

# Dangerous Goods - Hazardous Materials Group & Network

## Release 2010 – 608 Newsy Stuff

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

June 7 2010

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**USA, LA, VENICE, MAY 29 2010. BP'S PHOTO BLOCKADE OF THE GULF OIL SPILL >> PHOTOGRAPHERS SAY BP AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ARE PREVENTING THEM FROM DOCUMENTING THE IMPACT OF THE DEEPWATER HORIZON DISASTER.**



*Jean-Michel Cousteau (center) was turned away from a wildlife sanctuary by the U.S. Coast Guard after they discovered that an AP photographer was on board.*

As BP makes [its latest attempt to plug its gushing oil well](#), news photographers are complaining that their efforts to document the slow-motion disaster in the Gulf of Mexico are being thwarted by local and federal officials—working with BP—who are blocking access to the sites where the effects of the spill are most visible. More than a month into the disaster, a host of anecdotal evidence is emerging from reporters, photographers, and TV crews in which BP and Coast Guard officials explicitly target members of the media, restricting and denying them access to oil-covered beaches, staging areas for clean-up efforts, and even flyovers. Last week, a [CBS TV crew was threatened with arrest](#) when attempting to film an oil-covered beach. On

Monday, Mother Jones published [this firsthand account](#) of one reporter's repeated attempts to gain access to clean-up operations on oil-soaked beaches, and the telling response of local law enforcement. The latest instance of denied press access comes from Belle Chasse, La.-based Southern Seaplane Inc., which was scheduled to take a New Orleans Times-Picayune photographer for a flyover on Tuesday afternoon, and says it was denied permission once BP officials learned that a member of the press would be on board. "We are not at liberty to fly media, journalists, photographers, or scientists," the company said in a letter it sent on Tuesday to Sen. David Vitter (R-La.). "We strongly feel that the reason for this massive [temporary flight restriction] is that BP wants to control their exposure to the press." The ability to document a disaster, particularly through images, is key to focusing the nation's attention on it, and the resulting clean-up efforts. Within days of the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill, pictures of dead otters, fish, and birds, as well as oil-covered shorelines, ignited nationwide outrage and led to a backlash against Exxon. Consumers returned some 10,000 of Exxon's 7 million credit cards. Forty days after the spill, protestors organized a [national boycott](#) of Exxon. So far, no national boycott of BP is in the works, despite growing frustration over the company's inability to cap the leaking well. Obviously, [pictures are emerging from this spill](#), but much of the images are coming from BP and government sources. The U.S. Coast Guard insists that they and BP have gone to great lengths to accommodate journalists and "roughly 400 members of the media have been given tours of the spill on either BP-contracted aircraft or Coast Guard helicopters," says U.S. Coast Guard Petty Officer David Mosley, who is based at the BP command center in Houma, La. (BP referred all questions to the command center). "I understand there may be some frustration [among the press], but there is a constant ongoing effort to fulfill media requests." Mosley defended flight restrictions as a necessary safety precaution. Since the flight restrictions were expanded on May 11, private aircraft must get permission from BP's command center to fly over a [huge portion of the Gulf of Mexico](#) encompassing not just the growing slick in the Gulf, but the entire Louisiana coastline, where oil is washing ashore. If a request is denied, aircraft must stay 3,000 feet above the restricted area, where visibility is minimal. Photographers who have traveled to the Gulf commonly say they believe that BP has exerted more control over coverage of the spill with the cooperation of the federal government and local law enforcement. "It's a running joke among the journalists covering the story that the words 'Coast Guard' affixed to any vehicle, vessel, or plane should be prefixed with 'BP,'" says Charlie Varley, a Louisiana-based photographer. "It would be funny if it were not so serious." The problem, as many members of the press see it, is that even when access is granted, it's done so under the strict oversight of BP and Coast Guard personnel. Reporters and photographers are escorted by BP officials on BP-contracted boats and aircraft. So the company is able to determine what reporters see and when they see it. AP photographer Gerald Herbert has been covering the disaster since the Deepwater Horizon rig exploded on April 20. He says that access has been hit or miss, and that there have been instances when it's obvious members of the press are being targeted. "There are times when the Coast Guard has been great, and others where it seems like they're interfering with our ability to have access," says Herbert. One of those instances occurred early last week, when Herbert accompanied local officials from Plaquemines Parish in a police boat on a trip to Breton Island, a national wildlife refuge off the barrier islands of Louisiana. With them was Jean-Michel Cousteau, son of Jacques, who wanted to study the impact of the oil below the surface of the water. Upon approaching the island, a Coast Guard boat stopped them. "The first question was, 'Is there any press with you?'" says Herbert. They answered yes, and the Coast Guard said they couldn't be there. "I had to bite my tongue. That should have no bearing." Local fishermen and charter boat captains are also being pressured by BP not to work with the press. Left without a source of income, most have decided to work with BP to help spread booms and ferry officials around. Their passengers used to include members of the press, but not anymore. "You could tell BP was starting to close their grip, telling the fishermen not

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to talk to us," says Jared Moosy, a Dallas-based photographer who was covering the spill along the Gulf Coast earlier this month. "They would say that BP had told them not to talk to us or cooperate with us or that they'd get fired." Some Gulf Coast watermen find BP's desire to limit press access obvious. "If there was a major fire in a warehouse, would you let reporters go inside and start taking pictures?" asks Peace Marvel, a charter-boat captain in Venice, La. Job one, he says, is to clean up the spill, and running members of the press around only gets in the way and makes things worse. "Nobody wants this marsh saved as much as we do." Since the spill, Marvel has turned his 15 years of experience into helping coordinate the logistics of ferrying BP officials around the Gulf Coast to deal with the spreading disaster. His current contract with BP lasts for 30 more days, and he says he's making more money working for BP than he did as a charter-boat captain. "I'm hustling for business," he says. So are the reporters and photographers trying to cover the worst environmental disaster in the history of the U.S. waters. They'll have to do it without the help of people like Peace Marvel, and against the will of BP.

