



Dangerous Goods - Hazardous Materials Group & Network Release 2010 – 602 Newsy Stuff

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

May 16 2010



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CANADA, BC, ROBSON BIGHT, MAY 8 2010. TRUCKING COMPANY UNLIKELY TO PAY OIL SPILL FINE



A fuel truck was put in a large box before it was raised 350 metres from the bottom of Robson Bight to ensure that any spilled diesel would be contained.

It seems unlikely the costs of cleaning up an oil spill in Robson Bight, a whale habitat off of Vancouver Island, will be recovered, says a lawyer. A barge belonging to Ted LeRoy Trucking Ltd. overturned in the Robson Bight Ecological Reserve north of Campbell River on Aug. 20, 2007, dumping a tanker truck into the marine reserve. The tanker, carrying 10,000 litres of diesel and 11 pieces of logging equipment, slid into Johnstone Strait while being towed to a logging site. The company was found guilty of six charges — laid under the Canada Shipping Act, the Fisheries Act, and the Migratory Birds Convention Act — in March. The Crown is expected to ask the court to impose a large fine at a hearing scheduled for July. But Andrew LeCroix, the lawyer representing the company's former owner, said it's unlikely the court will be able to collect as a bankruptcy trustee is now in charge of the business. He said the court will have to line up behind other creditors. "In terms of enforcing the fine ... it can be registered as a civil judgment, but they're still behind the secured creditor and there's a shortfall in the estate, so the fine won't get paid," LeCroix said. Two other companies and the captain of the barge were also charged but were not convicted. It's estimated the cleanup cost \$2.5 million, which was paid by provincial and federal agencies.

<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/british-columbia/story/2010/05/07/bc-robson-bight-oil-spill.html>

USA, ALA, HUNTSVILLE, MAY 8 2010. REDSTONE ARSENAL EXPLOSION WORKERS WERE HANDLING WELL-KNOWN, BUT DANGEROUS FUEL

lee roop

 **Watch the Video** http://blog.al.com/space-news/2010/05/redstone_arsenal_explosion_workers_were_handling.html



Eric Schultz / The Huntsville Times A firefighter and an investigator walk back from the building where two contractors were killed after an explosion destroyed building 7352 near the intersection of Magazine Rd. and Flicker Rd. on Redstone Arsenal Wednesday, May 5.

Two workers fatally injured on Redstone Arsenal Wednesday were working with one of the oldest, most understood and most dangerous of rocket fuel components. Ammonium perchlorate, called AP by rocket engineers, is the main oxidizer used in solid-rocket fuel, NASA rocket engineer Dr. Jeffrey Sheehy said Thursday. Oxidizers provide the oxygen needed for the burn that provides thrust. In solid rocket motors, oxidizers and solid metal fuels are held safely in a rubbery binder material until ignited. NASA and the military have used AP as an oxidizer for decades. It is in the space shuttle's reusable solid rocket motors, Sheehy said. Engineers like AP because it has high density in very fine particle form, Sheehy said. High density means high energy in the resulting burn. "It is hazardous," Sheehy said. "There are well-known and well-understood safety procedures (but) every now and then there's an accident." Sheehy had heard about Wednesday's accident while working at the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico, where NASA tested a new crew-escape rocket Thursday. "I don't really know what they were doing," Sheehy said, but he said the military and its contractors understand solid rocket fuels as well as anyone in the world. One risk of high-density particles is a grain-silo effect, Sheehy said. In the explosions that plagued early grain silos, millions of very fine particles of grain suspended in the air would be ignited by a spark. The resulting flash fires spread so fast through the particles

that they virtually became explosions. The veteran technicians killed Wednesday were separating ammonium perchlorate from the other elements in solid rocket fuel, officials said. They were working on "demilitarization" techniques to render the components safe and unusable. If the separation process resulted in a concentration of AP particles in the air, any kind of electrostatic discharge in the area could have caused the explosion. It's happened before. On May 4, 1988, a Nevada plant that produced AP exploded when workers using a welding torch to repair a roof ignited AP residue. The fire spread to nearby containers of stored AP, and a series of powerful explosions followed. The explosions, caught on film and now on YouTube, destroyed the PEPCON plant. The largest blast was equivalent to a small nuclear weapon. Dust explosions involving rockets have happened here, too. In 1993, two workers at International Specialty Products on the arsenal were hospitalized after an explosion at their plant, Army officials said. Both suffered second- and third-degree burns. "They were involved in putting carbonile iron in some kind of big industrial-size thing to move the stuff around, and they had a dust fire," the late Redstone

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spokesman Dave Harris said at the time. The dust apparently filled the air and spontaneously burst into flame, Harris said then. There was no damage to the plant. Carbonile iron is spherical particles of iron developed in World War II as a coating to make radar display screens glow. In rockets, it increases the burning temperature of solid fuel motors.

Other accidental explosions have happened through Huntsville's years as the "Rocket City," including:

- A rocket motor exploded in 1996 at Wyle Labs in west Huntsville. The blast shattered windows in nearby apartments and echoed as far as southeast Huntsville about 10 miles away.
- In 1992, a Thiokol-designed rocket built for the Army exploded on a Redstone Arsenal test stand. The stand was heavily damaged but no one was hurt.

Ammonium Perchlorate - Fact Sheet

- AP is the salt compound of ammonium and perchlorate
- Uses include solid rocket fuel, known as Ammonium Perchlorate
- Composite Propellant; exploding ejector seats in airplanes; and spacecraft maneuvering rockets
- Used by NASA, military, commercial rocket manufacturers and hobbyists, who sometimes process APCP themselves
- Exhaust from APCP motors can form hydrochloric acid, a component of acid rain. This is one reason major users separate unused fuel for safe disposal in the kinds of operations that led to Wednesday's accident.

http://blog.al.com/space-news/2010/05/redstone_arsenal_explosion_workers_were_handling.html

USA, WASHINGTON D.C, MAY 9 2010. EPA RESPONDS TO THE BP OIL SPILL IN THE GULF OF MEXICO

Since the BP Oil Spill in the Gulf of Mexico on April 22, 2010, EPA has mobilized resources to support the U.S. Coast Guard and protect public health and the environment. Our Emergency Operations Center at headquarters has been activated, trained EPA responders are working on the scene, and special mobile equipment has been sent to the Gulf area. We have several online resources available:

We're posting updated data and other information on our [BP oil spill site \(www.epa.gov/bpspill\)](http://www.epa.gov/bpspill):

- Get air quality and water data
- Find answers to common questions
- Submit technology solutions

Connect with us on social media sites:

- Administrator Jackson's personal account of the response to the oil spill: [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)
- EPA's announcements about our response: [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

You can also visit the [coordinated government response site \(www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com\)](http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com) for:

- Information about the spill and efforts to stop the oil from flowing
- Hotlines to report oil on land or injured wildlife
- Details of how you can volunteer

[coordinated government response site](http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com)

GHANA, SUNYANI, MAY 9 2010. FUEL STATION OPERATORS GIVEN ULTIMATUM

The Brong Ahafo Regional Fire Officer, Divisional Officer I Paul Opoku has given a two-week ultimatum to fuel service station operators in the region to acquire fire safety certificates or face possible sanctions. The move, the fire officer explained, is aimed at compelling the operators in the oil and gas industry to take precautionary measures to avoid fire outbreaks in their stations to protect lives and properties. The stern warning comes in the wake of recent gas leakages in some parts of the region, especially the Sunyani Municipality, which would have caused a great havoc in the country but for the timely intervention of the personnel of Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS). "We have experienced gas leakages in the Sunyani Municipality, petrol tankers fires on the outskirts of Techiman, Atebubu and these have become necessary for us to be on the guard," DOI Opoku stated. Addressing over 300 fuel service station managers and attendants drawn from all the gas and filling stations across the region at a day's workshop in Sunyani, DOI Opoku revealed that the regional command of GNFS had given a two-week grace period to the operators to attain all the necessary fire safety facilities after which personnel of the service would embark on inspection tours to sanction those who fail to meet the fire safety standard. According to him, the GNFS by Act 537 and LI 1724 has a role to play to ensure the safety of the citizenry and the country as a whole. He disclosed that in the first quarter of this year, Brong Ahafo region recorded a total of 123 fire outbreaks, including 41 cases of domestic

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fire, 3 industrial, 11 vehicular, 9 electrical, 53 bushfire and 6 others, with a total damage cost of GH¢207,617. DOI Opoku further revealed that the rescue and road traffic accident division recorded a total of 10 accidents with 38 injuries and 5 deaths between January and March this year. The seminar, the first of its kind in the region, was geared towards equipping owners and attendants of the fuel stations with the requisite knowledge about safety, precautionary measures, fire fighting methods and procedures of acquiring land, among others. Officials from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Town and Country Planning advised the players in the oil and gas industry to adopt safety measures that would safeguard their properties, clients and the environment. The officials also expressed their readiness to enforce the law to ensure that the operators adhere to laid down rules.

