

Dangerous Goods - Hazardous Materials Group & Network

Release 2010 – 647 Newsy Stuff

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JAPAN, TOKYO, OCTOBER 3 2010. EXXON MOBIL TO END JAPAN RETAIL BUSINESS



Dwindling domestic demand for gasoline has led U.S.-based Exxon Mobil Corp., the world's biggest oil company, to begin a pullout from the retail petroleum business in Japan, the first major international oil firm to exit this country, The Yomiuri Shimbun has learned. Exxon Mobil's wholly owned subsidiary, the Exxon Mobil Japan business group, has been running 4,688 gas stations in the country under three brand names: Esso, Mobil and General. The group runs the second-largest number of filling stations in Japan after the 12,584 Jomo and Eneos pumps operated by JX Holdings, Inc., the nation's leader in petroleum resources development. It also is involved in oil and coal marketing. The world's top energy conglomerate believes there is no prospect Japan's dwindling demand for petroleum will pick up in the foreseeable future, according to sources familiar with the oil industry. Exxon Mobil plans to sell the rights to its marketing and distribution units for gas and other petroleum products on an area-by-area basis,

the sources said Thursday. The Texas-based company has already begun tender procedures to sell its business rights in Kyushu, with several petroleum-marketing arms of major trading houses poised to take part in the bidding, the sources said. Exxon Mobil will sell off its filling stations in other parts of the country in phases, they said. Established in 1999 through a merger of two U.S. oil majors, Exxon and Mobil, Exxon Mobil engages in a wide range of petroleum exploration, production, refining and marketing operations worldwide. Its global net profits stood at 19.28 billion dollars, about 1.61 trillion yen, in 2009. Because of Japan's shrinking population and the rising popularity of fuel-efficient vehicles, the market for gas and other oil products has declined after peaking in 2004. Capacity utilization rates of the nation's oil refineries have also been in continuous decline, with capacity estimated at an average of about 75 percent last year. The stagnant demand for gas caused Exxon Mobile Japan to register a record 34.4 percent plunge in sales from a year earlier in the business year ending December 2009, hitting 1.35 trillion yen. Sales of business rights will be contingent on the gas stations keeping their names unchanged, as well as on agreements to buy gasoline and other petroleum products from domestic refineries owned by the Exxon Mobil group, they said. Gas station buyers will be decided in stages starting early next year, the sources said.

<http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/business/T101001006058.htm>

CANADA. BRITISH COLUMBIA, OCTOBER 4 2010. CUTS LEAVE B.C. EXPOSED TO ECO-DISASTER, PROVINCE WOEFULLY UNDERSTAFFED FOR CLEANING UP DANGEROUS SPILLS

ben parfitt

With the biggest marine oil release in history only now under control in the Gulf of Mexico, debate over the future of oil pipelines and increased tanker traffic off British Columbia's coast will naturally intensify. Especially following recent disasters at oil pipelines in Michigan and Illinois owned by Enbridge, the company proposing to build a major pipeline to B.C.'s coast. A debate over what kind of future we want for our province is important, but what of the present? How prepared is B.C. to deal with a spill that could occur at any time as oil tankers already move out of the Port of Vancouver and into the straits of Georgia and Juan de Fuca or, for that matter, oil or hazardous waste spills on land? The answer is very poorly. Especially when viewed against the resources that neighbouring Washington state devotes to responding to spills and reducing their likelihood. We live in a vast province four times larger than Great Britain and with a coastline that, with its inlets and islands, is a total of 27,000 kilometres in length -- or well in excess of half of the Earth's equatorial circumference. Over this sprawling area, B.C.'s Environment Ministry deploys slightly more than 13 full-time staff to respond to oil and "dangerous goods" spills, of which there were nearly 4,000 in the province in 2008-2009. Just across the border, Washington's spill prevention and preparedness program has 77.7 full-time-equivalent staff. Washington also outpaces B.C. in funding this area of public and environmental health, spending roughly \$29.1 million per year compared to B.C.'s paltry allocation of \$2.5 million. Where it matters most -- getting people to where spills occur or might reasonably be expected to occur -- Washington has the dollars to do the work. B.C. does not. With a hiring freeze and plans to reduce an already emaciated environmental staff further through attrition, the government is saddling key agencies with absurdly complex challenges that will only get worse with time. Last year, in northeast B.C., 581 dangerous goods and oil spills were reported. The region is slightly larger than Nebraska. Its spill response "team" now consists of 1.2 dedicated staff. Meanwhile, water by the hundreds of millions of gallons is being sucked from local rivers, streams and lakes, mixed with chemicals and pumped underground at extreme pressure to fracture underground rock formations and release their natural gas. Who is minding the shop? Who is ensuring that spills by natural gas companies and their suppliers do not poison public waters? Meanwhile, on the coast, 2009 marked a record year for oil exports from the Port of Vancouver. Sixty-five tankers moved 28.6 million barrels of oil out of the port, for an average shipment of 439,834 barrels per ship. If just one shipment were to be disgorged into the waters between Vancouver and Victoria, it

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would dwarf the events of the evening of Dec. 23, 1988 -- events that actually set in motion the creation of B.C.'s spill response program. On that date, a tug rammed into a tanker barge that it was towing. Oil spilled from the battered vessel, the Nestucca, into the waters off Washington's Gray's Harbour and carried with prevailing winds across Juan de Fuca Strait to reach numerous beaches on Vancouver Island's west coast. The oil released was later estimated to have killed 56,000 seabirds, despoiled numerous herring spawning areas and wiped out crab and shellfish fisheries. All that destruction was achieved with just 5,500 barrels of oil -- or 1.2 per cent of what, on average, moves out of Vancouver in the hull of one tanker. BP's Gulf of Mexico debacle should give us pause to reflect on the wisdom of future offshore oil developments and increased oil tanker traffic. But perhaps it is time to focus on more present dangers. With an anemic provincial spill response staff, the risk that preventable spills will occur increases. Just don't try to glean the likelihood of such risks from the relevant government publication. The province's Environmental Emergency Management Program, which houses B.C.'s spills response team, has elected not to publish an annual report for 2009-2010. There's no budget for it. Ben Parfitt is a Victoria-based researcher and resource policy analyst with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, www.policyalternatives.ca <http://www.timescolonist.com/news/Cuts+leave+exposed+disaster/3616772/story.html>

USA, WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 4 2010. U.S DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, PIPELINE & HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SAFETY ADMINISTRATION [PHMSA] >> FIELD OPERATIONS ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL [UPDATED AUGUST 2010]

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USA, MI, MUSKEGON CO, OCTOBER 4 2010. WHAT LIES BENEATH? LARGE GAS PIPELINES WIND THROUGHOUT MUSKEGON AREA

john s. hausman



On Feb. 22, 1986, an 8-inch high-pressure Marathon Oil pipeline ruptured north of Sherman Boulevard near Estes Street in Muskegon, spilling thousands of gallons of gasoline into streams feeding into Ruddiman Creek, and sending explosive vapors into dozens of neighborhood homes.

In the wake of recent, catastrophic fuel-pipeline breaks in southern Michigan and California, safety officials are well aware of the potential for disaster buried beneath most communities. Muskegon County is no exception: It has many miles of both natural gas and gasoline pipelines. Not all of those miles are known to the general public, though. A U.S. Transportation Department website has county maps showing the approximate location of major "gas transmission pipelines and hazardous liquid trunk-lines" -- but not in close-up detail, and with no maps of natural-gas distribution lines leading from the main transmission pipes to customers in the Muskegon metropolitan area. Also hidden from the public are inspection history and any designation of which pipelines are considered high risk.