<http://www.newsweek.com/2010/05/26/the-missing-oil-spill-photos.html>

### USA, FLA, OCALA, MAY 30 2010. GAS TANKER EXPLODES ON I-75

 **Photo Gallery** <http://www.wesh.com/slideshow/news/23733227/detail.html>

 **Slideshow :**

<http://www.ocala.com/article/20100529/ARTICLES/100529656/1001/News01?Title=Gas-tanker-explodes-on-I-75>



*A tanker burns on I-75 between SR200 and CR484 in Ocala, FL on Saturday May 30, 2010. Traffic was backed up for hours in both directions. As a deputy was trying to stop the tanker and tell the driver he was on fire, a motorist crashed into him. Five people in that vehicle were injured. The fire was so intense all firefighters could do was let the fuel burn off before they could finish putting out the flame.*

Part of Interstate 75 was shut down for several hours early Saturday after a northbound tractor-trailer hauling 8,800 gallons of gasoline inexplicably caught fire and exploded about a mile south of the State Road 200 exit. The truck driver stopped his vehicle and escaped without injury. But two vehicle accidents happened after the explosion — one soon after, the other hours later. Five people were injured in the first wreck. The explosion happened about 2 a.m. Southbound lanes reopened at 5:25 a.m., and two northbound lanes were cleared at 7:45 a.m. According to the Florida Highway Patrol, here's what happened: James Reedy was driving the tanker north on I-75 when he heard a hissing noise coming from under the dashboard. The 55-year-old Ocala driver looked in the side mirror and saw flames coming from the right rear tires. He pulled to the outside shoulder, quickly exited the cab and called 911. Reedy, a driver for Eagle Petroleum, was on his way to make a delivery to a Kangaroo gas station on SR 200. "The tanker fire was a result of an apparent mechanical failure," the patrol reported later in a [news](#) release. It emphasized that the truck was not involved in a crash. At about 2:15 a.m., as he responded to the tanker fire, Marion County Sheriff's Deputy Matthew T. Bowers positioned his

patrol vehicle to block all three northbound lanes. Bowers' emergency lights were activated and he left the vehicle there unoccupied. Hulon Cole of Milledgeville, Ga., was driving his Lincoln Navigator northbound. His wife and family members were passengers in the SUV. Cole apparently didn't see the patrol vehicle at first and swerved to the right to avoid hitting it. The Lincoln struck the patrol car and rolled over, ejecting one of the passengers. Cole, 46, was critically injured. He was flown to Shands at the University of Florida in Gainesville. He was listed in fair condition Saturday afternoon. His wife, Dawn, also 46; her brother, Samuel L. Thomas, 50; and two other passengers, Tavis T. Thomas and Chavuis J. Cole, ages unknown, were taken by ambulance to Shands, West Marion Community Hospital, and Munroe Regional Medical Center for treatment of non-life-threatening injuries. Ocala Fire Rescue Battalion Chief Brian Stoothoff and Marion County Fire Rescue spokeswoman Miranda Iglesias said firefighters received calls about the tanker fire at 2:06 a.m. While there, Iglesias said, they learned about the serious accident involving the Lincoln SUV. Some firefighters continued fighting the tanker blaze while others tended to the crash victims. They had to extricate Hulon Cole from the SUV. At the tanker blaze, after briefly combating the fire, crews decided to let it burn itself out. By 4:50 a.m., the fire was nearly out and firefighters were extinguishing hot spots. Among the firefighting tools used: a special Ocala airport rescue truck that can provide thousands of gallons of foam. A second accident occurred not long after the southbound lanes reopened. A semi parked in the center lane was struck by a newer model BMW SUV. No one was injured. Road workers from Infrastructure Corporation of America were on scene early Saturday and told FHP officials they will have to repave the shoulder where the tanker blaze occurred.

<http://www.ocala.com/article/20100529/ARTICLES/100529656/1001/News01?Title=Gas-tanker-explodes-on-I-75>

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### **MALAYSIA, TANJONG PENGELIH, MAY 30 2010. OIL SLICK PATCHES SPOTTED IN MALAYSIAN WATERS**



*Patches of crude oil stain the sand along a beach in Singapore.*

An oil slick that had closed public beaches on Singapore's eastern coastline has been mostly contained but patches have drifted into Malaysian waters, officials said. "The isolated patches of oil that were close to East Coast Park have been largely contained," the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) said in a statement late Saturday. But it added: "An oil slick was observed this morning in Malaysian waters off Tanjong Pengelih. "MPA and the National Environment Agency informed our Malaysian counterparts of the observation and have offered our assistance," the agency said, without detailing the size of the slick in Malaysia. Tanjong Pengelih in southern Malaysia is located east of Singapore's Changi Beach. No "significant patches" have been observed off Changi itself or within Singapore's port waters, the

MPA said. The spill came from the Malaysian-registered tanker MT Bunga Kelana 3, which was carrying nearly 62,000 tonnes of crude when it collided on Tuesday with the MV Waily, a bulk carrier registered in St Vincent and the Grenadines. About 2,500 tonnes of crude leaked from a gash in the double-hulled tanker but most of it was contained at sea, according to the MPA. In its own update, the National Environment Agency said cleanup efforts at Changi Beach and an offshore marine nature reserve were "nearing completion". The NEA said containment booms set up to prevent oil from reaching more of the vulnerable reserve at Chek Jawa had been effective, with hundreds of emergency personnel and volunteers cleaning up oil that did seep through. "There are no immediate signs of major damage to the Chek Jawa ecosystem," the NEA said.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5h9IIjG7j2b15UMFXESfCGXOKtMjA>

### **USA, LA, VENICE, MAY 30 2010. 'TOP KILL' FAILS TO STOP FLOW OF OIL, BP SAYS**

 **Watch the Video:**

<http://us.cnn.com/2010/US/05/29/us.gulf.oil.spill/index.html?hpt=T1&iref=BN1>



(CNN) -- BP's "top kill" attempt to stop the flow of oil from a ruptured well in the Gulf of Mexico failed, the company's chief operating officer said Saturday. The oil giant has tried for days to stop the the largest oil spill in U.S. history by pumping heavy, mudlike drilling fluid into a ruptured oil well, a method known as "top kill." The next option is to place a custom-built cap known as the "lower marine riser package" over the leak, the company's chief operating officer, Doug Suttles said. BP crews were working Saturday to ready the materials for that option should it become necessary, he said. "We've been prepping that all along in case we need to move to that option," he said. "People want to know which technique is going to work, and I don't know." And if "lower marine riser package" were to fail, he said, BP engineers would try placing a second blowout preventer on top of the first, which failed to cut of the oil flow after the April 20 explosion of the Deepwater Horizon rig. The failed blowout preventer is a 48-foot-tall, 450-ton apparatus that sits atop the well 5,000 feet underwater. Meanwhile, teams in Louisiana