<http://news.myjoyonline.com/business/201005/45831.asp>

CANADA, CALGARY, MAY 9 2010. EMPLOYEE FACES RARE CHARGES IN WORKER'S DEATH

sherri zickefoose

Charges have been laid against a company and an employee in an explosion south of Calgary that killed a worker two years ago. Kevin David Lodge was killed while welding at the top of a biodiesel settling tank on a plant north of High River when it exploded April 15, 2008. Alberta Occupational Health and Safety laid multiple charges April 13. Western Biodiesel Inc. and GLP Instrumentation Inc. are each charged with seven counts of failing to ensure the safety of a worker, and failing to follow the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Co-worker Sebastien Berube is charged with failing to take reasonable care to protect the health and safety of Lodge and other workers present. The matter is being heard May 21 in Okotoks provincial court. Charges against individual workers are rare, according to Occupational Health and Safety. Of the 57 convictions under the act since 2005, only two were against workers, said agency spokesman Chris Chodan. One was charged along with his employer, and the other was a foreman accused of not complying with the employer's safety policies. All other convictions have been employers. Lodge, a 33-year-old subcontractor, lived in the hamlet of Cayley, just south of High River. Two other people working nearby were uninjured. The bomb-like blast shook the foundation of a neighbouring building. Western Biodiesel's corporate headquarters are in Calgary, but its production facility, where the explosion occurred, is 20 kilo-metres south of the city limits.

<http://www.calgaryherald.com/business/energy-resources/Employee+faces+rare+charges+worker+death/3003437/story.html>

USA, MA, CAMP EDWARDS, MAY 9 2010. EPA TAKING SUGGESTIONS FOR BASE CLEANUP EFFORT

george brennan

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is accepting comments through June 4 on a proposed remedy for groundwater contamination on what's known as the L Range on this Upper Cape military base. The Army has recommended monitored natural attenuation for the groundwater plume, which is contaminated with RDX and perchlorate. The bulk of the groundwater plume is within the base boundaries and is no threat to public or private drinking water supplies, according to an EPA press release. There is no longer an active source of contamination on the surface. A proposed remedy is set to be presented at a public meeting at 5 p.m. May 19 at the Forestdale School, 151 Route 130, Sandwich. Representatives from the Impact Area Groundwater Study Program, the EPA and the state Department of Environmental Protection will be available to answer questions. Comments are to be submitted by mail to Jeanethe Falvey, EPA, 5 Post Office Square, Suite 100 Mail Code HBT, Boston, MA 02109-3912, by fax to 617-918-0020 or by e-mail to Falvey.Jeanethe@epamail.epa.gov.

<http://www.capecodonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100508/NEWS/5080317/-1/NEWSMAP>

USA, W.V, MARION CO, MAY 9 2010. CHEMICAL LEAK FORCES MARION COUNTY EVACUATIONS >> RESIDENTS WERE EVACUATED FOR ABOUT THREE HOURS SATURDAY EVENING.

karen kiley

Watch the Video <http://www.wboy.com/story.cfm?func=viewstory&storyid=79561>

Hundreds of people were evacuated from their homes Saturday evening due to a poisonous chemical leak at a Fairmont plant. Hydrogen Sulfide began leaking from the SFK Pulp Recycling Plant in Fairmont, around 8:00 Saturday, officials said. The plant is directly across the Monongahela River from Rivesville. Because hydrogen sulfide is poisonous, several surrounding communities were evacuated for about three hours Saturday evening. The evacuated communities included: Sanford, Montana Mines, Five Forks, and Rivesville. Shelters were set up at the Baxter Volunteer Fire Department and East Fairmont Junior and High Schools. The evacuation was lifted around 11:00 Saturday night, and residents were free to return to their homes. A Hazardous Materials team from Monongalia County was called in to help stop the leak, which was coming from a

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back room of the plant. Hydrogen sulfide is flammable, colorless, but has a distinct odor. Residents who were evacuated, reported smelling rotten eggs. In high doses, the chemical can be fatal. No word right now on what caused the leak.

Related Links:

[Read the original story](#)

<http://www.wboy.com/story.cfm?func=viewstory&storyid=79561>

RUSSIA, SIBERIA [WESTERN], KEMEROVO REGION, MAY 9 2010. AT LEAST EIGHT KILLED IN RUSSIAN MINE EXPLOSIONS

At least eight people were killed Saturday in twin coal mine explosions caused by methane gas in the Kemerovo region of western Siberia, according to Itar-Tass agency. The second explosion occurred early Sunday morning. More than 60 miners remained underground at the Rapsadskaya company-operated mine, according to a source in the regional department for emergencies. Some of them had been in radio contact with officials outside. Contact had been severed to 20 members of three rescue teams who had entered the mine. Other rescue work was suspended because of dust and smoke after the second explosion. Rescue operations would be resumed when the problem was resolved, officials said. The damages from the second explosion were not yet clear. The eight deaths and 20 injuries occurred in the first explosion, about 23:55 local time. Up to 356 people were believed to have been working at the mine at the time of the accident, according to the Russian Emergencies Ministry, state agency Ria Novosti reported. At least 282 miners were able to leave the mine after the explosions. Twelve ministry rescue teams and rescue workers from nearby Novokuznetsk were trying to reach those stranded by the explosion. Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin ordered officials to do everything they could in the rescue efforts. The explosion destroyed three buildings above ground. The Rapsadskaya coal mine, opened in 1973, is the largest of its kind in Russia with 300 kilometres of shafts. It produces 8 million tonnes of coal a year for domestic needs as well as export to Ukraine and Asia. In 2007, an accident in a nearby mine in Novokuznetsk claimed 110 lives, the worst mine accident in decades in Russia.

http://www.monstersandcritics.com/news/europe/news/article_1554237.php/At-least-eight-killed-in-Russian-mine-explosions-2nd-Lead

UK, LONDON, MAY 9 2010. BP CHIEF REVEALS \$10M DAILY CLEAN-UP BILL >> THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF BP, TONY HAYWARD, HAS ORDERED A COMPLETE SAFETY OVERHAUL OF ALL THE OIL GIANT'S RIGS AFTER ADMITTING THAT A CUT-OFF VALVE KNOWN AS THE "BLOW OUT PREVENTER" HAD FUNDAMENTALLY FAILED ON THE STRICKEN DEEPWATER HORIZON.

kamal ahmed & rowena mason

In an interview with The Sunday Telegraph, Mr Hayward said that he expected regulators to put in a series of new safety measures in the Gulf of Mexico and elsewhere following the explosion on the rig which killed 11 workers and has led to fears of an oil slick destroying the area's delicate ecosystem. The new regulations will almost certainly increase costs of drilling in the area. Mr Hayward also revealed that BP could now be spending as much as \$10m a day on the clean up operation, a significant increase on the original \$6m a day revealed last week. This weekend, BP was making the final preparations to drop a "dome" over the well which is believed to be leaking 5,000 barrels of oil a day into the Gulf. Mr Hayward admitted that he was not confident that the dome, which is designed to collect oil from leaks which can then be siphoned off, would work as it had never been attempted at such deep levels. The Deepwater Horizon well operated at a depth of 4,500ft. "The blowout preventer, the ultimate safety system that every drilling operation has, failed and that is unprecedented," Mr Hayward said. "The oil industry has been drilling wells in deep water for 25 years, drilled 5,000-plus wells, maybe 10,000, around the world and this has never occurred. It was a catastrophic event," he said. "We are not doing any other drilling in the Gulf of Mexico. "We have issued a series of alerts across our global operation in terms of a thorough checking of blowout preventors as you would expect. The MMS [Minerals Management Service, the US regulator] has introduced some new requirements quite rightly. Clearly everyone is double checking and triple checking the integrity and operation of blowout preventors. "It is clearly necessary for the industry and regulators here to step back and take stock of this when we understand fully what has occurred and then determine what are the right additional safeguards that need to be applied. "There clearly are many. You can't have something like this and imagine that significant changes in safeguards are not required. That is going to be the first big impact." He also said that questions would have to be raised about smaller operators in the Gulf that simply wouldn't be able to manage the type of operation BP was undertaking. "[It is about] our ability to respond in the subsea but on the surface and onshore as well," he said. "We have mounted an enormous operation, a small company could not have done this." Despite dire warnings about the impact of the slick on the environment, the local fishing industry and tourism the destruction so far has