Much of that information was generally available before the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. But federal regulators clamped down after that, citing concerns that terrorists might try to blow up pipelines. Not that the availability of information necessarily means people know about it. A few neighbors living on a stretch of Mill Iron Road between Evanston and Broadway avenues, contacted by a reporter, were unaware of -- and unworried about -- the presence of a MichCon transmission pipeline that's shown on a federal map as running under the neighborhood. While the average homeowner doesn't have access to detailed maps and records, local emergency officials say they do. And -- though they can't guarantee no rupture will ever happen here -- officials believe the Muskegon area has better-than-average resources and training to deal with such a disaster should one occur. "I think we're more prepared than most," said Muskegon County Undersheriff Dan Stout, the director of Muskegon County Emergency Services. "You can't plan for everything, but can you improve? Yes." And spokesmen for the companies that operate the pipelines in Muskegon say safety is paramount, and the lines are inspected regularly and carefully.

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Disastrous Consequences

Two recent calamities brought the issue of pipeline safety to the forefront. In San Bruno, Calif., a natural-gas pipeline exploded early last month, killing four, injuring dozens and destroying an entire neighborhood. [Near Marshall, Mich., an Enbridge Inc. petroleum pipeline ruptured](#) in late July, pouring up to 1 million gallons of oil into the Kalamazoo River and other waterways. On a much smaller scale, Muskegon suffered its own catastrophic pipeline break a quarter-century ago. On Feb. 22, 1986, an eight-inch, high-pressure Marathon Oil line ruptured north of Sherman Boulevard near Estes Street in Muskegon. The break spilled thousands of gallons of gasoline into a Ruddiman Creek feeder stream, damaged city sewer mains and sparked a number of minor house explosions that forced dozens of Lakeside-Glenside residents to flee. No people were reported injured, but several residents complained of nausea, and many fish died. That particular line no longer is in use, local emergency officials say. But Muskegon County still has 15 miles of 10-inch Marathon pipeline, pumping gasoline from Indiana to the company's northernmost Michigan terminal in North Muskegon. And just south of Muskegon County, Wolverine Pipe Line Co. operates an eight-inch pipeline from Niles to its Ferrysburg terminal. Muskegon County soil also holds 38.5 miles of high-pressure natural-gas transmission pipelines owned by MichCon, a subsidiary of DTE Energy. That total doesn't count gathering or distribution pipelines, such as lines that deliver gas to a customer's home or business. Company spokesmen say pipeline safety is at the forefront of their concerns. DTE Energy spokesman John Austerberry said the company voluntarily launched a transmission-line inspection program in the 1990s, well before a federal mandate enacted in 2002, "so we actually have nearly 20 years of pipeline assessment, repair and replacement." Austerberry said many lines are inspected multiple times a year with a device called a "pig" that's inserted into the pipeline and records data about the integrity of the pipe, welds, corrosion and other information. If anomalies are detected, the company will dig up a line to investigate further, Austerberry said. "Fortunately we haven't had a lot of major incidents," he said of DTE's statewide network of transmission lines. "Certainly we've never had any incidents like the one in California, and certainly that is a very rare incident industrywide." Marathon Oil spokesman Shane Pochard, based in Findlay, Ohio, described similar pipeline monitoring techniques for that company's petroleum pipelines. "Safety is something that Marathon takes very seriously," Pochard said. "We have a very stringent maintenance and monitoring program. ... We have the latest technology as far as monitoring pipelines to detect any leaks that happen immediately. But obviously our goal is zero." Pochard said inspection technology has improved since Muskegon's 1986 leak. "We're smarter, as well, as far as what things we're able to see and expect," Pochard said. "I would say the industry as a whole is much more proactive instead of reactive."

Trained to Respond

Stout, Muskegon County's emergency-services chief, points to resources the county has that not every medium-sized community possesses: a trained Hazardous Materials team; nearby U.S. Coast Guard resources in case of gasoline spills into area waterways, giving the ability to quickly dam streams and spread booms if necessary. And emergency responders have received specialized training, including an April 2009 simulation of an 8,000-gallon flammable liquid spill near the Marathon terminal. The test used water with a nontoxic dye to determine where the spilled liquid would travel and how long it would take to enter the Muskegon River from storm sewers on M-120. A "table-top exercise" to analyze the results followed a month later, Stout said. Robert Kuhn, the recently retired Muskegon Public Works director who was in charge at the 1986 gasoline-spill scene, believes Muskegon County's emergency management has improved dramatically since that incident. "It was more scary afterward than at the time, when I realized what could have happened," Kuhn said.

Pipeline Safety Tips

If you're going to do any excavating around your home, call MISS DIG (800-482-7171 for information about all buried utility lines. Signs of a petroleum product or natural gas release:

- A pool of liquid on the ground
- A rainbow sheen on water
- Continuous bubbling in water
- A dense white cloud or fog
- Dead or discolored vegetation
- Dirt or water being blown in the air
- A hissing or roaring noise
- Unusual odor such as gasoline, oil, sulfur or rotten eggs

If a leak occurs:

- Leave the area immediately, preferably upwind.
- Keep ignition sources away from the area, including use of electrical equipment such as telephones.
- At a safe distance, call 911.

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Sources: Marathon Pipeline LLC and DTE Energy/MichCon websites

http://www.mlive.com/news/muskegon/index.ssf/2010/10/what_lies_beneath_large_gas_pi.html

USA, CA, SAN JOSE, OCTOBER 4 2010. AT&T BUILDING LEAKS 1,000 GALLONS OF DIESEL FUEL

About one thousand gallons of diesel fuel have spilled from a ten-story building and into a storm drain and surrounding concrete in San Jose Saturday evening, a fire captain said. Firefighters responded to a 5:15 p.m. call that fuel had been leaking out of an AT&T Corp. building at South Almaden Blvd., San Jose fire Captain Barry Stallard said. On the building's roof, arriving crews discovered an engine -- meant to power the building in the event of an outage -- was inexplicably leaking diesel fuel into the roof's drain and down to the street, Stallard said. The drain has leaked fuel into the nearby sewage system and onto a surrounding concrete recreational area where people jog. The engine has a fuel capacity of about 100 gallons, Stallard said, but is connected to tanks in the building parking lot that hold about 50,000 gallons. The building operates AT&T's 911 hub, which is used to route residents' emergency calls to local dispatchers. It also operates standard phone service. Service has not been affected by the spill, Stallard said. Almaden Boulevard is closed between West San Fernando and West Santa Clara streets, Stallard said. No injuries have been reported. Crews are continuing to respond to the incident with no estimation of when the oil will stop leaking or when the roads will be reopened.

<http://www.ktvu.com/news/25257655/detail.html>

USA, TX, HOUSTON, OCTOBER 4 2010. MAYOR TO SHUT 2/3 OF CITY'S 99 FUEL STATIONS >> SHE SAYS THE COST WILL BE OFFSET BY THE REDUCTION IN LIABILITY FOR LEAKAGE

james pinkerton

Mayor Annise Parker plans to shut down two-thirds of the city's 99 fueling stations, a cost-cutting measure intended to reduce the city's potential liability for leaking contaminants. While the closures will save the city in the long run, the process of removing underground fuel storage tanks can be expensive. The price skyrockets if underground tanks are found to be leaking fuel or oil, requiring expensive remediation to dispose of contaminated soil to safeguard surrounding neighborhoods. In some cases, monitoring wells have to be drilled to make sure the leaking fuel products have not contaminated the groundwater under the sites. In the last three years, the city has paid private contractors \$5.8 million to replace underground storage tanks at city fire and police stations, public works facilities and parks. A number of the sites where tanks had leaked had to undergo extensive soil removal and other remediation efforts, according to records obtained by the Houston Chronicle. For example, in February the city had to increase a \$323,375 tank replacement contract to haul off 200 tons of soil and dispose of thousands of gallons of contaminated fuel at its Northwest Vehicle Maintenance Facility, in the 1200 block of Judiway. Last December, the city paid \$840,000 to replace six older fuel tanks at Wheeler Park and install three new ones. The cost grew when a larger amount of contaminated soil and fuel than expected was discovered in the bottom of one tank pit, records show.