were working Saturday on a clean-up project aimed at protecting coastal marshes while BP continues its efforts to stop oil from gushing into the Gulf of Mexico. Plaquemines Parish President Billy Nungesser has said that machines would suck oil out of marshes Saturday after crews determined where to deploy them. "We will begin to clean up some of those areas that fell by the wayside for the last couple weeks," he said. Oil giant BP's focus has been trying to put a stop to what officials say is the largest oil spill in U.S. history, with as many as 19,000 barrels of crude gushing into the ocean daily. By Sunday morning the company could know whether the "top kill" procedure -- pumping heavy drilling mud into the breached oil well at high pressure -- is working, said Robert Dudley, BP's managing director. "It's like an arm-wrestling match of two equally strong forces," he said. Government scientists on Thursday said as many as 19,000 barrels (798,000 gallons) of oil were spewing into the ocean every day, making this disaster perhaps twice the size of the Exxon Valdez incident. Previously, BP officials and government scientists had said 5,000 barrels (210,000 gallons) of crude were flowing out daily. "This is clearly an environmental catastrophe," BP CEO Tony Hayward said Friday. "There's no two ways about it." Under intense political pressure to take control of the situation, President Obama toured the region on Friday. "We want to stop the leak, we want to contain and clean up the oil and we want to help the people in this region return to their lives and livelihoods as soon as possible," the president told reporters. About 25 percent of the Gulf of Mexico exclusive economic zone has been put off limits, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and fishermen are worried the gushing oil will take a more serious toll than Hurricane Katrina did in 2005. "Katrina was nothing but rain, water and wind. This is poison. It's gas," oysterman Arthur

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Etienne said. Obama said Friday that federal officials were prepared to authorize moving forward with "a portion of" an idea proposed by local officials, who want the Army Corps of Engineers to build a "sand boom" offshore to keep the water from getting into the fragile marshlands. That did not satisfy Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal, who has advocated immediate construction of the booms. Noting in a written statement that 107 miles of the state's coast have been oiled, he said, "We continue to ask federal officials to approve our entire sand-boom plan from the northern Chandeleurs to the Isle Dernieres chain." Obama said he has directed federal officials to triple the manpower in places where oil has hit shore or appears within a day of doing so.

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### USA, LA, VENICE, MAY 30 2010. OIL SPILL CREATES HUGE UNDERSEA 'DEAD ZONES'

emily dugan & sarah morrison



#### Anti-oil booms deployed along the Louisiana coast

Clouds of crude and chemical dispersants have formed in the Gulf of Mexico and oceanologists fear these could have devastating effects on the food chain. The world's most damaging oil spill – now in its 41st continuously gushing day – is creating huge unseen "dead zones" in the Gulf of Mexico, according to oceanologists and toxicologists. They say that if their fears are correct, then the sea's entire food chain could suffer years of devastation, with almost no marine life in the region escaping its effects. While the sight of tar balls and oil-covered birds on Louisiana's shoreline has been the most visible sign of the spill's environmental destruction, many scientists now believe it is underwater contamination that will have the deadliest impact. At least two submerged clouds of noxious oil and chemical

dispersants have been confirmed by research vessels, and scientists are seeing initial signs of several more. The largest is some 22 miles long, six miles wide and 3,300 feet deep – a volume that would take up half of Lake Erie. Another spans an area of 20 square miles. More than 8,300 species of plants and animals are at risk. Some, such as the bluefin tuna, which come to the Gulf to spawn, could even face extinction. Scientists predict it will be many months – even years – before the true toll of the disaster will be known. In previous spills, oil rose to the surface and was dealt with there, but due to the use of dispersants, as well as the weight of this particular crude oil and the pressure created by the depth of the leak, much of the oil has stayed submerged in clouds of tiny particles. At least 800,000 gallons of dispersants were sprayed at escaping oil in a frantic attempt to keep it offshore, but it now seems this preventative measure has created a worse disaster. The chemicals helped to keep the oil submerged and are toxic to marine life, resulting in unprecedented underwater damage to organisms in the Gulf. Once these harmful substances enter the food chain, almost nothing will escape their effects. Forests of coral, sharks, dolphins, sea turtles, game fish and thousands of shellfish could all face destruction. What happens next to these underwater clouds – or plumes – depends largely on the currents. If they do eventually rise to the surface, they may end up on the shoreline months or years from now, causing a second wave of destruction. The leak itself is far from over. With up to 40 million gallons of oil now in the sea, efforts to plug the hole (disgorging up to 19,000 barrels a day) have become frantic. Since Wednesday, BP has been trying to block the source by blasting it with mud and concrete. On Friday, things took a more desperate turn as BP added a dubious-sounding "junk shot" of shredded rubber and golf balls. BP's chief operating officer, Doug Suttles, said yesterday: "To date it hasn't yet stopped the flow. What I don't know is whether it ultimately will or not." "It's the biggest environmental disaster of our time and it's not even over yet," said the marine toxicologist Dr Susan Shaw, director of the Marine Environmental Research Institute based in Maine. She has been diving among the damage and is horrified by the contamination caused by BP's continued use of dispersants. "They've been used at such a high volume that it's unprecedented. The worst of these – Corexit 9527 – is the one they've been using most. That ruptures red blood cells and

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causes fish to bleed. With 800,000 gallons of this, we can only imagine the death that will be caused." According to Dr Shaw, plankton and smaller shrimps coated in these toxic chemicals will be eaten by larger fish, passing the deadly mix up the food chain. "This is dismantling the food web, piece by piece," she said. "We'll see dead bodies soon. Sharks, dolphins, sea turtles, whales: the impact on predators will be seen in a short time because the food web will be impacted from the bottom up." The largest of the clouds, confirmed by a University of South Florida research ship last week, has gone deeper than the spill itself, defying BP's assurances that all oil would rise to the surface. It is now headed north-east of the rig, towards the DeSoto Canyon. This underwater trench could channel the noxious soup along the Florida coast, impacting on fisheries and coating 100-year-old coral forests. Tests on the toxicity of another chemical cloud, some 10 miles long and heading south-west of the site, are also being done by scientists from the University of Georgia. Marine biologists say the timing of this underwater contamination could not be more catastrophic. "This is when all the animals are reproducing and hatching, so the damage at this depth will be much worse," said Dr Larry McKinney, director of the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies in Texas. "We're not talking about adults on the surface; it will impact on the young – and potentially a generational life cycle." This could wipe out more precarious species. "Bluefin tuna spawn just south of the oil spill and they spawn only in the Gulf. If they were to go through the area at a critical time, that's one instance where a plume could destroy a whole species." What happens next to these suspended clouds worries scientists. Nobody knows how long it will take them to reach the surface and come towards the shore (if they ever do). Dr Peter Roopnarine, an invertebrate zoologist and geologist at the California Academy of Sciences, is conducting tests on molluscs. He fears a second wave of wetland damage from these sub-surface plumes. "The organisms we're working with are in shallow sub-tidal waters and in the salt marshes, so we won't get immediate results from a plume. But we could end up seeing two disasters on shore, because the plume will eventually work its way there." With no confirmation that BP's attempts to stop the flow of oil have succeeded, the damage is likely to get worse. If this "top kill" method of plugging the hole with concrete and mud fails, then the only option left is a relief well, which will take until August at the earliest to become operational. In the meantime, the surrounding ocean will become deadlier every day that passes. And even if the plug works, it may well be too late. As Dr McKinney pointed out: "At the depth that these plumes are at, the sea will be toxic for God knows how long."