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not been as bad as some feared. There are up to 100 ships in the area spreading dispersant and "skimming" the oil as well as four Hercules C130s tackling the slick from the air. Hundreds of miles of booms are also being used to contain the spill. "The team are doing a very good job retaining it [the slick] in the vicinity of the well," Mr Hayward said. "There is an enormous amount of activity endeavouring to do that. "There are very few reports of oil actually getting to the shore. The containment exercise is having a real impact." He said it could still be a number of weeks or months before the leak is brought under control through a number of parallel interventions, including the dome, drilling a relief well and filling in the well, known as "top kill". "This is a bit like the Apollo 13 mission to 'bring it back'," Mr Hayward said. "We've got all these different elements to create various interventions to stop the leak." Mr Hayward's reservations about the safety of blowout preventers comes after a US politician uncovered a report from 2003 warning that industry was not taking problems with the equipment seriously enough. Although the safety valve is meant to be fail-safe, a study coauthored by a then-executive of rig operator Transocean – which operated the Deepwater Horizon rig for BP, highlighted the fact that "poor BOP [blowout preventer] reliability is a common and very costly issue confronting all offshore drilling contractors". "Because of the pressure on getting the equipment back to work, root cause analysis of the failures is generally not performed," the report said. "In many operations, high maintenance is accepted as a necessary evil to prevent downtime." The report was uncovered by a Democrat senator for Washington, Maria Cantwell, who said the US government must act to make sure that the relationship between industry and the regulator had not become "too cosy". Insurers believe that the accident could result in an overhaul of their relationship with the oil industry. Two companies, Lancashire Holdings and Catlin, said their losses caused by the sinking of Transocean's rig two weeks ago could be the worst in history – larger even than the Piper Alpha oil platform fire in 1988. JP Morgan estimates that the Deepwater Horizon incident may cost insurers \$1.6bn. But the Piper Alpha accident spiralled beyond initial estimates to cost Lloyds of London £8bn after a spate of reinsurance claims. Lancashire said it expects a full re-rating of the energy market with the main renewals in June, noting that unexpected disasters are difficult to quantify quickly and losses often rise rapidly weeks after the original event.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/energy/oilandgas/7696827/BP-chief-reveals-10m-daily-clean-up-bill.html>

SPAIN, MUXIA, MAY 10 2010. SPAIN'S 'COAST OF DEATH' BEARS EVIDENCE OF OIL SPILL 8 YEARS LATER

ivan watson

 **Watch the Video** [Can oil, coastal towns peacefully coexist?](#)

 **Photo Gallery** <http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/europe/05/09/spain.black.tide/index.html>

Story Highlights

- In November 2002, tanker ship Prestige sank, spilling millions of gallons of oil
- More than 100,000 volunteers came to help in a clean-up effort costing billions of euros
- Despite lingering pollution, fishermen say their catch is back to pre-Prestige levels
- Today, Spain and the European Union restrict the movement of older, single-hulled tankers

Wooden sailboats and steering wheels from ships decorate the cavernous Nosa Senora da Barca, or "Our Lady of the Boat" church. Last week, a small congregation from the neighboring fishing village of Muxia gathered to pray in this stone chapel, which stands 100 feet from where the foaming Atlantic Ocean pounds the rocky coast. Here, along the stormy Costa da Morta, or Coast of Death, locals are raised with the knowledge that the sea is a capricious neighbor, one that can be as bountiful as it can be dangerous. But no one prepared these people for the man-made disaster that washed up on their shores nearly eight years ago, when the tanker ship Prestige broke open and sank, releasing millions of gallons of oil. "It was the worst thing I have ever seen," said Ramon Vilela, a Muxia resident who makes his living harvesting goose barnacles, a valuable local delicacy, off the region's rocky beaches. "We had a difficult time," said Jose Soneira, a pensioner who lives by the harbor in Muxia. This town on Spain's northwestern coast was considered ground zero during the disaster. "We couldn't come out here," he said, pointing at the beach. "It was all full of black sludge. Black, black, black. Wherever you put your feet, you had to wear boots and protection." The Prestige first got into trouble in November 2002, when the Greek-owned ship operating under the flag of the Bahamas sprang a leak after being caught in a storm off Spain's Galician coast. The Spanish government denied the Prestige refuge and ordered the foundering ship to be towed further out to sea. Several days later, more than 100 miles off the Spanish coast, a roiling storm finally broke the stricken ship in two, sending its shattered hull to the bottom of the ocean and spilling much of its cargo of heavy fuel oil into the water. Millions of gallons of oil began washing up. Locals called it la marea negra, or the black tide. It was one of the worst oil spills in modern history. More than 100,000 volunteers traveled to Galicia to help in a clean-up effort that eventually cost Spain and the European Union billions of euros. According to the World Wildlife Fund, the pollution killed an estimated 250,000 sea birds. The oil spill also ground Galicia's multimillion-dollar fishing

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industry to a halt. Today, locals point to the rocky beach at Cuña. Despite nearly eight years of wind, surf and rain, thick black tar still clings to the rocks. Despite lingering pollution, fishermen say their catch is back to pre-Prestige levels. Juan Diz, 80, had to shut down his fish-drying operation during the worst of the oil spill. He said he wasn't entitled to the compensation of 1,200 euros a month that fishermen received when the government shut down fishing grounds. But today, he is back at work at his secadero, drying fish the old-fashioned way by hanging them outside from a network of wooden beams where the near-constant sea winds dry and cure the oily meat. "The problem was not just economic, it was ecological and especially a health issue," said Naxo Castro, head of Muxia's fishing cooperative. "Today they are still doing studies on the impact of the contamination on our bodies." A 2006 study by Spain's University of La Coruna concluded that volunteers working on the oil slick clean-up showed evidence of "an increase in the level of genetic damage in blood cells." Researchers also detected higher levels of heavy metals in these volunteers, similar to tobacco smokers. The study concluded that clean-up crews were provided with inadequate face masks and protective gear to protect them from airborne contaminants. Other researchers have found evidence of tumors and genetic mutations in some of the shellfish growing along the Galician coast. In the wake of the Prestige disaster, Spain and the European Union have taken steps to restrict the movement of older, single-hulled tankers from sailing too close to Spanish territorial waters. But maritime experts warn the threat of another oil spill can never be ruled out. "Accidents are part of the deal. If we consume oil, we have the risk of oil accidents," said Felipe Louzan, a professor at the University of La Coruna's school of maritime studies. He's a former captain with years of experience sailing oil tankers. He said the Prestige disaster forced the Spanish government to invest in better tugboats and oil-spill containment ships. Like many of the people who witnessed the Prestige disaster, Louzan had nothing but sympathy for Americans who will now face the spreading oil slick in the Gulf of Mexico. "They will need lots of patience," said fisherman Francisco Castro. "And I'd advise them to arm themselves with courage." "Nothing can stop the black tide," warned Castro. "It's very good what (U.S. President Barack) Obama did, making British Petroleum responsible. ... I think he should mobilize the military so that they use all their technology to deal with the catastrophe." Castro stood next to the pounding surf, below the Nosa Senora da Barca chapel. He pointed toward a tall stone obelisk erected on a hill above the church, which stands as a monument to the tens of thousands of volunteers who helped during the Prestige oil spill. "Looking at it eight years later, I feel like I survived a war," Castro said, recalling how the fishing cooperative's offices became the headquarters for months of clean-up operations. For this Muxia resident, there was a silver lining to the Prestige disaster. Castro met and fell in love with one of the volunteers who came to Muxia to clean up the beaches. Today, they are happily married and living within site of beaches that were once swamped by the filthy black tide.