\$1.1 Million Tab

Similarly, the city ended up with a \$1.1 million tab in January 2008, after paying more money to contractors who had to remove buried electrical conduits and 284 cubic yards of contaminated soil as they replaced two leaking fuel storage tanks at the old Houston police station at 61 Riesner. "We have dozens and dozens of fuel storage facilities," Parker said recently. "We want to have a certain number of them for strategic purposes — for emergency vehicles and post-hurricane, for example - but, for the most part, they are a liability issue and we end up with fuel inventory that just sits there. And in Houston, you're not very far from a gas station." Parker has identified 55 city fueling stations she intends to shut down immediately. Eventually, the number of stations may be trimmed to as few as 30, aides confirmed. The city plans to retain fueling stations in locations that are distributed around the city to make it convenient for city vehicles to gas up. Councilman Steve Costello, a civil engineer, backs Parker's plan and envisions some of the fueling sites being sold to bolster city finances. "Anytime we can consolidate resources and make better use of our fueling stations, I think that's a great idea," Costello said. "If that means closing down some of these stations and having excess property we can sell, that's even better to help us bridge some of the budget gaps we have." Reducing the number of fuel stations is one part of an ambitious effort under way by Parker to balance the budget by shaving \$22 million from fleet operation costs this year and next, including a cut in the number of municipal employees with take-home vehicles and consolidation of city vehicle garages. Parker is searching for a director to head a new city fleet management office, and is planning to ask the City Council to approve the hiring of CST Fleet Services, a North Carolina consulting firm known for reducing fleet operation costs.

A LUST Problem

Houston is not alone in contending with a serious environmental problem known as LUST - Leaking Underground Storage Tanks - that has festered quietly across the state and nation for decades. Texas environmental officials say their database of

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leaking fuel tanks dates back to 1972. Texas currently has more than 55,600 underground storage tanks in use, including 7,536 in Harris County. Leaks have been discovered at 26,048 sites, including 3,411 in Harris County. To date, the majority across the state have been cleaned up, but there are 2,363 underground tank sites where cleanup operations are still going on, state officials say. "Monitoring tanks that are being used is very important, because, if you have fuel in those tanks, we want to make sure it doesn't get out into the environment because it can definitely cause problems for people," said Victoria Modak, a specialist with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's leaking tank program in Austin. "As great as our technology is ... there still are releases, despite all of our efforts. So, it's good to keep a handle on that, make sure we're tracking when they have a release and things are getting cleaned up." Modak said the TCEQ estimates the average cost for environmental cleanup of the site of an underground tank is \$84,705, although she noted there is a procedure for sealing the tanks and leaving them in place. That practice can lead to problems in future land sales, however. It makes sense, Modak said, for cities such as Houston to replace aging tanks, even if they are not leaking, and invest in storage tanks with updated technology to prevent and detect leaks.

<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/metropolitan/7230186.html>

IRAQ, CAMP TAJI, OCTOBER 4 2010. COMBAT AVIATION BRIGADE, 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION ARMY FUELERS PUMP OVER 5 MILLION GALLONS OF JET FUEL IN IRAQ

spc. roland hale



Army fuelers serving in Iraq pumped their millionth gallon of jet fuel on Camp Taji, Oct. 2, bringing their unit's grand total to over five million gallons. In seven months of deployment, their unit has already surpassed the number of gallons that an aviation brigade normally pumps over the course of a 12-month tour. This is due mostly to the fact that their unit is not a typical aviation brigade. The Enhanced Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division deployed to Iraq this March in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, and is now the Army's sole aviation brigade here. The unit is the Army's first ever enhanced aviation brigade, meaning that it has absorbed other units to become a super-brigade of sorts. As an enhanced brigade, the unit has about double the standard amount of troops and aircraft. With the increased size, the brigade also inherited an increased responsibility for logistical support. Accordingly, the brigade is now responsible for providing fuel and armament to military helicopters across Iraq at Forward Arming and Refueling Points, or FARPs. The fueling points provide aircraft the ability to refuel and rearm in the middle of a mission. The points are strategically placed at U.S. bases around Iraq to extend the reach of aviation missions. "We have different battalions from the brigade running the FARPs, and they all report [their numbers] to us," said Staff Sgt. LoRae Davis, the non-commissioned officer in charge of tracking the fuel. Davis is assigned to the 601st Aviation Support Battalion, the enhanced

brigade's designated support asset. "We started taking control of additional FARPs as all the other aviation brigades left [Iraq]," said Davis. "We're able to maintain our daily missions at each location, which makes us successful across the country." The brigade's fuelers also supervise civilian fuelers from contracted companies, who now work at several FARPs in Iraq. The FARP on Camp Taji is run by personnel from Company A, 601st ASB. The company operates the point 24-hours a day with about 30 personnel. Since they took over operations at the FARP this March, the company has fueled over 6,000 aircraft from several branches of the U.S. military, as well as helicopters from the Iraqi army, said Staff Sgt. Kevin Howard, a NCO working at the fueling point. This number contributes to the brigade's total of 28,000 aircraft as of Oct. 2. "The one million gallon milestone is a great point to reach without incident or injury," said Capt. Travis Peck, commander of Company A. "We're aiming to hit somewhere around the two million gallon mark by the end of our deployment." The crew on Camp Taji, along with the brigade's fueling personnel from around the country, is scheduled to hand the mission over to another aviation unit next March. The unit replacing them will be a similarly structured enhanced-brigade, and will also have control of U.S. FARPs throughout Iraq.

<http://www.dvidshub.net/news/57432/army-fuelers-pump-over-5-million-gallons-jet-fuel-iraq>

NIGERIA, WARRI, OCTOBER 4 2010. JTF TROOPS ON RED ALERT, TIGHTEN SECURITY AROUND OIL FACILITIES

joe ogbodu

The Joint Military Task Force (JTF), codenamed Operation Restore Hope, has beefed up security around oil facilities, following the bomb explosions that rocked some parts of Abuja during the independence anniversary, allegedly detonated by the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND). Sources told the Nigerian Compass that additional security would

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also be extended this week to major government facilities in the region. "I can tell you that troops are being placed on red alert over the development in Abuja. The taskforce doesn't want a recurrence of what happened in Abuja because you know some miscreants can take undue advantage of the situation to either launch attack on facilities or sabotage facilities for illegal oil bunkering operations," the source said. He added that troops would also be deployed in the Niger Delta waterways. But JTF's spokesman, Col. Timothy Antigha, yesterday dismissed any possible alarm in the region. He said there was nothing to fear as the task force had always been up and doing in ensuring security in the region. Antigha assured oil multinationals and people of the region not to entertain any fear of attacks. Also, the 'Grand Commanding Officer' (GCO) of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and repentant warlord, Chief Government Ekpemupolo (a.k.a. Tompolo) at the weekend urged President Goodluck Jonathan to be focused; not be distracted by the antics of enemies of the state, who want to distract him. Tompolo, who spoke through his media aide, Paul Bebenimibo, described the incident as barbaric and a negation of the struggle in the Niger Delta region. He distanced ex-militants in the zone from the attack, describing those who carried out act as "cowards who want to paint the region in bad light and discredit the Jonathan's presidency." He, however, charged security agencies to fish out the perpetrators of the act and bring them to justice so as to serve as deterrent to others. Similarly, 'Commander' of the Deadly Underdogs, 'General' Ezekiel Akpesibewie, said he was not sure which of the MEND's splinter groups carried out the bomb attack.

http://www.compassnewspaper.com/NG/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=68516:jtf-troops-on-red-alert-tighten-security-around-oil-facilities&catid=43:news&Itemid=799

USA, N.M, ALBUQUERQUE, OCTOBER 4 2010. FUEL CLEANUP DEAL

john fleck

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8DAat2R21Tc>

The Air Force has signed a \$23 million contract with Shaw Environmental and Infrastructure Inc. to begin cleaning up a jet fuel spill that threatens Albuquerque's drinking water wells. The contract in some cases sets milestones calling for faster cleanup than required by the New Mexico Environment Department, Air Force officials noted Monday. "Our hope is to be more aggressive than the state initially requested," said Brent Wilson, Kirtland's chief engineer, in an interview Monday. State officials have in the past been critical of the Air Force's handling of the spill, claiming the military has not moved quickly enough on cleanup. James Bearzi, head of the Environment Department's Hazardous Waste Bureau, said Monday it is too soon to say whether the new contract is sufficient to answer the state's criticisms. The fuel leaked unnoticed over a period of decades from an underground pipe at the base's jet fuel loading area. The state believes as much as 8 million gallons are now contaminating water near city drinking water wells. No contamination has been found in the wells. The new contract requires the Louisiana-based Shaw to:

- Clean up contaminated soil around the jet fuel area within the next three months.
- Control the moving liquid jet fuel now floating on the water table within three years.
- Find a way to halt the spread of ethylene dibromide, the jet fuel constituent that has been found closest to the drinking water wells.