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<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/oil-spill-creates-huge-undersea-dead-zones-1987039.html>

### USA, WA, SEATTLE, MAY 30 2010. DIESEL SPILL IN SEATTLE'S DUWAMISH RIVER

The Washington Department of Ecology and U.S. Coast Guard are investigating the source of a diesel spill on the Duwamish River about one half mile north of the South Park Bridge. A sheen and diesel odor were reported to Ecology at 8:30 a.m. and spill responders found an unknown amount of recoverable diesel oil in an inlet on private property at 7400 Eighth Ave. S., next to Boeing property. The Coast Guard estimates the size of the spill to be 20-25 gallons. A cleanup contractor hired by the Coast Guard had to give up on efforts to recover the oil because of a shifting tide.

<http://www.king5.com/news/local/Oil-spill-investigation-in-Seattle--95189654.html>

### NIGERIA, LAGOS, MAY 31 2010. NIGERIA'S AGONY DWARFS THE GULF OIL SPILL. THE US AND EUROPE IGNORE IT

john vidal



*A ruptured pipeline burns in a Lagos suburb after an explosion in 2008 which killed at least 100 people.*

The Deepwater Horizon disaster caused headlines around the world, yet the people who live in the Niger delta have had to live with environmental catastrophes for decades. We reached the edge of the oil spill near the Nigerian village of Otuegwe after a long hike through cassava plantations. Ahead of us lay swamp. We waded into the warm tropical water and began swimming, cameras and notebooks held above our heads. We could smell the oil long before we saw it – the stench of garage forecourts and rotting vegetation hanging thickly in the air. The farther we travelled, the more nauseous it became. Soon we were

swimming in pools of light Nigerian crude, the best-quality oil in the world. One of the many hundreds of 40-year-old pipelines that crisscross the Niger delta had corroded and spewed oil for several months. Forest and farmland were now covered in a

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sheen of greasy oil. Drinking wells were polluted and people were distraught. No one knew how much oil had leaked. "We lost our nets, huts and fishing pots," said Chief Promise, village leader of Otuegwe and our guide. "This is where we fished and farmed. We have lost our forest. We told Shell of the spill within days, but they did nothing for six months." That was the Niger delta a few years ago, where, according to Nigerian academics, writers and environment groups, oil companies have acted with such impunity and recklessness that much of the region has been devastated by leaks. In fact, more oil is spilled from the delta's network of terminals, pipes, pumping stations and oil platforms every year than has been lost in the Gulf of Mexico, the site of a major ecological catastrophe caused by oil that has poured from a leak triggered by the explosion that wrecked BP's Deepwater Horizon rig last month. That disaster, which claimed the lives of 11 rig workers, has made headlines round the world. By contrast, little information has emerged about the damage inflicted on the Niger delta. Yet the destruction there provides us with a far more accurate picture of the price we have to pay for drilling oil today. On 1 May this year a ruptured ExxonMobil pipeline in the state of Akwa Ibom spilled more than a million gallons into the delta over seven days before the leak was stopped. Local people demonstrated against the company but say they were attacked by security guards. Community leaders are now demanding \$1bn in compensation for the illness and loss of livelihood they suffered. Few expect they will succeed. In the meantime, thick balls of tar are being washed up along the coast. Within days of the Ibeno spill, thousands of barrels of oil were spilled when the nearby Shell Trans Niger pipeline was attacked by rebels. A few days after that, a large oil slick was found floating on Lake Adibawa in Bayelsa state and another in Ogoniland. "We are faced with incessant [oil spills](#) from rusty pipes, some of which are 40 years old," said Bonny Otavie, a Bayelsa MP. This point was backed by Williams Mkpa, a community leader in Ibeno: "Oil companies do not value our life; they want us to all die. In the past two years, we have experienced 10 oil spills and fishermen can no longer sustain their families. It is not tolerable." With 606 oilfields, the Niger delta supplies 40% of all the crude the United States imports and is the world capital of oil pollution. Life expectancy in its rural communities, half of which have no access to clean water, has fallen to little more than 40 years over the past two generations. Locals blame the oil that pollutes their land and can scarcely believe the contrast with the steps taken by BP and the US government to try to stop the Gulf oil leak and to protect the Louisiana shoreline from pollution. "If this Gulf accident had happened in [Nigeria](#), neither the government nor the company would have paid much attention," said the writer Ben Ikari, a member of the Ogoni people. "This kind of spill happens all the time in the delta." "The oil companies just ignore it. The lawmakers do not care and people must live with pollution daily. The situation is now worse than it was 30 years ago. Nothing is changing. When I see the efforts that are being made in the US I feel a great sense of sadness at the double standards. What they do in the US or in Europe is very different." "We see frantic efforts being made to stop the spill in the US," said Nnimo Bassey, Nigerian head of Friends of the Earth International. "But in Nigeria, oil companies largely ignore their spills, cover them up and destroy people's livelihood and environments. The Gulf spill can be seen as a metaphor for what is happening daily in the oilfields of Nigeria and other parts of Africa. "This has gone on for 50 years in Nigeria. People depend completely on the environment for their drinking water and farming and fishing. They are amazed that the president of the US can be making speeches daily, because in Nigeria people there would not hear a whimper," he said. It is impossible to know how much oil is spilled in the Niger delta each year because the companies and the government keep that secret. However, two major independent investigations over the past four years suggest that as much is spilled at sea, in the swamps and on land every year as has been lost in the Gulf of Mexico so far. One report, compiled by WWF UK, the World Conservation Union and representatives from the Nigerian federal government and the Nigerian Conservation Foundation, calculated in 2006 that up to 1.5m tons of oil – 50 times the pollution unleashed in the Exxon Valdez tanker disaster in Alaska – has been spilled in the delta over the past half century. Last year Amnesty calculated that the equivalent of at least 9m barrels of oil was spilled and accused the oil companies of a human rights outrage. According to Nigerian federal government figures, there were more than 7,000 spills between 1970 and 2000, and there are 2,000 official major spillages sites, many going back decades, with thousands of smaller ones still waiting to be cleared up. More than 1,000 spill cases have been filed against Shell alone. Last month Shell admitted to spilling 14,000 tonnes of oil in 2009. The majority, said the company, was lost through two incidents – one in which the company claims that thieves damaged a wellhead at its Odidi field and another where militants bombed the Trans Escravos pipeline. Shell, which works in partnership with the Nigerian government in the delta, says that 98% of all its oil spills are caused by vandalism, theft or sabotage by militants and only a minimal amount by deteriorating infrastructure. "We had 132 spills last year, as against 175 on average. Safety valves were vandalised; one pipe had 300 illegal taps. We found five explosive devices on one. Sometimes communities do not give us access to clean up the pollution because they can make more money from compensation," said a spokesman. "We have a full-time oil spill response team. Last year we replaced 197 miles of pipeline and are using every known way to clean up pollution, including microbes. We are committed to cleaning up any spill as fast as possible as soon as and for whatever reason they occur." These claims are hotly disputed by communities and environmental watchdog groups. They mostly blame the companies' vast network of