<http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/europe/05/09/spain.black.tide/index.html>

SOUTH AFRICA, DURBAN, MAY 10 2010. FUEL-PIPE LEAK 'COVER-UP' >> OPPOSITION DEMAND SAFETY PROBE AT KING SHAKA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

amukelani chauke



Runway at King Shaka

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[Zuma opens new Durban airport](#)

[King Shaka move cost SAA R35m](#)

Opposition parties have called for a thorough investigation of reports of fuel leaks at King Shaka international airport, Durban. The Sunday Times reported yesterday that poor welding, and up to 8000 leaks on the 10km fuel pipeline - parts of which run beneath the airport - were a severe health and safety hazard. President Jacob Zuma officially opened the airport on Saturday. Stuart Farrow, the DA parliamentary spokesman on transport, yesterday called for an investigation to determine if safety standards were followed when the fuel pipeline was laid. "We

also want to establish who will foot the bill for the repair work. we hope it is not Acsa [the Airports Company of SA] because it has already exceeded its budget for that [R8-billion] airport," he said. Farrow said it was clear that the contractors had tried to complete the airport before the World Cup and, as a result, "a proper job was not done. "The leaks might be narrow but they can grow bigger in time and that might pose a pollution threat." Senior managers and members of the development team said there was a risk of explosions within the 2000ha grounds of the airport. Lucky Gabela, a Cope MP, said: "Cope is calling for a thorough investigation into the reasons for the leak and whether this was known before the [Sunday Times] article was published." It was reported that parts of the steel pipeline pass through and beneath busy sections of the new R8-billion airport, including the 6500-bay car park, the administration offices and taxiways connecting runways with ramps, hangars, and

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the three-level terminal. Reports in possession of the Sunday Times show that, though more than 8000 defective pipeline welds had been identified and repaired since January, inspectors uncovered more than 17 additional leaks just hours before the airport's opening last week. Minutes of a meeting in January reveal how Acsa and the contractor planned a cover-up, with what they termed "positive spin", if the fuel pipeline leaks were discovered by the media. The faults were first detected in November. Engineering consultants hired for the airport development, Encon Engineering Projects, have recommended that sections of the faulty pipeline be replaced - but only after the World Cup, to avoid affecting the airport's operations. - Additional reporting by Buddy Naidu and Simpiwe Piliso

<http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/article441470.ece/Fuel-pipe-leak-cover-up>

USA, N.J., NEWARK, MAY 10 2010. PLANE CIRCLING CENTRAL JERSEY DUMPS FUEL OVER SOMERSET CO. BEFORE LANDING >> 170,000 LBS OF FUEL OIL



A plane seen Sunday morning circling Somerset County made a safe emergency landing at Newark Liberty Airport at 12:20 p.m. Sunday. According to New York/New Jersey Port Authority spokesman Steve Coleman, Continental Airlines flight nine, originating in Newark with a destination of Tokyo, Japan, took off from Newark Liberty, but returned to the airport after experiencing a mechanical problem. The diverted plane was forced to vent excess fuel, Larry Ragonese, a spokesman for the state Department of [Environmental Protection](#), said at about 2:30 p.m. Reports of a fuel smell had been reported in Somerset County. Ragonese said at about 4:30 p.m. that Continental Airlines had earlier alerted the DEP that about

170,000 pounds of fuel oil had been released during the plane's return trip to Newark Airport. He said the fuel had been released from an altitude of about 4,500 feet. Ragonese said he could not specify where the oil had been dropped. However, he said the state had been receiving reports of the smell of oil in parts of neighboring Middlesex County as well. Ragonese said the DEP could not specify where the excess fuel had been dumped based on reports received. He said the DEP had received a number of diverted 9-1-1 calls from residents, but no direct calls as of that time. "So far, we have determined that there doesn't seem to be any health risk to people," Ragonese said. He said the DEP is asking residents to call the DEP hotline, 1-877-WARN DEP 1-877-WARN DEP highlighting (1-877-927-6337 -877-927-6337 to report additional problems. The state will go out to Somerset County if necessary, he added. For more information about the flight and rescheduling, Coleman recommends contacting Continental Airlines.

<http://www.mycentraljersey.com/article/20100509/NEWS/100509003/-1/newsfront/Plane-circling-Central-Jersey-makes-emergency-landing>

USA, LA, NEW ORLEANS, MAY 10 2010. COAST GUARD CREW FINDS GULF OIL'S SMELL 'NASTY'

melissa nelson

From the crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Oak's engine room to the officers on its deck, "nasty" is the operative word to describe the mouth of the Mississippi Delta, now covered for miles in rust-colored tendrils of oil. The South Carolina-based cutter spent two days in a slow churn from Pensacola Naval Air Station before finding leading edges of the massive slick, hazy and pink ocean waters streaked with red ribbons of oil. It made an impressive and heartbreaking scene. The Coast Guard cutter is on the front line in a fight to keep an enormous swath of oil, some 60-miles wide and 90-miles long, from reaching the Gulf Coast. The Oak and its 50-man crew normally patrol the Caribbean, tending buoys and looking for boats carrying people trying to enter the U.S. illegally. But now it is commanding a 10-ship flotilla working to keep the oil out of the Mississippi Delta and the away from the Mississippi River. The work is slow and frustrating, skimming from the surface as much red, gunky oil as possible in a slow trek. The slick's leading edge shifts and changes - winds, currents and continuous spraying of chemical dispersants alter the formation. Monitoring involves satellite maps, nonstop radio coordination with planes and helicopters. The stakes are high and hard to fathom. Lt. Justin Vandenheuvel, the ship's executive officer, watched from the bridge as a tug offloaded the first 12,500 gallon tank of oil collected by the Oak and hauled it to a nearby tanker. "The ecosystem, the wetlands, the environment, the economy, a way of life, all of the collateral impacts, those are just a few of the things at risk," he said. The 17-year Coast Guard veteran said he tries to look at this mission like any other job. But the thought of the fouled ocean disturbs him. Vandenheuvel said he wouldn't eat anything caught in these waters right now. "And the only meat I eat is American seafood. I am concerned, very concerned," he said. Purple jelly fish float in long lines on top of the oily gunk. Occasionally, sea turtles follow the mess. The ship has diverted course to make way for a few turtles. They have seen five or six swimming through oily waters. Deck watch officers are required to report any turtle, bird or mammal sightings to command

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headquarters. They haven't see any dolphins swimming through the stuff. From the ship's decks and bridge, there is a mild smell of burnt charcoal and the ocean looks pink and red. Up close, the colors give way to something thicker and different. "It's like a liquid tar, like a molasses, a thick gooey, molasses. It looks red in the water, but up close it's brown," said Jesse Carns, a hazardous materials specialist from the Coast Guard's elite Atlantic strike team based in Fort Dix, N.J. He had ridden atop a 45-foot rubber tank used to collect the mess that the cutter skimmed from the ocean's surface and helped transfer the tank to a smaller ship, which then went to a waiting barge. The barge will empty the tank and return it to the cutter for more skimming. The skimming is hard, physical work - it takes hours for 10 deck hands using ropes, pulleys and a crane to maneuver the skimmer and its tank, which weighs 3,000 pounds when empty. The sun beats down and the humidity is high. Anyone who comes near the oil must wear protective suits and gloves, which means even more heat. The ship's deck is layered in plastic to protect it from toxic mess. The scene is rancid and dangerous, becoming more so as the work continues. There is the complicated process of how the rubber tank, full of oil, is transferred and towed. Hoses are cleaned and the smell is overpowering. One deck hand had to stop work because he almost vomited. "It was nasty, really foul," Carns said. Carns and Robert Pottgieser, a hazardous materials specialist from the Hawaii-based Pacific strike team, are supervising the oil collection. The men are careful not to speculate about what they are seeing and finding. This is the first time either has worked an oil spill in these conditions. They said some outer layers of the slick have been dispersed by chemicals sprayed by planes. Those layers look a bit like sawdust floating on top of the ocean. Further into the slick, the red and pink lines begin, some of the worst. When the Oak returns to Pensacola Naval Air Station, some of the jellyfish and other heavy debris removed from the top of the skimmer probably will be studied by scientists trying to determine the condition of the ocean. The cutter will stay out in the gulf as long as its water supply holds - longer if water is resupplied by another ship. The Oak cannot make water using its desalination system in this toxic environment. Crew members wonder if they are making any difference - after all, about 200,000 gallons a day have been gushing from the ocean bottom since a rig exploded off Louisiana two weeks ago. A long day done, Chief Mark Gilmore removed his hard hat and life vest. Anchoring each night in these hazy pink waters among dozens of oil rigs is very strange. "I'd just like to know if there's anyway to find out how much oil we've actually skimmed up," he said.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2010/05/09/1620797/coast-guard-crew-finds-gulf-oils.html>