<http://www.abqjournal.com/news/metro/052322306141newsmetro10-05-10.htm>

USA, KY, LOUISVILLE, OCTOBER 4 2010. LITHIUM BATTERY RISK BACK IN FOCUS AFTER UPS CRASH

Though the cause of the Sept. 3 crash of a UPS cargo plane in Dubai that killed two crew members has not yet been determined, a pilots' organization says the accident eventually may prove to underscore the need for stricter rules on shipping lithium batteries. That's because the head of the aviation authority in the [United Arab Emirates](#) has said it appeared the plane carried mainly electronic goods — many of which are powered by lithium batteries. And news reports relying on unidentified sources have said investigators are trying to determine whether lithium batteries were in the cargo compartment where the fire began. The crash killed two crew members, including Capt. Doug Lampe of Prospect, Ky. UPS spokesman Mike Mangeot declined to say whether lithium batteries were among the plane's cargo, citing the confidentiality of the investigation. U.S. transportation safety officials have also declined to reveal cargo or other details of the investigation, which is being headed by the United Arab Emirates' General Civil Aviation Authority. But Mark Rogers, dangerous goods program director for the Air Line Pilots Association International, said if reports are correct that the cargo included lithium batteries, the crash "demonstrates what we've been saying for years now" — that even if lithium batteries don't cause a blaze, a fire that involves them "spreads very quickly and can quickly become uncontrollable." Lithium batteries, used in millions of electronic items such as laptop computers, cell phones and cameras, have figured in numerous fires on airplanes and in airports in recent years. Most were extinguished without major damage — such as a passenger's smoking laptop battery pack that a flight attendant

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doused with water and Sprite in 2008, and a fire in a bag of audio-video equipment in an overhead bin that forced an emergency landing in 2007. But the increasing incidence of such fires — 25 since 2007, according to Federal Aviation Administration records — has prompted the U.S. Department of Transportation to consider stricter rules for shipping the batteries. It issued proposed rules last January, and has been weighing comments from industry and pilots groups before issuing a final version. The proposed rules would require more lithium batteries to be labeled as hazardous materials, limit some battery shipments to cargo holds that have fire-control equipment, and require pilots to be notified of batteries being shipped on a flight. All cargo planes are required by the Federal Aviation Administration to use fire-control equipment in the lower holds, but the FAA has said such equipment in the main hold — roughly the same area as a passenger cabin — would be impractical. Nonetheless, UPS rival FedEx has installed fire-fighting foam equipment in the main cargo holds of 74 of its wide-body jets. Rogers, of the Air Line Pilots Association, said pilots' worry is concentrations of batteries in cargo holds, not passengers' carry-on laptops or cell phones. He noted that pilots often aren't aware they're carrying a load of batteries or electronics, because small lithium batteries aren't required to be listed among hazardous materials on board. "We're aware of a five-pound shipment of dry ice that's keeping (fish frozen) ... but if there are 100,000 lithium batteries next to that shipment, we're not even aware that they're there," Rogers said. "And if a fire were to start, or if that shipment would be exposed to any fire source, the result could be catastrophic." On the other side, battery manufacturers and UPS, which has its main air hub in Louisville, say the proposed rules would slow the shipping of computers, medical devices and other goods, cost billions of dollars, and shift some U.S. shipping — and jobs — to overseas carriers. "We believe that we do ship (lithium batteries) safely," said UPS's Mangeot. "We believe there's always room for improvement. And we are working with regulators to make that happen." But, he added, "You have to balance tangible improvements in safety with economic impact." Atlanta-based UPS and PRBA — The Rechargeable Battery Association, whose members include many battery manufacturers, were among the organizations that filed comments objecting to portions of the proposed rules. Both said that shipped batteries have only caused problems when senders didn't follow safety requirements, such as putting an insulating cap or tape over battery terminals to prevent short circuits. UPS said that because the proposed U.S. rules differ from international standards, their adoption would cause "chaos" in commercial shipping. Manufacturers would face higher shipping costs — or slower delivery if they switched to ground travel — and U.S. airlines could lose international business to foreign shippers. UPS estimated the proposed rules would cost the company nearly \$264 million in the first year alone, in training, equipment and other costs — including the need to reprogram systems and hire more workers at the Worldport hub in Louisville. Consumers would feel the restrictions as well, said George Kerchner, executive director of the Washington, D.C.-based Rechargeable Battery Association. "It would basically mean they would not be able to air-ship their portable electronic equipment," he said. For example, a father couldn't send a Blackberry to his son in college because it would have to meet standards for shipping hazardous materials, and retail stores don't have the special labeling and training that would require, Kerchner said. There are two types of lithium batteries, which present different risks. Lithium metal batteries contain lithium, are mostly non-rechargeable, and typically power camera, medical devices and other electronics. If they catch on fire, they burn with great heat and can't be extinguished with suppressants carried on airlines. Rechargeable lithium ion batteries — used in laptops, cell phones, power tools and other devices — can cause a fire if overheated, but such fires can be extinguished. Lithium batteries are useful because they store more energy in a small space than other batteries — but that is also what makes them more dangerous when a fire or mishap releases that energy. "If you handle them properly, you shouldn't have any problems," said Jian Xie, a battery expert at Indiana University-Purdue University in Indianapolis. "You've probably never heard someone around you say, 'My cell phone exploded' or 'My laptop caught fire.'" Though the cause of the Sept. 3 crash of a UPS cargo plane in Dubai that killed two crew members has not yet been determined, a pilots' organization says the accident eventually may prove to underscore the need for stricter rules on shipping lithium batteries. That's because the head of the aviation authority in the [United Arab Emirates](#) has said it appeared the plane carried mainly electronic goods — many of which are powered by lithium batteries. And news reports relying on unidentified sources have said investigators are trying to determine whether lithium batteries were in the cargo compartment where the fire began. The crash killed two crew members, including Capt. Doug Lampe of Prospect, Ky. UPS spokesman Mike Mangeot declined to say whether lithium batteries were among the plane's cargo, citing the confidentiality of the investigation. U.S. transportation safety officials have also declined to reveal cargo or other details of the investigation, which is being headed by the United Arab Emirates' General Civil Aviation Authority. But Mark Rogers, dangerous goods program director for the Air Line Pilots Association International, said if reports are correct that the cargo included lithium batteries, the crash "demonstrates what we've been saying for years now" — that even if lithium batteries don't cause a blaze, a fire that involves them "spreads very quickly and can quickly become uncontrollable." Lithium batteries, used in millions of electronic items such as laptop computers, cell phones and cameras, have figured in numerous fires on airplanes and in airports in recent years. Most were extinguished without major damage — such as a passenger's

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smoking laptop battery pack that a flight attendant doused with water and Sprite in 2008, and a fire in a bag of audio-video equipment in an overhead bin that forced an emergency landing in 2007. But the increasing incidence of such fires — 25 since 2007, according to Federal Aviation Administration records — has prompted the U.S. Department of Transportation to consider stricter rules for shipping the batteries. It issued proposed rules last January, and has been weighing comments from industry and pilots groups before issuing a final version. The proposed rules would require more lithium batteries to be labeled as hazardous materials, limit some battery shipments to cargo holds that have fire-control equipment, and require pilots to be notified of batteries being shipped on a flight. 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The NTSB's investigation focused on the possible role of lithium batteries, based partly on the presence of batteries and damaged laptops in the burnt remains. The agency finally said it could not pinpoint the fire's cause, but found that "flight crews on cargo-only aircraft remain at risk from in-flight fires" involving lithium batteries. Since then, the NTSB, the transportation department's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, and pilot groups have advocated continued study of the potential dangers of transporting these batteries, and stricter handling and labeling rules. Kerchner, of the Rechargeable Battery Association, said lithium batteries are "certainly safe for transport," based on the billions that have been shipped over the past 15 or 20 years — compared with the few dozen incidents cited by authorities. But Michael Moody Jr., a member of the executive board of the Louisville-based Independent Pilots Association, which represents UPS pilots, disagreed. "There have been numerous incidents ... where we were able to investigate and find that the cause was lithium batteries," said Moody, who took part in the investigation of the

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burnt UPS plane in Philadelphia. "The reason why it's being discussed more and more ... is because the rate of incidence of that kind of event is increasing.