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rusting pipes and storage tanks, corroding pipelines, semi-derelict pumping stations and old wellheads, as well as tankers and vessels cleaning out tanks. The scale of the pollution is mind-boggling. The government's national oil spill detection and response agency (Nosdra) says that between 1976 and 1996 alone, more than 2.4m barrels contaminated the environment. "Oil spills and the dumping of oil into waterways has been extensive, often poisoning drinking water and destroying vegetation. These incidents have become common due to the lack of laws and enforcement measures within the existing political regime," said a spokesman for Nosdra. The sense of outrage is widespread. "There are more than 300 spills, major and minor, a year," said Bassey. "It happens all the year round. The whole environment is devastated. The latest revelations highlight the massive difference in the response to oil spills. In Nigeria, both companies and government have come to treat an extraordinary level of oil spills as the norm." A spokesman for the Stakeholder Democracy Network in Lagos, which works to empower those in communities affected by the oil companies' activities, said: "The response to the spill in the United States should serve as a stiff reminder as to how far spill management in Nigeria has drifted from standards across the world." Other voices of protest point out that the world has overlooked the scale of the environmental impact. Activist Ben Amunwa, of the London-based oil watch group Platform, said: "Deepwater Horizon may have exceed Exxon Valdez, but within a few years in Nigeria offshore spills from four locations dwarfed the scale of the Exxon Valdez disaster many times over. Estimates put spill volumes in the Niger delta among the worst on the planet, but they do not include the crude oil from waste water and gas flares. Companies such as Shell continue to avoid independent monitoring and keep key data secret." Worse may be to come. One industry insider, who asked not to be named, said: "Major spills are likely to increase in the coming years as the industry strives to extract oil from increasingly remote and difficult terrains. Future supplies will be offshore, deeper and harder to work. When things go wrong, it will be harder to respond." Judith Kimerling, a professor of law and policy at the City University of New York and author of Amazon Crude, a book about oil development in Ecuador, said: "Spills, leaks and deliberate discharges are happening in oilfields all over the world and very few people seem to care." There is an overwhelming sense that the big oil companies act as if they are beyond the law. Bassey said: "What we conclude from the Gulf of Mexico pollution incident is that the oil companies are out of control. It is clear that BP has been blocking progressive legislation, both in the US and here. In Nigeria, they have been living above the law. They are now clearly a danger to the planet. The dangers of this happening again and again are high. They must be taken to the international court of justice."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/may/30/oil-spills-nigeria-niger-delta-shell>

### **USA, MA, ATTLEBORO, MAY 31 2010. STATE FINES GAS STATIONS >> VIOLATIONS FOUND AT TWO CITY LOCATIONS**

A survey of gasoline stations in Massachusetts found violations at two Attleboro stations. A survey of octane levels at 237 gas stations by inspectors with the state Division of Standards found only a single violation, and that was at Quik and Variety at 584 Washington St. in Attleboro. An inspection of premium fuel found an octane level of 90.8, not 93 octane as premium is listed. A review of the station's records found an April 29 delivery of 6,000 gallons of regular 87 octane fuel was made, and about 218 gallons were placed in the premium underground storage tank and mixed with premium fuel to reduce the octane level. A civil citation was issued for \$375, the maximum fine allowed by law for the first offense of selling adulterated fuel, according to division officials. At all other locations, octane levels matched or were higher than the octane listed on the pump, as mandated by state law, officials said. Higher-octane gas is more expensive, and consumers need to be assured they are purchasing a product at the octane level they are seeking, the state division said. "Consumers can be confident that when they are at the gas station, the grade of fuel they are pumping is appropriate," said Charles Carroll, the director of the Division of Standards. "With the cost of gas near \$3, a tank of fuel is a significant expense for many families, and confidence in octane content is important." Inspectors also fined a Shell station in Attleboro \$500 for not properly posting pricing signs. Debit cards were being charged the credit card price, which is higher than the cash price. A small sign was placed on dispensers informing debit card users of refunds by going into the station, officials said, but without the information on large overhead signs, consumers don't realize they are paying a higher price, officials said. Regulations regarding accurate signs for cash and credit prices were put into effect Jan. 1

<http://www.thesunchronicle.com/articles/2010/05/30/news/7452134.txt>

### **INDIA, RAJKOT, MAY 31 2010. ABLAZE TANKER'S DRIVER AVERTS DISASTER**

The presence of mind and courage shown by the driver of a tanker which caught fire in Ribda village in Rajkot district averted a major disaster on Saturday night. The driver, Arvind Jadav of Jamnagar, drove the burning tanker to a safe distance from the petrol pump where it had caught fire before jumping off to safety. According to chief fire officer, Rajkot division, RK Maheshwari who rushed his teams to the spot, the incident took place at 9.30 pm at the petrol pump near Ribda village, about

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18 km away from the city. "The tanker had arrived at the petrol pump to offload petrol at the station. The moment the workers opened the valve on the tanker's rear end, fire broke out and started engulfing the vehicle," Maheshwari said. As soon as the vehicle caught fire, Jadav hopped in and drove it away from the petrol pump, keeping in mind the consequences of the fire engulfing the pump. Eyewitnesses said, "The driver took a huge left turn and drove up to the main Rajkot-Gondal highway where he abandoned the vehicle and jumped off." Meanwhile, fire fighters were called in and the Rajkot division sent two trucks to control the situation. "A major fire explosion was averted thanks to the driver's presence of mind," Maheshwari said. Fire fighters too contained the flames within a short time as a blast in the tanker could have been dangerous. It could have had multiple hazardous effects, Maheshwari added. Meanwhile, as the fire engulfed the tanker and it stood on the national highway, traffic on both sides came to a standstill. There was momentary panic on the road as people tried to drive away.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/rajkot/Ablaze-tankers-driver-averts-disaster-/articleshow/5982616.cms>

### USA, LA, BATON ROUGE, MAY 31 2010. U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE INVESTIGATING JAMAICAN OIL TANKER

A large tanker carrying oil from Jamaica to New Orleans is under investigation. A spokesman with the Coast Guard tells us the ship had less oil on it compared to when it left Jamaica, leading to a discrepancy in the ships oil log. U.S. Attorney Jim Letten's office is investigating to see how much oil may have been discharged.