USA, N.M, ALBUQUERQUE, MAY 10 2010. 4 MEN INJURED IN EXPLOSION >> BCFD: MEN WERE TRYING TO START GRILL

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.kob.com/article/stories/S1551587.shtml?cat=516>



KOB.com

Four men are in the hospital after they were burned in a southwest Albuquerque neighborhood. The Bernalillo County Fire Department said four men tried to start a grill at a family gathering near Wilshire Drive and Cerro Vista Street when a propane tank exploded at about 2 p.m. Sunday. About 30 to 40 family members were outside sitting around the area when the explosion occurred. Neighbors said they could feel the explosion. A small fire, that was put out immediately, started after the explosion. Firefighters said they are not sure what caused the propane tank to explode, but said it was a commercial-sized tank about 5 feet tall. It was not the tank that fit the grill. "My nephew was playing outside with my dog and we heard a big old popping sound. We came outside and I saw smoke and saw some guy against the pole with severe burns all the way down his arms," said neighbor Michael Benitez. The victims suffered third degree burns to the chest, arms and face. There was no immediate word on their condition. "Because they were burned in their face, their airways are involved so it

could be life threatening. That's why we got them out of here so quickly," said BCFD Commander Marty Giron. BCFD said it is investigating what caused the explosion. The state propane inspector and the fire marshal are also involved.

<http://www.koat.com/news/23501334/detail.html>

CHINA, SHANGHAI, MAY 10 2010. FIRE EXTINGUISHED AT GAOQIAO REFINERY NEAR SHANGHAI

A fire at a storage tank at the Gaoqiao oil refinery in Shanghai's industrial Pudong district has been extinguished after an explosion on Sunday morning sent black smoke billowing into the sky. The fire was at a naphtha storage tank, with a capacity of about 1,000 tonnes, a Sinopec media officer told Reuters, adding that there would be no impact on production. The explosion occurred around 11.23am and extinguished around 2.30pm, according to the Gaoqiao district firefighting department,

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which mobilised trucks to contain the blaze and prevent it from spreading. No-one was hurt, said an official at the department. The 2,30,000 barrel-per-day refinery is one of China's largest. It is owned by Sinopec, China's largest oil refining corporation.

http://www.dnaindia.com/world/report_fire-extinguished-at-gaoqiao-refinery-near-shanghai_1380869

USA, DE, DELAWARE CITY, MAY 10 2010. DELAWARE CITY REFINERY: LINGERING SUITS CLOUD SALE >> VALERO ACCUSED OF PUTTING PROFITS AHEAD OF WORKERS' SAFETY

jeff montgomery

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.delawareonline.com/article/20100509/BUSINESS/5090377/1003>

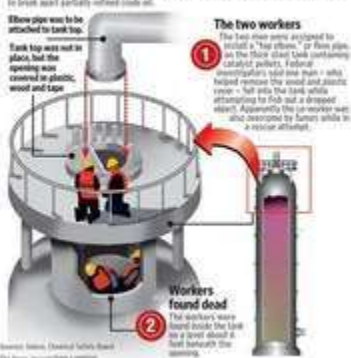


Valero Energy's Delaware City refinery.

A costly and unusually bitter wrongful-death lawsuit will keep some of [Valero Energy's](#) fortunes tied to the Delaware City refinery this summer, despite the impending sale of the plant to an investor group led by European refiner Petroplus. Millions are at stake in the federal court case, filed in Philadelphia by survivors of John J. Ferguson Jr. of Westminster, Md., who suffocated inside a nitrogen-filled refining column in November 2005 near the end of a maintenance project. Relatives of another man who died in the accident, John Lattanzi of Laurel Springs, N.J., settled with the company for nearly \$7 million in 2007, according to court documents. The lawsuit battle serves as a stark reminder that a legacy of pollution, malfunctions and danger remains tied to the aged refinery. It also highlights the

2005 accident killed two

A fatal accident in 2005, when Valero owned the refinery, occurred in a reactor used in the refinery's hydrocracking unit, a unit that uses high temperature and pressure with catalysts to break down partially refined crude oil.



challenge faced by a new owner planning to restart the plant in less than a year -- and state officials responsible for making sure that happens in a manner safe for workers and neighbors. [PBF Energy Partners](#) chief Thomas D. O'Malley acknowledged the difficulty last month, during an announcement of the sale. "When you take units down completely and they go cold, you really have to examine every pipe, every valve, every meter throughout the plant," O'Malley said. Company officials expect to spend \$125 million to \$150 million checking, repairing and refurbishing the complex, he said. Delaware City's previous owners have struggled for decades to contain soil and groundwater contamination, with several plumes of pollution spreading deep underground. Air pollution violations also have persisted, even as Valero and its predecessors pumped hundreds of millions into scrubbers and other cleansing equipment. The Delaware operation also has a history of workplace accidents, something common to all U.S. oil refineries, according to a 2008 insurance company report. That study found a chronic problem with accidents that turn deadly, with refineries in the U.S. losing four times as much money from such incidents as refineries in the rest of the world. A 2007 federal [Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#) inspection blitz at U.S. refineries found more than 1,000 violations. The wrongful-death

lawsuit pending in Philadelphia involves one of two fatal accidents in the last decade at the Delaware City refinery. A first attempt to put the Ferguson family's lawsuit before a jury was cut short by a mistrial and claims of courtroom misconduct in mid-March, after years of pretrial work and maneuvering. A new trial is now scheduled to begin on July 12. Over the years, the suit has spun off demands for judicial sanctions against attorneys on both sides as well as accusations involving corporate greed, neglected safety rules, missing documents, attorney misconduct and tactical firings or harassment of witnesses. Pretrial actions -- including more than 100 depositions around the country and 335 separate legal filings -- already have prompted the judge in the case to accuse one lawyer of refusal to comply with court restrictions. In court documents, attorneys with Philadelphia-based McCann, Schaible & Wall LLC who represent Ferguson's relatives have argued that neither man was aware of suffocation risks near the tank opening, despite federal, industry and company requirements for notification and use of safety equipment and barricades.

High-Powered Law Firms

Valero retained two of the nation's largest law firms -- Washington, D.C.-based Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld and New Jersey-based Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll -- for its defense. Michelle A. Roberts, an attorney representing the refinery, told the presiding judge shortly before the March mistrial that "I objected more times in this courtroom than I have in 30 years of practicing law, and I could have objected more." Attorneys for the victims' families have pointed repeatedly to key missing documents, and at one point sought a destruction-of-evidence hearing. "Throughout this litigation, defendants have taken advantage of their overwhelming economic and legal resources ... in an apparent attempt to stifle counsel's ability to establish

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plaintiff's case," attorneys for Ferguson's survivors wrote in a motion asking a judge to penalize the refinery's representatives. "High-stakes type of litigation can sometimes excite people," said Kenneth T. Kristl, a professor and director of the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Clinic at the Delaware campus of Widener University. "You definitely take risks, if a judge gets upset." District Judge Mary A. McLaughlin has grown upset more than once. During the March trial, McLaughlin warned Wayne A. Schaible, an attorney for the victim's family, that "I have never been shown such disrespect as you've been showing me this afternoon." At another point, McLaughlin chided Schaible to "look at me" while making statements, and warned him "don't walk away" after a comment during a mid-trial conference by attorneys and the judge. Neither side would comment publicly last week on the status of the case or the accident history. According to the investigation of the 2005 accident, Ferguson fell after he was overcome while using a long wire to try to fish out a roll of duct tape left inside the catalyst-filled tower. Lattanzi suffocated while attempting to reach Ferguson. Attorneys for family members of both men have argued that neither knew they were working at the edge of an area likely to be short of oxygen. A U.S. Chemical Safety Board report blamed the deaths in part on "inadequate" warnings and barriers around an opening in the tank where the men died. The investigation also concluded that managers failed to give the workers adequate written notice of the suffocation hazard. They blamed corporate greed and "reckless and outrageous" safety failures for the deaths -- and attributed some failures to company hunger to profit from high gasoline prices in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Valero, the attorneys said, delayed a major maintenance project on the unit where the men died because of high refining returns, and then accelerated the repair work before the deaths. "If Delaware City Refinery had done what they were required to do, we wouldn't be here and John Ferguson would," Schaible told jurors while paraphrasing testimony from a company employee in February, shortly before a mistrial was ruled. Transcripts from the mistrial and court filings indicate that Valero considers Ferguson partially to blame for his own death; the company said evidence shows that the two men violated company safety rules that could have saved their lives. "The evidence will show that John Ferguson had been trained and had all he needed to stay alive," Roberts said in opening statements of the first trial attempt.