[http://www.courier-](http://www.courier-journal.com/article/20101003/BUSINESS/310020020/Lithium+battery+risk+back+in+focus+after+UPS+crash)

[journal.com/article/20101003/BUSINESS/310020020/Lithium+battery+risk+back+in+focus+after+UPS+crash](http://www.courier-journal.com/article/20101003/BUSINESS/310020020/Lithium+battery+risk+back+in+focus+after+UPS+crash)

AUSTRALIA, VICTORIA, MANSFIELD, OCTOBER 5 2010. SAFETY SPOTLIGHT ON DSE AFTER TANK EXPLOSION

WorkSafe is demanding safety improvements from the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) after a fuel tank explosion last year left a worker with serious burn injuries. The April 2009 incident occurred when a 31 year-old DSE worker at the organisation's Alexandra depot was instructed to weld a leak in a 400-litre tank used to store fuel used in controlled burning operations. "The unsupervised worker was told the tank needed to be ready by the following day – he wasn't told that he would need to clean the tank or remove any fuel," Executive Director for Health and Safety Ian Forsyth said. "When he began to weld the tank, it exploded. He suffered second degree and superficial burns to around 8% of his body, as well as other injuries from the force of the blast." DSE is entering into an enforceable undertaking with WorkSafe, requiring it to create a senior full-time health and safety leadership role to work across the organisation's regional depots. The undertaking sets out that DSE will also invest \$120,000 in a safety leadership program – half of which will be allocated to dangerous goods training and half to training managers and supervisors in health and safety. DSE will also spend \$10,000 advertising an alert in regional papers around Victoria - to publicise the dangers of welding fuel drums and best-practice for this work. The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 provides for enforceable undertakings as an alternative to prosecution. An undertaking is a legal agreement where an organisation is required to carry out specific activities to improve health and safety for employees, which will benefit the wider community. WorkSafe has entered into 13 enforceable undertakings since 2004, two of which are with government departments. "As this situation clearly shows, welding or cutting a container which contains traces of flammable substances can be extremely dangerous," Mr Forsyth said. "The worker wasn't given any instructions to help him carry out the work safely, nor was he warned that there was a risk of explosion. "Even if there's a suspicion of flammable substances, hazard identification and cleaning procedures need to be carried out by someone who is trained to do this kind of work," he said. WorkSafe will monitor DSE's progress to ensure the conditions of the undertaking are met. To view the undertaking, click [here](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/wsinternet/worksafe/sitertools/news/safety+spotlight+on+dse+after+tank+explosion) and scroll to the bottom of the page.

<http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/wsinternet/worksafe/sitertools/news/safety+spotlight+on+dse+after+tank+explosion>

UK, LEICESTERSHIRE, OCTOBER 5 2010. FIRMS FINED £350,000 FOR CHLORINE DIOXIDE DEATH

Crisp-maker Walkers and chemical distributor Omnicem have been fined a total of £350,000 after a worker was killed by a cloud of toxic gas. Driver John Marriott, 59, from Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, died from chlorine dioxide poisoning while transferring chemicals from his lorry. He inadvertently mixed up the hoses on steel tanks while delivering to a Beaumont Leys site in July 2006. Both companies admitted two charges under the Health & Safety at Work Act. Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspector Sue Thompson said: "This incident was entirely preventable. "Basic risk assessments and clear procedures could have avoided Mr Marriott's tragic death but as it was there were a catalogue of serious failings. "Employees who had tried to help Mr Marriott did not know the type of operation that was being carried out, nor the nature of the gas being released."

Safety Breaches

After realising his mistake, Mr Marriott started to hose the area down but it was too late and he died in hospital a month later. The HSE said both chemicals were used in Walkers' starch reclamation unit to turn waste starch into food-grade material used to make snack foods. At Leicester Crown Court, Walkers admitted breaching two sections of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and was fined £200,000 and ordered to pay costs of £38,971. Omnicem admitted the same breaches and was fined £150,000 and ordered to pay £29,229 in costs. In a statement, Walkers said it had been "saddened and shocked" by Mr Marriott's death. It said: "Walkers Snack Foods Limited is committed to ensuring the health and safety for all our employees, customers and visitors, and prompt remedial steps were taken immediately after this incident to ensure this does not happen on one of our sites ever again."

From Other News Sites

- DunstableToday [Firm fined over toxic gas death of worker](http://www.dunstabletoday.co.uk/news/leicestershire/firm-fined-over-toxic-gas-death-of-worker)
- Leicester Mercury [Two Leicestershire firms are fined after toxic gas kills delivery driver](http://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/leicestershire/two-leicestershire-firms-are-fined-after-toxic-gas-kills-delivery-driver)
- News Distribution Service [Walkers fined after man killed by toxic gas](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-11409491)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-11409491>

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CANADA, NL, CARTWRIGHT, OCTOBER 5 2010. GROUNDED OIL TANKER FREED IN LABRADOR HARBOUR >> SHIP WAS EMPTY WHEN IT HIT SHOAL, OPERATOR SAYS

 **Photo Gallery** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/yourcommunity/2010/10/nl-tanker-see-photos-of-the-grounded-ship.html>



The Mokami ran aground in Cartwright, on Labrador's coast, on Monday.

An oil tanker ran aground temporarily Monday in the harbour of a small coastal Labrador community, although the company that owns it says the ship was empty. The Mokami, a 91-metre vessel owned by the Labrador-based Woodward Group, ran into trouble shortly after making a fuel delivery in Cartwright on Monday morning. A Woodward official told CBC News that no one was injured and there was no fuel aboard the Mokami when the incident happened. Another vessel, the MV Astron, arrived on the scene and pulled the Mokami to safety early Monday afternoon. It was not immediately clear what damages, if any, the Mokami had sustained. Resident Robert Lethbridge said he saw the tanker hit a

shoal after it had completed its delivery. "I was watching it when it was taking off, when she was leaving the marine centre, [and] noticed her heading straight for that shoal," he told CBC News. "I said to myself, 'She's going to go on that shoal there.' Sure enough, I [saw] her when she brought up." The Woodward Group said appropriate authorities have been notified, and an assessment team has been dispatched to Cartwright. The Woodward Group also owns the tanker MV Nanny, which ran aground in September in the Northwest Passage. It took more than two weeks to free that tanker, which had been carrying about 9.5 million litres of diesel, from a sandbar.