<http://www.wafb.com/Global/story.asp?S=12565378>

### USA, FLA, NAPLES, MAY 31 2010. HURRICANE SEASON: ETHANOL GAS LEFT IN GENERATORS MAY DISABLE THEM, EXPERTS SAY

*liz freeman*

 **Photo Gallery** <http://www.naplesnews.com/news/2010/may/30/hurricane-season-ethanol-gas-left-generators-may-d/>



*Mechanic Geovanni Martinez pulls the carburetor from an electric generator to repair the damage from ethanol-added gasoline at Capri Lawn Equipment Center on Wednesday, May 26, 2010 in Naples. If left to set in engines for long periods of time, ethanol-added gasoline can corrode parts of the engine causing seals to deteriorate and fuel injector jets to become clogged. Since generators are mainly used in case of emergency, many owners won't discover they have an issue with ethanol-added gasoline until they might be depending on the device.*

First it was boat engines and lawn equipment. Get ready now for potential hassles with portable generators. Leaving gas in your generator or not adding ethanol stabilizer at the end of hurricane season last year can mean trouble this hurricane season. Generator owners who didn't take these measures need to act before a storm is on its way, small engine mechanics say. That's largely due to the ethanol-blended gasoline on the market today. "Ethanol kills everything," said Mike Iaconelli, owner of Capri Equipment Center in East Naples. "It's going to cause problems." If gasoline sits in the generator for a period of time, it turns bad and the generator won't run. "If there is a bad odor in the gas tank, you need to get the gas out of the tank. It's a pain in the neck; you need to drain it in a container and properly dispose it," he said. On top of that, the ethanol, which is alcohol, in the gasoline likely will have dried out O-rings and damaged other parts and that can mean repairs. A Florida law passed in 2008 requires gasoline to contain 10 percent ethanol, which is called E10 fuel. Marinas and airports are exempt. The Florida law required the conversion to be complete by the end of this year. A lawsuit was filed in 2008 on behalf of a handful of Florida boat owners who sustained considerable boat engine damage. The suit was against five oil companies which produced ethanol gas without warning of the potential hazard to engines. The lawsuit was settled and dismissed earlier this year. Terms of the settlement weren't released. "A lot of the time the carburetor may need to come out and be replaced," Bill Swanson, an owner of 1st Electric in Naples, said of generators. He doesn't believe the ethanol-blended gasoline is the sole culprit for engine failure; a lack of maintenance comes into play, he said. Swanson hasn't gotten any calls yet about portable generators not cranking up but he expects that to change with the arrival of hurricane season and emergencies. "We get the calls when the generators won't run," said Doug Bonar, owner and manager of Corder's Landscape Supply in Bonita Springs. "We're not quite there yet, but we will get an influx of calls when storm season comes." Bonar said generator owners need to do the preventive measure of adding stabilizer to the gas to stave off phased separation. "The longer it sits, the more separation there is, the stabilizer helps keep it mixed," he said. What happens is the ethanol attracts water or condensation in the tank. If the gasoline sits long enough, the ethanol and water separate from the gasoline and they form distinct layers in the tank. The result is the engine won't start if the water or ethanol is drawn into the fuel line. The engine will perform poorly or stall out if the gasoline layer is drawn into the fuel line because of its lower

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octane level, according to numerous websites on ethanol's harm to small engines. The ethanol-blended gasoline doesn't have as much opportunity for phased separation in car engines because cars generally don't sit for periods of time. Lawn equipment, recreational vehicles and boats, which may not be used as often, especially among winter residents, is when the problem arises. After draining the old gasoline in the generator and adding fresh gas with stabilizer, try the engine and if it won't start, it probably will need carburetor work or replacing, Bonar said. That can run anywhere from \$35 to \$100. Iaconelli, owner of Capri Landscape in East Naples, said his business starts to get a run on generator calls close to a storm coming and that's too late. Generator owners need to test the engines and get the fixes done early in hurricane season. "It is my senior citizens who are on top of it," he said, adding that his business will come and pick up a generator if the owner can't lift it into their vehicle or arrange for transport to his business. Paula Bonar, owner of Small Engine World on Bayshore Drive in East Naples and the wife of Doug Bonar, said some people bring their generators in for repair in April or May and then the generators sit all summer when there are no storms. The next spring, they run into same problem of the generator not starting. Others ignore their generators until a storm is on the way and that's no good. "They need to do it now because what they will run into, they hear a storm is coming in a week and everyone waits until the last minute and we get backed up," she said. "The biggest thing is to think ahead of time." Once they get the old gasoline out, the carburetor working and fresh gas in with stabilizer, it's best to run the generator once a week for 10 minutes to keep it in top order, she said.

<http://www.naplesnews.com/news/2010/may/30/hurricane-season-ethanol-gas-left-generators-may-d/>

### MEXICO, ARROYO MORENO, MAY 31 2010. STOLEN OIL FUELING MEXICO'S DRUG WAR >> THEFTS USED TO LAUNDER CASH, HIKE CARTEL PROFITS



*Tanker trucks fill up at a Petroleos Mexicanos distribution center in Tierra Blanca, Mexico, where several cases of fuel theft have occurred.*

Mexico's violent drug cartels are getting into the oil business, tapping into underground pipelines and siphoning off tons of crude, gasoline and other fuels, some of which is ending up in the United States. The stolen fuel has created a huge income stream, as much as \$715 million a year, that gangs can use to buy weapons, bribe officials and bankroll their bloody battle against the Mexican government, experts warn. [Drug gangs steal oil in Mexico](#) They sell the fuel through their own gasoline stations; sell it to unscrupulous manufacturers or trucking firms in Mexico; use it to pump up profits at front companies owned by the cartels; or sell it to foreign refiners on the international black market. Last year, thieves stole an average of 8,432 barrels of petroleum products each day, enough to fill 39 tanker trucks. The thieves are leaving a trail of environmental devastation, with broken pipelines poisoning farm fields and leaking into Mexican rivers. The number of

illegal pipeline taps has more than quadrupled since 2004, from 102 then to 462 last year, despite renewed anti-theft efforts by Petroleos Mexicanos, the state-owned oil monopoly better known as Pemex. In 2008 alone, authorities arrested 528 people and seized 517 vehicles, Pemex said. Losses that year were \$715 million; it has not released an estimate for 2009. "It's a big problem and a continual thorn in their side," said David Shields, editor of *Energia a Debate*, an oil-industry magazine. "And the states that have drug trafficking have more problems with their pipelines." The thieves use powerful drills and sophisticated valves to prevent any drop in pipeline pressure that might be detected by Pemex. They use hoses to fill fuel trucks with the stolen liquids. Sometimes they even take a more direct approach: hijacking tanker trucks full of fuel. Since October, five American businessmen have pleaded guilty to importing stolen petroleum condensate, a raw ingredient for fuels.