Money Pit For Valero

The Delaware refinery already has cost Valero dearly. The company reported more than \$1.4 billion in losses and write-offs because of breakdowns and other problems in the months leading up to its sale. Motiva Enterprises, an earlier owner of the plant, paid more than \$36 million to settle a single wrongful-death lawsuit arising out of an acid tank explosion and fire in 2001 that killed a Pennsylvania contractor, injured several other workers and crippled the operation for months. The 210,000 barrel-per-day plant was sold to Premcor in 2004 and to Valero in 2005. Ferguson and Lattanzi died three weeks after Valero took ownership. In November, the company announced that it was closing and dismantling the plant, but reversed course early last month and agreed to sell to [PBF Energy Partners LLC](#), in a deal backed by as much as \$30 million in state grants. The two companies plan to close the deal by early June, with production resuming as early as April 2011. PBF Energy is a joint venture of Switzerland-based Petroplus and two investment companies: the Blackstone Group and First Reserve. O'Malley, PBF's president and the former chief of Petroplus, was Premcor's chief in 2004, when that company purchased the Delaware plant and three other refineries from Motiva. First Reserve, one of PBF's joint venture partners, also is an 80 percent owner of the Bahamas Oil Refining Co., which operates a huge storage tank terminal in Freeport. Company officials have said that they plan to open and inspect every refining vessel at the 5,000-acre Delaware City complex before restarting. Some jobs will remain with previous owners, however. Valero will retain responsibility for shutdown and securing of a 21 million-gallon, chronically leaking pit of liquid propane on the east side of the plant. [DNREC](#) officials in 2008 ordered the pit -- with earthen walls kept frozen by cold liquid propane -- taken out of service because of gas leaks and seeps that might have been present since its first use in the 1960s. Motiva Enterprises, meanwhile, will continue to pay for investigations and cleanup work at dozens of groundwater pollution sites around the plant, some extending as far south as Dragon Run Creek, near Delaware City. The company is a joint venture of Shell Oil and Saudi Aramco, the national refining company of Saudi Arabia.

File Downloads:

[document: Valero Energy's Nov. 2, 2006, Case Study: "Confined Space Entry -- Worker and Would-be Rescuer Asphyxiated"](#)

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- [Valero announces sale of Delaware City Refinery](#)

On The Web

- [Valero Energy Corp.](#)

<http://www.delawareonline.com/article/20100509/BUSINESS/5090377/1003>

USA, WA, EVERETT, MAY 10 2010. MAN KILLED IN CAR-TANKER COLLISION ON US 2

A 38-year-old motorist is dead after his car collided head-on with a tanker truck. The crash Saturday afternoon on U.S. 2 near Monroe shut down the roadway for several hours. Washington State Patrol trooper Mark Francis says the car driven by a Bothell man crossed the center line and struck an oncoming tanker truck. The motorist was killed. The 50-year-old tanker driver wasn't hurt. No names were released. Francis says two other cars were hit by debris from the accident, but nobody else was injured.

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

CANADA, ALTA, MILLARVILLE, MAY 10 2010. RANCH WINS APPEAL IN LEGAL WRANGLE OVER PIPELINE LEAK



Agnes Ball, right, her daughter, Susan, and son-in-law, Craig Graham, successfully sued Imperial Oil for damages to their cowherd after a sour gas pipeline leaked and contaminated the water and soil in a pasture.

An Alberta ranch family has won an appeal court decision upholding \$70,000 in damages from an Imperial Oil sour gas pipeline leak in 2002. The dispute between Agnes Ball and Imperial Oil Resources stems from an incident in which some of her cattle out on pasture were exposed to hydrocarbon contamination from a leaking sour gas pipeline. Ball ranches with her son-in-law and daughter, Craig and Susan Graham. They attributed the loss of 49 of their 200 head during a one year period to water and soil contamination caused by the leak and subsequent company excavations to repair the leak. Ball won the original case in Court of Queen's Bench

in 2008. The appeal to the Alberta Court of Appeal upheld the ruling April 13. She said she hopes the conflict is over. "They took away our ability to make a good living and we still haven't caught up." Imperial Oil spokesperson Pius Rolheiser said the company is reviewing the appeal decision. It has argued its employees behaved appropriately and that it tried to reach a settlement with the family. "We are not unsympathetic to the Ball family and the difficulties they had in their 2003 calving season," Rolheiser said. Court documents from the original trial show the company admitted the leak, but it said the contaminants escaping into the water and soil were not sufficient to have damaged the herd. Activity at the site has been suspended and the company received a non-compliance order from the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board, the industry regulating body. "Imperial Oil had a duty to give adequate prior notice of its intended repair work and to adequately protect the plaintiff's livestock from exposure to hydrocarbons and hydrocarbon contaminated soil and water, and breached that duty by pouring contaminated water on the ground and leaving the area unfenced," the trial judge ruled in 2008. Ball kept records of activities on the leased pasture and Susan Graham had extensive herd and calving records. They believe the records won them the case. "Every cow and calf that we had, we could do a history," Graham said in an interview. "We could compare how many of these calves we lost in comparison to the rest of our herd and how many we had to treat in comparison to the rest of our herd." Ball and Graham said they advise others in similar disputes to document everything with diaries, pictures and video. "My pictures and my diary spoke volumes," Ball said. The situation began in the summer of 2002 on 640 acres of crown lease land when a leak in a two-metre-deep sour gas pipeline was being repaired. Imperial Oil workers noticed a brown spot with dead vegetation in a field in the fall of 2001 during an aerial survey of the pipeline. It did not start repairs until the following spring. Imperial Oil tried to contact Ball, but she was away on vacation. Family members told the trial court that they were not told the situation was urgent and no one asked for permission to enter the area. The company contracted a firm to repair the site. By the time Ball saw the site, a large pit along the length of pipeline was excavated and filled with water. The water was pumped on the ground and the soil was placed on a tarp. A snow fence was erected but part of it came down and cattle got

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into the area. Laboratory tests during the summer failed to show that contamination levels in the water or soil exceeded Alberta Environment guidelines. But the family noticed a calf behaving erratically during its herd roundup the subsequent September. It was euthanized in November. The company and Ball conducted separate veterinary tests. Ball's vet report showed hydrocarbons in the calf's kidney, liver and fat. More problems appeared the following spring when the family calved out 194 head. Cattle were sorted by age so Ball and the Grahams had a good comparison between those that had been in the contaminated area and those that were not. Calves born to cows grazing the land where the pipeline work took place were premature and had higher death rates. The family said 49 of about 200 head died over the course of one year because of the leak and company excavations to repair the leak. "We never really saw a cow that looked ill but you would go out one day and there would be a cow lying dead," Susan Graham said.