<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/newfoundland-labrador/story/2010/10/04/cartwright-tanker-mokami-104.html>

USA, ID, LOWELL, OCTOBER 5 2010. DIESEL FUEL SHEEN CONTAINED



Idaho Transportation Department officials say containment booms and absorbent pads have been placed at the edge of the Lochsa River to minimize the effects of a diesel spill from a tanker crash on U.S. 12. ITD says hazardous materials experts have been on the scene about 136 miles east of Lewiston since a tanker truck and pup trailer overturned Wednesday, releasing an estimated 8,000 gallons of diesel into a borrow pit on the north side of the highway. A small amount of sheen appeared near the bank of the Lochsa River Saturday across the highway from where the spill occurred. Afternoon reports indicated that very aggressive measures to capture the material appeared to be working as intended and that the sheen had been contained within about two feet of the riverbank. ITD said absorbent pads that spanned the Lochsa also were preventing material from spreading downriver. Crews from a number of state and federal agencies and environmental consultants will monitor the river 24 hours a day and will deploy

additional resources if the sheen moves beyond the containment booms. They also resumed excavation on the north side of the highway Sunday to discover the path of material migration. Equipment was expected to arrive on the scene Sunday to drill core samples and help determine whether diesel is present under the highway. The highway will be limited to single lane through the spill area with alternating traffic controlled by flaggers while crews proceed with excavation and drilling. Motorists are advised

<http://www.klewTV.com/news/local/104228704.html>

USA, N.J, CAMDEN, OCTOBER 5 2010. US LABOR DEPARTMENT'S OSHA CITES NEW JERSEY CLOTHING MANUFACTURER \$43,150 FOR EXPOSING WORKERS TO CHEMICAL AND OTHER WORKPLACE HAZARDS

leni fortson

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited Miskeen Originals LLC for workplace safety and health violations, including employee exposure to methylene chloride. Proposed penalties total \$43,150. Miskeen Originals LLC is a clothing manufacturer with 12 employees at the Camden location. OSHA initiated an inspection after receiving an employee complaint alleging workplace safety and health hazards. As a result of the inspection, Miskeen was cited for one willful violation with a penalty of \$28,000, 12 serious violations with a \$15,150 penalty, and seven other-than-serious violations, which carry no penalty. "Employees exposed to methylene chloride are at increased risk of developing cancer; adverse effects on the heart, central nervous system and liver; and skin or eye irritation," said Paula Dixon-Roderick,

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director of OSHA's area office in Marlton, N.J. "These hazards need to be corrected immediately to protect the safety and health of workers at the plant." The willful violation was due to the company's failure to provide emergency exits free of obstruction and unlocked. A willful violation is one committed with plain indifference to or intentional disregard for employees' safety and health. The serious violations include employee overexposure to methylene, failing to provide personal protective equipment, conduct a personal protective equipment assessment, evaluate respiratory hazards, properly monitor for methylene chloride, conduct medical evaluations for respirators, provide eyewash, train employees on how to use fire extinguishers, establish a regulated area for employees exposed to methylene chloride and implement effective engineering controls. An OSHA violation is serious if death or serious physical harm could result from a hazard an employer knew or should have known exists. Some of the other-than-serious violations include failing to properly record injuries and illnesses, provide a written respirator and hazard communications program, maintain required material safety data sheets for each hazardous chemical at the facility, and failing to ensure that each container of hazardous chemicals was properly identified and labeled. An other-than-serious violation is one that has a direct relationship to job safety and health, but probably would not cause death or serious physical harm. The company has 15 business days from receipt of its citations to comply, meet with the OSHA area director or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. This inspection was conducted by OSHA's Marlton Area Office; telephone 856-596-5200. To report workplace accidents, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to workers, call OSHA's toll-free hotline at 800-321-6742

http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=NEWS_RELEASES&p_id=18402

USA, WA, ANACORTES, OCTOBER 5 2010. TEXAS REFINER'S FINE A RECORD IN WASHINGTON STATE BLAST >> TESORO MUST PAY \$2.4 MILLION OVER EXPLOSION THAT LEFT 7 DEAD

vicki vaughan



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http://www.publicbroadcasting.net/kplu/news.newsmain/article/1/0/1708938/KPLU.Local.News/Family.Reacts.to.Tesoro.Fine.in_Deadly.Explosion



The company sign is pictured behind locked gates of the Tesoro Anacortes Refinery, April 2, 2010. On Monday, Texas-based Tesoro was fined \$2.4 million by Washington Labor and Industries following a six-month investigation into April's deadly explosion and fire that killed seven workers.

Washington state officials hit Tesoro Corp. with a \$2.4 million fine Monday — the highest penalty ever issued by the state's workplace safety regulators - after an investigation of an April 2 explosion that killed seven at the company's plant north of Seattle. The deaths could have been prevented at the company's Anacortes, Wash., refinery had the San Antonio-based company followed standard industry procedures and its own policies, regulators said. "One conclusion stands out among all others: The seven deaths could have been prevented and should have been prevented," said

Michael Silverstein, assistant director of the Washington Department of Labor & Industries' occupational safety division. "It wasn't a question of whether (equipment) would blow up; it was a question of when." After a six-month investigation, the agency sharply criticized the refiner for sending poorly trained, unprotected workers into an area where 40-year-old equipment had been inadequately tested. When a vessel cracked, it spewed vapors that ignited and led to a fiery explosion that killed seven. Washington regulators cited Tesoro for 39 "willful" violations for being indifferent to fixing hazards and five "serious" violations for which there was a high probability of serious injury or death. The company has 15 working days to appeal the citations. "The most important thing is for Tesoro to correct the hazards identified in the investigation," regulators said. Tesoro spokesman Lynn Westfall said the company "is in the process of reviewing the results of the inspection and cannot comment further until this review is complete." Tesoro cooperated during the agency's inspection, he said. "Safety is our top priority," he added. "In connection with our own investigation of the accident and the resumption of operations, we have undertaken a review of equipment and piping at the refinery. We are working hard for a safe resumption of operations at Anacortes." Tesoro earlier had said it would start up some units at the plant on Monday and have all units operating by Oct. 15. It's unclear how state's ruling would affect those plans.

Related Stories [Fatal Tesoro blast in Anacortes under investigation](#) Friday, April 2, 2010

<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/business/7231847.html>

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USA, MASS, BRIDGEWATER, OCTOBER 5 2010. EXPLOSION LAUNCHES PROPANE TANK INTO HOME

ron sanders

 **Watch the Video** <http://wbztv.com/local/bridgewater.propane.tank.2.1945866.html>

 **Watch the Video:**

<http://www1.whdh.com/news/articles/local/12002392784336/natural-gas-tank-explodes-crashes-into-house/>



Bridgewater firefighters removed a gas tank from a house yesterday, after the tank exploded and landed in a bedroom.

A 200-pound tank of compressed natural gas accidentally exploded at a Bridgewater auto salvage yard and was launched 600 to 700 feet through the air into the roof and bedroom ceiling of a home, narrowly missing a woman standing beneath that part of the ceiling. "I was kneeling down on the floor and there was a huge explosion. It shook the whole house. I didn't know what it was. Scared to death," said Beth Maraglia. Bridgewater firefighters got a 911 call from Maraglia just after the tank blew through the roof about 10:30 a.m. "An explosion and something just fell on the house. It came through the bedroom," she told the dispatcher. Maraglia was still shaken several hours later. "I jumped out of the way in time and the ceiling came down right where I was standing," she explained. Maraglia and fire investigators say solar panels on the roof prevented the tank from landing on her. "Probably would have killed me. Scariest thing that ever

happened to me in my life," she said. Deputy Fire Chief Thomas Levy said part of the 30 inch tank was still missing after the explosion, which happened when a machine cutting apart a truck for scrap evidently cut into the tank, caused a spark and the blast. That left a 4-foot crater in the ground at Chuckran's Auto Parts. The deputy says the salvage company was in full compliance with all regulations but someone had left the tank in the truck before it was delivered to the yard. "We're probably never going to find out who placed that device inside the metals. It could have been there a while," he said. Maraglia's boyfriend, Bill Woodman, said someone must have been watching over her. "I have a guardian angel or something watching over me," she surmised. The deputy chief said the compressed natural gas tank is the type that might be found on a bus that uses alternative fuel. He said since this is Fire Prevention Week, he urges all salvage yards and companies that handle scrap materials to be extra vigilant about what they may contain.