#### Scene of the Crime

On the outskirts of Arroyo Moreno, a Pemex pumping station grinds day and night, moving tons of crude oil, diesel, gasoline and other fuels northward from Mexico's oil fields and refineries along the Gulf of Mexico. On the night of Oct. 27, Isidora Sierra Guerrero was awakened by a sickening odor like the smell of burning tar. She dashed to the bathroom, soaked towels in water and stuffed them under the doors. "I smelled those fumes, and I thought we were all going to die," she said. The smell was fresh crude oil. A mile from Sierra's house, thieves had botched an attempt to tap a high-pressure Pemex line, creating a 60-foot geyser of oil in the middle of a nearby sugarcane field. By the time Pemex crews stopped the leak, the oil had soaked 86 acres of farmland. Veracruz, the Gulf Coast state where Arroyo Moreno is located, accounted for 122 of the 462 illegal taps detected in 2009, more than any other state, Pemex says. The buried pipelines are easy to find: Yellow posts emblazoned with "PEMEX LINE - DO NOT EXCAVATE" dot the landscape for hundreds of miles across the Sierra Madre foothills. Oil theft here is controlled by the Zetas, a band of hit men that broke off from the Gulf Drug Cartel two years ago, the Mexican Attorney

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General's Office says. The Zetas have quickly diversified, dabbling in everything from pirated DVDs to kidnappings for ransom. The thieves prefer sites where they can tap more than one product. In Arroyo Moreno, there are five parallel pipes, including ones that carry gasoline and diesel fuel, said Sierra, who is the town treasurer. Pemex sent bulldozers into the fields to scrape the topsoil into huge piles and build a berm of dirt to try to stop any further seepage. But the damage was done. "Look at this," said farmer Cupertino Vazquez, dipping a stalk of sugarcane into a water well that he uses to irrigate crops near the village of Arroyo Moreno. The stalk came out dripping with black crude. "I can't water the crops now. These people are destroying our livelihoods." Nearby, a field of corn stood ragged and dry in the tropical sun because of the lack of water.

### Complementary Business

Oil theft is a perfect business for Mexico's drug cartels because many have acquired gasoline stations and liquefied-petroleum suppliers as a way of laundering drug money, said George Baker, a Houston-based consultant. Drug cartels need ways of depositing huge amounts of cash into banks without raising suspicion. Gasoline stations offer perfect cover because most Mexican motorists pay in cash. "It's a ticket to go to the bank without raising any questions," Baker said. Selling stolen fuel allows the cartels to make even more profit from these side businesses, he said. Drug gangs may mix stolen fuel with legitimately purchased fuel for extra profit or sell it on the black market to other companies. All it requires is a truck, and in oil-rich areas like Veracruz state, the highways are full of private tanker trucks that can be easily rented.

### Crossing the Border

There are signs that stolen petroleum is increasingly ending up in the United States. Executives from five Texas companies have confessed in a U.S. district court to knowingly buying million of dollars of natural-gas condensate stolen from Pemex. Condensate is a liquid distilled from natural gas that can be used, like oil, to make fuels, plastics and other products. One oil-purchasing company, Continental Fuels of San Antonio, received 22 tanker trucks full of stolen condensate at its terminal in Brownsville, Texas, between late January and early March 2009, U.S. prosecutors say. It put the liquid on barges and sold it to manufacturing companies. Tim Brink, Continental's president, was secretly recorded on a wiretap on Feb. 12, 2009, discussing price negotiations and acknowledging that the condensate was stolen. According to a summary of the phone call submitted by U.S. prosecutors, "Mr. Brink . . . reiterated that the suppliers were paying nothing for the product." Brink pleaded guilty to conspiracy to receive and sell stolen goods on May 14 and is helping investigators, court documents show. Another man involved in the scheme, Arnoldo Maldonado of Mexican company Y Gas & Oil, admitted in court that he and a Continental Fuels employee had discussed paying bribes to Customs agents to let the tanker trucks through. It's unclear whether he meant Mexican or U.S. Customs or whether the bribes had been paid. The U.S. Department of Justice declined to comment on the case.

### Fighting Thieves

The Mexican government says it has tightened security at its pumping stations and stepped up aerial patrols in an effort to stem the theft. It is also using an "instrumented pig," a device that moves through the pipelines, to map any leaks. Mexico's Department of Energy has set up a telephone hotline for people to report theft. Posters outside Pemex sites warn: "They came looking for my neighbor - he ended up in prison for getting involved in fuel theft." As a result, crews are detecting and closing off illegal taps faster, Pemex says. It notes that even though the number of illegal taps rose from 396 in 2008 to 462 in 2009, the volume of crude, gasoline and diesel lost declined 38 percent, from about 4.99 million barrels to 3.08 million barrels. Even with the new detection equipment, it can take hours or days for authorities to track down leaks. In a pasture near Tierra Blanca, Veracruz, ranch hand Lorenzo Pérez climbed atop another berm built by Pemex last year after thieves tapped into a pipe carrying unleaded gasoline. By the time Pemex had found the leak, thousands of gallons had soaked into the ground. "These criminals don't care about the damage they do," Pérez said. "They take as much as they can, then they disappear."

<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/news/articles/2010/05/30/20100530mexico-oil-drug-war.html>

### NIGERIA, KADUNA, MAY 31 2010. CHLORINE LEAK LEADS 300 TO FALL ILL IN NORTHERN NIGERIA AFTER WELDER CUTS INTO CHLORINE TANK

A chlorine gas leak led 300 people to fall ill in northern Nigeria after a welder cut into a tank of the noxious gas, Nigerian environmental officials said Sunday. John Odey, minister of Nigeria's Environmental Ministry, said the leak started Saturday afternoon in Kaduna. He said people became ill and passed out after breathing in the gas. Odey said emergency services controlled the leak Sunday morning after soaking the tank in water. Industrial disasters occur regularly in oil-rich Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, either from carelessness, failing pipelines or theft. In 2008, an oil pipeline explosion in Lagos killed 100 people, while more than 400 people died in two similar explosions in the city in 2006.