<http://www.producer.com/News/Article.aspx?aid=22307>

RUSSIA, MOSCOW, MAY 10 2010. DEATH TOLL RISES IN EXPLOSIONS AT SIBERIAN MINE

Rescuers found the bodies of 17 of their colleagues on Monday morning who were killed while trying to reach trapped [coal](#) miners in western Siberia, bringing the death toll in the disaster to 30, with 60 still missing. For nearly a day after two explosions sealed the miners in caverns filling with water and smoke, officials suspended rescue operations, saying they could not attempt to save the men until methane gas dropped to safe levels. The agonizing wait marred [Russia's](#) celebration of Victory Day, which brought millions of Russians onto the streets for lavish parades and fireworks displays. Sergei K. Shoigu, Russia's emergency situations minister, described harrowing conditions inside two underground caverns without working drainage systems, where he said water likely flooded in at a rate of about 2,600 cubic yards per hour. "We have about a day and a half to two days to do our work," Mr. Shoigu said, in comments carried by RIA-Novosti. Thirteen men sealed in the two caverns can only be reached through narrow mine shafts, he said, as engineers attempt to release fresh air into the mine without sparking a third deadly blast. Mr. Shoigu added that the rescuers have heard very little noise coming from the enclosures where the miners are trapped. "We are continuing to search, and hope to save someone," he said. The rescue was unfolding in the city of Mezhdurechensk, one of Russia's biggest coal centers, some 1850 miles east of Moscow. Regional officials were scrambling to calm families of the trapped miners, promising to provide them with new housing, as well as new schools, free tuition and cash compensation ranging from \$1,000 to \$6,700. It was unclear whether the efforts would work, in a region that sparked formidable protest movements in 1989 and 1991. With Victory Day festivities canceled, families stood vigil at a monument to lost miners, lighting hundreds of narrow candles. During a meeting with officials on Sunday, relatives shouted out "They are short of air there" and "Tell us the truth," according to a reporter from Interfax news service who was at the scene. The mine, founded in 1973, belongs in part to the steelmaking giant Evraz Group. Evraz's owners include the billionaire Roman Abramovich, best known for buying London's Chelsea football club. Prosecutors announced on Sunday that they have opened a criminal investigation into the causes of the explosion. In 2007, 108 people were killed after a methane explosion in the same coal-rich area of Siberia, prompting a national day of mourning. Authorities later said that the mine's management deliberately disabled a methane detector, defying safety regulations in order to boost production. In that case, methane built up to the point where an explosion was sparked by a short circuit.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/11/world/europe/11mine.html>

UK, HALESOWEN, MAY 10 2010. MAN DISCOVERS WARTIME GRENADES



Grenades are discovered in the back garden of a home in Belbroughton Road, Halesowen.

A bomb scare shattered the tranquillity of a quiet residential street in the Midlands this weekend after a resident discovered a hoard of wartime grenades in his back garden. Fire crews and paramedics were dispatched to Belbroughton Road in Halesowen at around 4pm on Saturday after Ian Cooke inadvertently disturbed the weapons stash, buried 12 inches below ground, while digging. The army's bomb disposal experts were alerted and arrived around five hours later, finding 24 unexploded Self Igniting Grenades (SIGs). With darkness falling they were forced to return yesterday to remove and safely detonate the devices, which consist of glass bottles containing a volatile mix of phosphorus and benzene. A section of the street

was cordoned off and around half a dozen homes evacuated for several hours while controlled explosions were carried out in a skip provided by Dudley Council.

<http://www.expressandstar.com/news/2010/05/10/gardener-discovers-wartime-grenades/>

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USA, WASHINGTON D.C, MAY 11 2010. DIGGING UP CHEMICAL WEAPONS IN D.C.

Related: [Map: Area of concern](#)



A site in the Spring Valley neighborhood adjacent to American University is the focus of cleanup efforts to dispose of buried chemical weapons from testing dating to World War I.

After World War I, munitions including shells of poisonous liquid mustard were buried in a then-rural area. The cleanup has forced evacuations at American University and prompted concerns about illness. Greg Nielson pushed a joystick, and a video camera zoomed in on three men in moon suits and gas masks as they prepared to blow up a weapon of mass destruction less than five miles from the White House. Later, the crew slid the rusting World War I artillery shell into a small steel vault and sealed the door. They detonated a shaped explosive charge to cut

the projectile open, and pumped in reagent to neutralize its contents: liquid mustard, an infamous chemical warfare agent. The process is "as safe as sliced bread," said Nielson, the operation leader, at a control panel in a nearby trailer. "Maybe safer." The destruction of five poison-filled shells and 20 other suspect items ended last week. But the strange saga of America's most unusual hazardous waste site is far from over. Since 1993, the Army Corps of Engineers has removed 84 chemical-filled shells and more than 1,000 conventional munitions, plus at least 44,000 tons of contaminated dirt and debris, from the verdant campus of American University and the manicured lawns of Spring Valley, one of Washington's most prestigious neighborhoods. The toxic trash dates from 1917 and 1918, when the military leased the then-rural campus and nearby farms to test gruesome gases. After the war, soldiers and scientists buried lethal leftovers in unmarked pits, calling the area Death Valley. A developer renamed it Spring Valley, and mansions sprouted. Presidents Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon and George H.W. Bush lived here before they entered the White House. U.S. Atty. Gen. Eric H. Holder Jr. and Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), among other top officials and foreign diplomats, reside here now. The Pentagon says 5,000 old arsenals and other former defense sites may hold hazardous waste. But the bomb hunt here "is the No. 1 priority," said Col. David Anderson, the Army Corps district commander. "This is the nation's capital." The Army has spent \$180 million and expects to spend \$15 million more to finish the job, Anderson said. So far, government agencies and independent studies have not found adverse health effects on American University students or the 4,000 or so residents of Spring Valley. "Overall, community health is very good," said Beth Resnick, coauthor of a 2007 study by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. "Cancer rates overall are low. Mortality rates are low." She said a new study may focus on several people who lived near the burial pits and reportedly suffered rare cancers, blood disorders and other ailments. It's not known if military waste played a role. For now at least, the oak-shaded streets buzz with lawn mowers, not public outcry. Property values are stable, and activists acknowledge that few residents share their suspicion that the Army Corps has downplayed dangers and concealed data, a charge the Army denies. "They're deliberately misleading people," said Nan Wells, who represents part of Spring Valley in local government. "They just want to leave." Tom Smith, another Army Corps critic, said many residents have become complacent. "We've grown a little too accustomed to having the Army in our backyards, literally in our backyards, for the last 17 years," he said. The yard that causes the most concern is between the official residence of South Korea's ambassador, Han Duk-soo, and the white-columned house of American University's president, Cornelius Kerwin. Previous digs unearthed more than 300 munitions and chemical weapons debris on the South Korean property and toxic chemicals beside the AU house. A high fence with barbed wire guards the current excavation, known as Pit 3. A two-story, tent-like structure covers the hole to prevent leaks. It also hides the men in hazmat suits and breathing apparatus on a winding street of stately homes and purple azaleas. Engineers believed the digging was almost finished until they uncovered more than 500 pounds of jugs, beakers and other laboratory glassware this spring. On March 29, a broken bottle spewed smoke inside the containment tent. Tests show the fumes came from arsenic trichloride, which is poisonous by inhalation, skin contact or ingestion. Known as "arsenic butter," the compound was used to boost the lethality of mustard, a blister agent that reportedly caused more than 1 million casualties in World War I, and to produce lewisite, dubbed the "dew of death," and other chemical warfare agents. The find was deemed so perilous that work has been halted until Army engineers can determine how to safely proceed. "The concern is they may find a lot more, and there's a real question whether the air pollution controls are adequate," said Paul Chrostowski, an environmental scientist who monitors the cleanup for the university. Kerwin, the university president, was forced to abandon his home for two years when his yard was dug up. He and his wife moved back last fall after tests showed the hazard was gone. "We may have to change our analysis now," Chrostowski said. "He may have to move again." The long-forgotten ordnance first made news in 1993 when workers digging a utility line unearthed an arsenal. Two years later, after removing 141 munitions, the Army Corps declared the danger over. But local historians and amateur sleuths found