<http://wbztv.com/local/bridgewater.propane.tank.2.1945866.html>

USA, ILL, VENICE, OCTOBER 5 2010. FIREFIGHTERS BATTLE HUGE MAGNESIUM BLAZE IN VENICE

patrick m. o'connell

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.kplr11.com/news/kvi-plant-explosion-magnesium-venice-il-100510.0.2096206.story>

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.kmov.com/news/local/Plant-explosion-shakes-Venice-Illinois-104322354.html>

 **Watch the Video**

http://www.necn.com/10/05/10/Plant-explosion-shakes-up-Venice-IL-/landing_newengland.html?blockID=324779&feedID=4207

Firefighters were at the scene of a huge fire late Monday at an industrial site here where some residents said magnesium is processed. What appeared to be flames could be seen at the site off Illinois Route 3 an hour after the blasts. In addition, a huge plume of smoke from the site covered a wide area. Alderman Victor Valentine Sr. said he was watching Monday night football about 10:30 p.m. when he heard a loud boom followed by two more. "I thought the place was collapsing," Valentine said. Officials at the scene had not released any information about injuries or the source of the blasts late Monday. A sign in front of the site in the Cherokee Properties Industrial Park identifies it as home to Magnesium Elektron. The sign also lists Custom Steel Processing and Quality Rail Service. Residents said the site used to be the home of a Dow chemical plant. Valentine said he has heard other blasts at the site before, but none with the force of those he heard Monday night. Some residents said the explosions shook their homes. Venice is a river town in Madison County with a population of about 2,500.

http://www.stltoday.com/article_8d01c898-d036-11df-814d-00127992bc8b.html

INDONESIA, JAKARTA, OCTOBER 5 2010. FEARFUL INDONESIAN VILLAGERS DISCARD GAS CANISTERS FOR WOOD

Residents of Siak district in Riau are fast abandoning their three-kilogram gas canisters in favor of firewood because of safety fears. The canisters, distributed by the government under a program to get people to switch from using the more expensive

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subsidized kerosene, have long been blamed for a series of explosions that have claimed scores of lives. Darwilis, the head of the Riau Trade and Industry Office, said many Siak residents feared their canisters could explode at any moment. "The thing is, they're still unfamiliar with how to use the gas canister and stove properly," he said. "That's why they've been abandoning the canisters outside their homes. "Everyone's afraid that their canister will explode because they have no clue how to use it, and there's been no effort from the government to teach them." One of the residents, Sumiati, said recent TV news reports about exploding canisters had prompted her to stop using her gas stove and instead use firewood for cooking. "There's just been so many explosions killing so many people," she said. "These canisters are just like bombs. Who wouldn't be scared with so many accidents?" She has dumped her gas canister in the backyard. Samsiah, another resident, also said she had been scared off by the news reports. "I'm afraid the thing will explode," she said. She said that while she felt safer cooking with wood, it took much longer to prepare meals than when using the gas stove. "My son said the regulator that connects the canister to the hose is the source of the explosions," Samsiah said. Critics and experts have blamed faulty canisters and regulators for most of the accidents. Investigations this year found that illegal operators were jimmying regulators to siphon gas from the subsidized three-kilogram canisters to fill non-subsidized 12-kilogram containers and selling them for a hefty profit. The practice, experts say, weakens the regulator valves and makes a gas leak more likely, leading to an explosion. Meanwhile, spot checks on factories supplying the canisters have found some producers churning out cylinders with substandard seals and below-specification wall thickness. The government has since introduced regulators and hoses it says are safer. However, explosions have continued, even in cases where the new parts were used. The last reported explosion of a three-kilogram canister occurred in South Jakarta last week, when one person was injured and a roadside eatery was burned.

<http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/home/fearful-indonesian-villagers-discard-gas-canisters-for-wood/399653>

USA, CA, PALO ALTO, OCTOBER 5 2010. REPORT: POLLUTION SPIKES DESPITE YEARS OF CLEANUP >> SUPERFUND SITE TO CLEAN UP TOXIC CHEMICALS FROM A LEAKY TANK HAS GENERALLY LOWERED CONTAMINATION EXCEPT FOR SOME AREAS

sue dremann

Despite nearly three decades of clean-up efforts at a central Palo Alto Superfund site, groundwater contamination from a leaky underground chemical tank has dramatically concentrated in some small areas, according to a new water-quality report. None of the contamination is threatening homes but it is causing some concern about vapors penetrating commercial buildings. Underground contamination from the "Hewlett-Packard 620-640 Page Mill Road Superfund Site" has increased in some areas, according to a five-year review released Sept. 30 by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board San Francisco Bay Region. It is the third five-year study. Inspectors have noted a slow decrease in contamination in many areas, but dramatic rises in some areas, the report states. The contaminated plume emanates from the former HP site and combines with contamination from two other locations: the former Varian Medical Systems, Inc., facility at 601 California Ave. and the former HP facility at 395 Page Mill Road. The plume, which contains heavy metals and toxic chemicals known as volatile organic compounds (VOCs), has affected groundwater under parts of Stanford Research Park, the Palo Alto Mayfield soccer complex, Palo Alto Square, Fry's Electronics and the Palo Alto Courthouse, among numerous other businesses. Contamination has not spread into the adjacent residential area, the report said. The Regional Water Board approved decommissioning groundwater monitoring and extraction wells at the former Mayfield School site in 2005. That site was redeveloped by Stanford University into the Stanford/Palo Alto Community Playing Fields soccer complex in 2006. In some areas, contaminated water in close proximity to the soil's surface has brought toxic vapors into buildings, according to the report, which was created from monitoring done by Stantec, a company hired by HP and Varian. HP has reported a cumulative cost of \$6,788,253 through October 2009 to clean up the contamination. The clean up has been ongoing since 1982. The company detected a toxic leak from a 1,000-gallon underground solvent-storage tank in 1981 and began remediation to remove the contamination from soil and groundwater in 1982. The company left the site in 1986 but continued its lease until 2007. The site contains contaminants in the soil including arsenic, gallium, trichloroethene (TCE), trichloroethane (TCA), 1,1 dichloroethene (DCE), tetrachloroethene (PCE) 1,2,4 trichlorobenzene and phenol. It was added to the federal Superfund site list in 1990. The plume extends 1,500 feet northeast under Oregon Expressway and runs from the HP 620-640 Page Mill Road site northward in a finger to California Avenue under the former Varian site. It flows east along Grant Avenue to Alma Street and the Oregon Expressway underpass, then south along Portage and Lambert Avenues, just shy of Matadero Canal, according to report maps. Inspectors have seen a slow decrease in toxic levels in many areas within the plume area. During the last five years, 880 pounds of VOCs were removed from the 620-640 Page Mill site. The off-property study area, which includes the Oregon Expressway Underpass area, removed 1,267 pounds of VOCs. But contamination levels have risen dramatically in some

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areas. Water Quality Control Regional Water Board inspectors want more monitoring and a better analysis of the extent of the contamination and if some areas are emitting vapors from underground. An area just south of the 620-640 Page Mill Road buildings showed TCE levels in groundwater increased by 75 percent. TCE concentrations increased by 20 percent from 2005 to 2009 in a monitoring well near El Camino Real and Page Mill Road. But water collected from two bore holes near the well site at 2875 and 2865 El Camino Real (the northeast corner of El Camino Real and Page Mill Road, respectively), indicated TCE levels have increased nearly 800 percent, according to the report. The groundwater is not used for drinking or bathing and so does not pose a risk of off-gassing vapors from showers and baths, but inspectors expressed concern about air vapors that could seep into buildings. Rising groundwater levels in some areas have re-saturated soils. The effectiveness of vapor barriers is also still not completely known, according to the report. In the Stanford Research Park, HP installed a vapor barrier under portions of the replacement building in 1994 and added a grated entrance to an underground parking area for increased ventilation. The current occupant, Wilson Sonsini Goodrich and Rosati, took indoor air samples in 2009 and found volatile organic compounds on the first-floor level at one location. None were detected on the second floor. Wilson Sonsini plans to conduct more indoor sampling to confirm its findings at the end of 2010, according to the report. Groundwater TCE concentrations have also increased in the area at the northwest corner of El Camino and Pepper Avenue. The groundwater is close to the surface and there is potential for contaminating vapors to enter buildings, inspectors said. The Regional Water Board also wants to determine if the contaminated area has spread due to rising groundwater levels. The extent of contamination should be fully defined in the so-called A1, A1 Upper and A2 zones (from the western edge of the pollution site and north and east along portions of California Avenue, Page Mill Road, Grant and Sherman Avenues to Park Boulevard and the Oregon Expressway underpass.) The potential for vapor intrusion cannot be determined until the extent of groundwater contamination in these areas is defined, according to the report. The study determined the potential vapor-intrusion areas should be reevaluated within 18 months. HP should submit its next five-year report to the water board by Feb. 1, 2015, inspectors said.

