters since the April 20 rig explosion, which left 11 workers missing and presumed dead. The June 1979 Ixtoc I spill in Mexico's Bay of Campeche was bigger. By the time a blown-out well was capped nearly 10 months later, it had emptied 140 million gallons of oil into the gulf, according to the U.S. Interior Department. Within a couple of months after the blowout, a band of crude 30 to 50 feet wide coated South Texas beaches 700 miles north of the leak. John "Wes" Tunnell, associate director of the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, studied the impacts of the Ixtoc I spill on the South Texas coast. Populations of worms and

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small crustaceans, food for shorebirds and small fish, plummeted by 80% in the intertidal zone and 55% in the surf zone. "The good news is that it recovered fairly quickly," Tunnell said. "The Gulf of Mexico is a very resilient place to have an oil spill," he added, noting that every year the equivalent of one or two supertankers of oil leaks into gulf waters from natural seeps. But the Ixtoc I blowout was in relatively shallow water, about 200 feet. Tunnell said little of the research on impacts closer to the wellhead was released by Mexico's state-owned petroleum company, Pemex. "So we really don't know much about the studies they did." The flow of water through the gulf is so huge that the swirling BP spill mixture will eventually be replaced by clean water, said Rowe, of Texas A&M. In the meantime, a risky, unplanned experiment is underway. "You go back to the word 'unprecedented,'" he said. "We're in a situation where the volume of the material, the concentration of the material, are in places where we've never experienced them before. So we don't know what the effect is going to be."

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julia kollewe



The Deepwater Horizon explosion caused millions of gallons of crude oil to pour into the Gulf.

The [insurance industry](#) is forecasting a loss of up to \$3.5bn (£2.4bn) from the growing [oil](#) spill in the Gulf of Mexico. This will be the biggest energy insurance loss in more than 20 years, and could drive up premiums. According to [Lloyd's](#) of London insurer Catlin, the 20 April explosion, which triggered an undersea well leak, will be the biggest loss in the energy market since the explosion of the Piper Alpha platform in 1988. A spiral of reinsurance losses from that disaster cost Lloyd's £8bn between 1988 and 1992. Swiss Re has estimated total insured losses from the oil rig at between \$1.5bn and \$3.5bn, and its own loss at \$200m.

JPMorgan Chase analyst Michael Huttner, who initially put the insurance industry's liability at \$1.6bn, says Swiss Re's \$3.5bn figure reflects additional costs if the oil comes ashore: "As soon as the oil hits the shore, it triggers additional policies linked to business disruption." The losses estimated so far by individual insurers total about \$700m. Experts say much of that will end up being paid by reinsurers, which cover the losses made by direct insurance companies – resulting in reinsurance price hikes that will be passed back to the insurers, who may then pass them on to customers. Amlin, the largest group in the Lloyd's market, warned this week that it faces claims of up to \$180m after a catastrophe-hit first quarter, including \$15m from the oil spill. It expects the oil rig disaster to "trigger upward pressure on rates". The remark was echoed by Chris White, the head of the energy division at Lloyd's underwriter Chaucer, who said the loss "demands a strong market response, with significant rate rises to compensate for the underwriting exposures confronted in these areas". Chaucer estimates its net loss at \$25m from the oil leak. And Munich Re, the world's biggest reinsurer, has warned that payouts for the oil spill and such natural disasters as the Chilean earthquake threaten its 2010 earnings target, despite better-than-expected profits in the first quarter. The Deepwater Horizon rig, owned by Transocean, had a total insured value of \$560m. A Lloyd's spokeswoman said: "Transocean insured their oil platform at Lloyd's; this has now been claimed and paid. We are now reviewing other contracts." The insurance market will publish a total loss estimate later this month.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/may/16/gulf-oil-spill-insurance-losses>

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