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old photos, logbooks and other records that suggested hazardous waste and explosives were scattered over 661 acres. Excavations, evacuations and lawsuits have ebbed and flowed ever since. Crews have dug up arsenic-laced lawns and spread clean soil at about 140 homes so far, and more are planned. They recently began searching for debris by the reservoir that supplies drinking water to Washington after rusting artillery and mortar shells were found in the weeds. "It's taken years to understand the magnitude and scope" of the pollution, said Steve Hirsh, the Spring Valley project manager at the Environmental Protection Agency. "This is really a unique problem." The long cleanup has put the university in an uncomfortable spotlight. School officials must balance public safety with public relations, taking pains not to spark undue alarm among the 11,000 students and their parents, as well as prospective students. In 2001, the university evacuated its campus day-care center and closed nearby athletic fields after dangerous levels of arsenic were found in the soil. Medical tests of the toddlers and others proved normal. But the day-care center stayed shut until last year, long after the contaminated dirt was scooped up and hauled away. Artificial turf was laid on the sports fields, and a girls lacrosse team practiced there on a recent morning. Not far away, a backhoe clawed at the soil behind a former fraternity house. Now used by campus police, the building overlooks a ravine that was once a dump. The Army will drill under the building this summer to look for more pollution. David Taylor, assistant to the university president, said he was eager to see the Army complete the cleanup. "We told them: 'Do it right. Do it thoroughly. And then wrap it up.' " The work draws little apparent interest among students. Only a dozen people showed up when six experts gathered recently to give presentations on the cleanup. A senior, Michael Ginsberg, had organized the panel as part of his honors project. "Most students don't even know there were chemical weapons here," Ginsberg, 21, said in frustration. Kent Slowinski, a landscaper, leads informal tours of waste sites on campus and in Spring Valley. He starts at the school's McKinley Building, where a plaque by the door reads "Birthplace of Army Chemical Corps." "You'll notice it doesn't say anything about developing or testing chemical weapons on dogs, goats and other animals," he said grimly. Five chemical rounds have been rendered harmless since April 16. All were destroyed on a patch of federal property behind Sibley Memorial Hospital, about a mile from campus. Three held the poisonous gas arsine, one had liquid mustard and one carried lewisite. Another 60 to 80 conventional munitions will be turned to scrap this summer. "We considered transporting off-site," said Dan Noble, the Army Corps' project manager. "But you risk traffic accidents. This is by far the safest way to do it. Here we have complete control." The fenced compound looks like a construction site. Front-end loaders rumble by stacks of blue barrels, filled with arsenic-laced dirt, that will be hauled to a hazardous waste dump. More fences, cameras and an infrared laser help protect chemical rounds and other unsafe materials destined for destruction. "Some soldier was probably walking out here 90 years ago and a sergeant comes up to him and says, 'Hey you, the war's over. Dig a hole. Get rid of all this!'" said Anderson, the Army Corps district commander. "Could they ever imagine it would come to this?"

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-chem-bomb-20100510,0,3944946,full.story>

SCOTLANDF, ABERDEENSHIRE, ST CYRUS, MAY 11 2010. WORKER DIED IN 'BARBECUE OIL DRUM' EXPLOSION



The inquiry at Stonehaven Sheriff Court is probing the 2008 accident.

A man was killed at work after an explosion while cutting open an oil drum to make a barbecue for a customer, an inquiry has heard. Ian Morrison, 50, of Montrose, died at Ross Agri Services in St Cyrus in June 2008. The first day of a fatal accident inquiry has heard how his son found him dead minutes after the explosion. The 45-gallon drum had been used to store flammable paint thinners, thought to have ignited during the work. Stonehaven Sheriff Court heard how Mr Morrison had been cutting the oil drum with an electric grinder when there was an explosion. He died as a result of "instantaneous head injuries".

'Eerie Silence'

Mr. Morrison's son, also Ian, 34, told how he had been finishing off paperwork in the office when he heard the noise. The father-of-three, from Brechin, said: "There was quite a big bang then an eerie silence. "I knew something had happened because of the loudness of it. There was a state of panic after that." The agricultural worker, who still works at the firm, said he was unaware of whether his father had carried out any health and safety training at the site. He said he did not consider Ross Agri Services an unsafe place to work. He described Ian senior as an experienced blacksmith, who was aware of potential hazards in the business. But he said he would not have carried out the job himself with barrels that had contained flammable substances. He added: "He should've known better to be honest. But part of it was that the drum had been sitting out in the sun. "There probably could have been ways to make it safer."

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'Experienced Blacksmith'

The court heard apprentice Steven MacPherson, 20, had located the drum at the back of the tractor shed and cleaned it out with hot, soapy water after spotting a 'paint thinner' label attached. Martin Ross, one of the firm's partners, said Mr Morrison had been left in charge of the blacksmith side of the business because of his experience. He described the worker as the best blacksmith he had ever employed. But he added he could not understand why Mr. Morrison failed to vent the oil drum before cutting into it. The hearing continues.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/scotland/north_east/8672204.stm

NIGERIA, LAGOS, MAY 11 2010. OIL SPILL - AGENCY INVESTIGATES MOBIL EXXON

The National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) has commenced investigation into the May 1 crude oil discharge from the Qua Iboe oil field into the Atlantic Ocean. Mr Henshaw Ogubike, NOSDRA's Chief Information Officer, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Eket, Akwa Ibom, on Friday that officials of the agency had visited the spill site to assess its impact on the environment. "Our team responded to the report and collected crude samples and our investigations have so far shown that there was impact on the marine environment and the coastline. "We visited the spill site independently on May 3 before the joint visit with other stakeholders, including the host community, on May 5," Ogubike said. Mobil Producing, an affiliate of US oil firm, ExxonMobil, confirmed last week that a leaking pipe from one of its offshore platforms, discharged a yet to be ascertained volume of crude into the ocean. A source at the zonal office of NOSDRA in Uyo said the agency had scheduled 'offshore sampling' for next week. NAN reports that the host communities are insisting on assurances of compensation after the clean up. Ibeno, the host to MPN, on Tuesday protested the frequent oil spills which they claimed had led to economic losses to the predominantly fishing population. Mr Williams Mkpa, a community leader in Ibeno, said the frequency of spills from the Qua Iboe fields was no longer tolerable. "Within the past two years, this community has experienced 10 oil spills and our fishermen can no longer sustain their families due to poor catch occasioned by the spills," Mkpa said. Mobil operates the Qua Iboe Crude Oil Export Terminal, off Akwa Ibom shoreline, with 90 offshore platforms in its three oil blocks in a joint venture with the NNPC.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201005101028.html>

USA, OH, MIDDLETOWN, MAY 11 2010. AUTOPSY: FALL INTO MANHOLE DIDN'T KILL MIDDLETOWN WORKER>> INVESTIGATORS STILL TRYING TO DETERMINE SOURCE OF FUMES

 **Watch the Video** [Officer's Heroic Actions Saved 2 Firefighters](#)

 **Photo Gallery** [Worker Dies, Firefighters Overcome In Manhole](#)



Investigators said they still don't know what killed a Middletown city worker and sent three others to the hospital Friday. Jabin Lakes died when he was overcome by fumes and fell into an open manhole. Results of an autopsy indicated that Lakes did not die from the 20 to 30 foot fall into the manhole. Investigators were waiting for toxicology results, which could take several weeks, to determine the cause of death. Two firefighters who tried to rescue Lakes from the bottom of the manhole -- Fire Marshal Bob Hess and Fire Capt. Todd Wissemeier -- were also overcome by fumes and hospitalized. Hess was released from Atrium Medical Center and was recuperating at home. Wissemeier remained at Miami Valley Hospital in fair condition. A third firefighter, Tom Allen, was treated and released. Police officer Chris Alfrey pulled Hess and Wissemeier out of the danger zone. "Chris is a very stout individual, he's got a lot of upper body strength, he's one of our better officers," Maj.

Mark Hoffman said. Just days before the incident, Alfrey was named officer of the month. "We are very proud of Chris, from the chief on down, for what he did that day, but you know, it's not anything that any officer wouldn't do in the same set of circumstances," Hoffman said. The city issued a news release Monday, which said that they have ruled out several different materials but have not yet identified what displaced the oxygen in the manhole, leading to Lakes' death. The release also said that tests around the manhole show that there is, "no evidence that anything harmful is being released into the air." The area has been secured so that no one can access it, the release said. "We are going to do everything we can to find out exactly what happened. And whatever time that takes, I anticipate that we are devoted to doing that," city attorney Les Landen said. Middletown officials said a memorial fund has been set up in the name of Lakes' eldest daughter, Tomasina Lakes. Donations can be made at any Chase Bank.

<http://www.wlwt.com/news/23508743/detail.html>

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