http://www.paloaltoonline.com/news/show_story.php?id=18496

UK, SOUTHPORT, OCTOBER 5 2010. SIX-YEAR-OLD AINTREE GIRL SWALLOWED GLOWSTICK CONTENTS AT FIREWORKS DISPLAY

rebecca cole

A six-year-old girl was rushed to hospital after swallowing the contents of a glowstick at a fireworks display. Lee Chesworth, of Aintree, took his daughter Nicole and son Lewis, nine, for a fun evening out at the British Musical Fireworks Championships, in Southport's Kings Gardens, on Saturday. He never suspected the evening would end with a trip to hospital. Today he praised St John Ambulance and council staff for their rapid response to his daughter's ordeal. Mr Chesworth said the children were playing with glowsticks when his daughter suddenly appeared in tears with luminous liquid streaming from her mouth. He said: "Nicole must have had the stick in her mouth and burst the plastic because the stuff was all over her. "She was so distressed, crying hard and did not know what to do with herself. "I was really scared about what chemicals she had swallowed so I grabbed the nearest steward. "He told me we had to get medical treatment right away." Mr Chesworth said the Sefton council steward then rushed him and Nicole through a security barrier towards the first aid area, where there was a medical team and three or four St John ambulances waiting. He said: "A paramedic put Nicole in the back of the ambulance and the on-site doctor immediately gave the order to go straight to hospital. "The steward then went out of his way to find Lewis and his friend, brought them over and we all went off to hospital together." On arrival, staff at Ormskirk hospital examined Nicole and performed toxicology tests on the glowstick's contents. Fortunately, the fluid was not poisonous and Nicole escaped with mild irritation to her mouth. Mr Chesworth added: "I am so grateful for the quick thinking of the council steward and the fast response of St John Ambulance. "I do not know what I would have done without them. They were absolutely first class. "Nicole was back in school on Monday and has been proudly telling all her friends about her trip in an ambulance." Simon Galley, St John Ambulance's operations commissioner for Merseyside, said: "This was a great success story. "We were very concerned about Nicole because although glowsticks are designed to be as safe as possible, they can contain nasty stuff." He said paramedic Steven Scholes, ambulance crewmen James Gilboy and Rick Rhymen and their supervisor Viv Rathbone were a "credit to the team that night". He added: "I am delighted to hear they have made such an impression on Mr Chesworth." Sefton council offered Mr Chesworth and his son free entry to the event on Sunday. A council spokesman said: "We work very hard to make sure the British Musical Fireworks Championships run smoothly and safely and that involves the help of all the stewards. "Thankfully this was resolved very quickly."

<http://www.southportvisiter.co.uk/southport-news/southport-southport-news/2010/10/05/six-year-old-aintree-girl-swallowed-glowstick-contents-at-fireworks-display-100252-27401507/>

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AUSTRALIA, QUEENSLAND, BRISBANE, OCTOBER 5 2010. ROBERTSON MOVES TO BAN TOXIC CHEMICALS

Proposed new laws to ban toxic chemicals from use in coal seam gas (CSG) operations were introduced to Queensland parliament on Tuesday. Natural Resources Minister Stephen Robertson introduced the bill, which bans the CSG industry from using BTEX in fracking - a process where fluid is pumped at high pressure into a coal seam to fracture the seam and allow gas to flow readily into gas wells. BTEX is an acronym for the toxic group of petroleum chemicals benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylenes. The proposed new laws come after Cougar Energy's pilot underground coal gasification plant near Kingaroy was shut down in July after traces of benzene and toluene were found in nearby bores. However, a spokesman for Mr Robertson told AAP the Cougar Energy water contamination scare did not trigger the bill. He said Mr Robertson was fulfilling a promise he made in August to ban BTEX. "Although I acknowledge that industry has assured me these chemicals are not currently used this amendment ensures protection of the community and the environment by legislating to ban BTEX from ever being used in Queensland," Mr Robertson told parliament.

<http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-national/robertson-moves-to-ban-toxic-chemicals-20101005-165u2.html>

USA, MN, FAIRMONT, OCTOBER 5 2010. BUFFALO LAKE ENERGY TO PAY \$285,000 ENVIRONMENTAL PENALTY

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) announced today that Buffalo Lake Energy LLC has agreed to pay a \$285,000 penalty to resolve alleged violations of the company's state-issued environmental permits at its ethanol production facility in Fairmont, Minn. The agreement covers violations that occurred since the facility began production in June 2008. On numerous occasions the company's operations violated the conditions of both its air quality and water quality permits. The most significant source of the water quality violations was that the company built and operated a different wastewater treatment system than was permitted by the MPCA. The system did not perform adequately to ensure that pollutants discharged from the facility met the permit's effluent limits. The facility discharged wastewater to Center Creek which violated its permitted limits for toxicity, a measure of potential harm to aquatic organisms. Also, when the facility's water quality permit was issued, it was granted variances from several water quality standards. The permit required the company to investigate treatment technologies that would enable it to meet standards without the variances, and the company failed to adequately investigate treatment options. Finally, the water quality portion of the agreement covers a number of other violations involving record keeping, failure to report spills and unauthorized discharges, failure to properly operate the wastewater treatment system, late submittals of monitoring data to the MPCA, improper storage of byproduct, and failure to monitor in accordance with the schedule required by the permit. On the air side, the company applied for an air emissions permit in 2006, and then applied twice in 2008 for an amended permit. The first amendment was to update design changes made during construction. The second amendment was to increase emissions limits. The MPCA issued a permit in July 2008 which incorporated the first amendment, and required performance testing within 180 days after startup to measure emissions and verify compliance with permitted emission limits. The second amendment was not issued until April 2009. Testing conducted from the fall of 2008 into the winter of 2009 showed the emissions did not comply with the limits for particulates and nitrogen oxides in effect at that time. After the new limits went into effect in April 2009, the emissions were in compliance. To resolve the violations, Buffalo Lake Energy will pay a civil penalty of \$285,000. In addition, the company agreed to a schedule of corrective actions to achieve compliance, including specific plans on how it will be sure to comply with the facility's environmental permit limits and prevent reoccurrence of the violations. Failure to comply with the schedule in the agreement will result in further specified penalties. When calculating penalties, the MPCA takes into account how seriously the violations affected the environment, whether they were first-time or repeat violations, and how promptly they were reported to appropriate authorities. Penalties also attempt to recover the calculated economic benefit gained by failure to comply with environmental laws in a timely manner.

[http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/about-mpca/mpca-news/current-news-releases/buffalo-lake-energy-to-pay-\\$285000-environmental-penalty.html](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/about-mpca/mpca-news/current-news-releases/buffalo-lake-energy-to-pay-$285000-environmental-penalty.html)

USA, WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 5 2010. COURT WON'T SPARE APEX FROM OIL SPILL CLEAN UP

The Supreme Court won't stop the government from making Apex Oil Company Inc. clean up pollutants from the soil and groundwater near its former refinery in Illinois. The high court refused to hear the appeal from Apex Oil of Hartford, Ill., on Monday. The government sued to make Apex Oil clean up land under its former refinery, located about 20 miles north of St. Louis. Apex says it shouldn't be forced to pay for the clean up, since its responsibility for cleaning up the land was discharged with its other debts during the bankruptcy proceedings. Federal courts have disagreed. Shell Oil Co., Valero Energy Corp., BP Amoco and Sinclair Oil Corp. agreed to begin cleanup in Hartford in 2004. The case is Apex Oil Co. v United States, 09-1023.

http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gz4n107Tjx_4Nu9UeMRCn7GV8CKgD9IKUERO0?docId=D9IKUERO0

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