<http://www.metronews.ca/vancouver/world/article/538147--nigeria-300-fall-ill-after-welder-cuts-into-tank-holding-chlorine-gas-in-northern-state>

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### CANADA, OTTAWA, MAY 31 2010. JET FUEL, SEWAGE, AMONG MILLIONS OF LITRES SPILLED IN ARCTIC: CP ANALYSIS

steve rennie



*Icebergs dot the seascape in Croaker Bay, near Devon Island in the Canadian Arctic, a region feared to be at risk of the harmful effects of sewage and jet-fuel spills. Revelations come as Gulf of Mexico spill presses Ottawa to put its Arctic environmental rules under more scrutiny.*

Millions of litres of harmful contaminants — including sewage and jet fuel — have been spilled across great swaths of Canada's pristine Arctic in recent years, an analysis by The Canadian Press has found. A classified government database reveals the alarming extent to which Canada's North has been an accidental dumping ground for dangerous liquids. And it shows one of the most frequent offenders is the federal government. This never-before released information comes to light as the Harper government reviews its Arctic environmental-protection rules in the wake of a catastrophic oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The Arctic spills to date have been smaller than the giant BP disaster off the U.S. coast, but are a reminder of the continuing threat from development to one of Canada's most vulnerable ecosystems. The information has been kept in an environmental-enforcement database called NEMISIS. The acronym stands for National Enforcement Management Information System and Intelligence System. Federal enforcement officers use the database to track and prosecute polluters and environmental lawbreakers. It took The Canadian Press two years and a complaint to the information commissioner to pry the data from Environment Canada under the Access to Information Act. The news agency then created its own spills database using the government information, which covers the period from January 2004 to last November. The analysis found 260 spills in the North over five years. There were 137 spills in the Northwest Territories, 82 in Nunavut and 41 in the Yukon. The biggest spill happened in Nunavut two years ago. Residents of Hall Beach marked Canada Day in 2008 with a dike failure that released 13.5 million litres of sewage in their remote hamlet. Environment Canada says sewage seeped out of a lagoon into a wetlands area. The sewage didn't make it into any bodies of water where fish could be affected. Hall Beach resident Jayco Simonie recalls the hamlet dumped gravel in the leaking sewage lagoon to contain the spill. "The water was seeping under, but the solid stuff was kept inside because of the gravel put in there," he said. Some spills took weeks or even months to clean up, while others were dealt with in a day or less. In one case, an unspecified amount of diesel seeped from a container in the Yukon for 2,013 days — more than five years — before someone finally plugged the leak.

#### Other significant spills included:

- Four million litres of silt water was discharged when equipment failed at a Diavik Diamond Mines plant in the Northwest Territories in May 2008. Environment Canada says there weren't any chemicals in the water. — Another Diavik Diamond Mines spill last May in which 500,000 litres of an unknown substance leaked from a pipeline in Yellowknife.
- 300,000 litres of sewage that flowed out of a sewer pipe in Inuvik, N.W.T., in February 2008.
- Another 250,000 litres of sewage that leaked from a municipal sewage-treatment plant in Tungsten, N.W.T., in February 2006.
- A sewer overflow in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut in April 2007 that released 600,000 litres.
- Another sewer overflow in Watson Lake, Yukon, in February 2006 that dumped 250,000 litres of sewage into the Flat River. The North American Tungsten Corp., was blamed for the spill. Spill samples taken by the company "indicated the spill was not deleterious to fish," Environment Canada said.

150,000 litres of jet fuel that seeped from a container in Iqaluit in April 2007. The spill is blamed on Nasittuq Corp., which maintains northern radar sites for the Defence Department. An identical entry appears for the Defence Department. Environment Canada says these two incidents are one and the same. Two companies, NTCL and Miramar Hope Bay, have pleaded guilty to violating the Fisheries Act and paid fines for discharging diesel fuel in the North. The Environment Canada database identifies all other companies as 'responsible parties' for the spills. There are many instances in which the database doesn't say how much time it took to clean up the mess. Indeed, the government's tracking system is riddled with blank entries. Often it doesn't say how much of a contaminant has been spilled. Sometimes even the name of the responsible party isn't known. The head of Environment Canada's environmental enforcement branch, Manon Bombardier, said her staff enters information into the NEMISIS database, often after speaking to provincial officials. Sometimes information that doesn't fall within Environment Canada's mandate might not be entered into the database, she said by way of explanation for the blank

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entries. Bombardier acknowledged there may be other reasons data are missing, but she didn't offer any. The department later followed up with an email saying NEMISIS "is often being improved and updated to manage its effectiveness." Bombardier insisted the department can take action against environmental offenders even if some data is missing. "For those files that merit an enforcement action, you can be sure that the information is in NEMISIS," she said. She added the department is just one of several that can prosecute and penalize rulebreakers. Others, including Indian and Northern Affairs and the provinces and territories, have different enforcement tools at their disposal. Bombardier said Environment Canada generally relies on the federal Fisheries Act and the Canadian Environmental Protection Act to enforce environmental laws. The government has prosecuted two companies in the North under the Fisheries Act since 2004, she said, and two warning letters have gone out. "People feel that prosecution is the only way that enforcement takes action," Bombardier said. "We have other tools to apply, and it all depends on their circumstances." The federal government is blamed for 34 of the 260 spills or about 13 per cent of all cases. The RCMP, the Coast Guard, and the departments of Defence, Public Works, Fisheries and Oceans and Indian and Northern Affairs are listed as culprits. The responsible party is unknown in 27 instances. And in another 20 cases, Environment Canada invoked a section of the Access to Information Act to shield the name of the culprit, because doing so would reveal "personal information." Sewage spills are the biggest in terms of pure volume. But petroleum products accounted for nearly two-thirds of all northern spills. Often these are hundreds or a few thousand litres of diesel, a ubiquitous northern fuel source because it doesn't freeze easily, even in frigid temperatures. The database lists 75 diesel spills across the North. That's followed by 28 sewage spills, 26 spills of unspecified or unknown contaminants and 25 jet-fuel spills. The number of northern spills shocked at least one environmental group. "It begs the question of whether we've got a chronic problem of oversight related to toxic spills in the North," said Craig Stewart, director of the World Wildlife Fund's Arctic program. "If there are so many repeat occurrences, what are the cumulative effects of these spills and why haven't we heard more about them up until now?" The content of some spills was also cause for alarm. "Jet fuel is cancer-causing, and sewage simply makes people sick," Stewart said. "And the water table is very close to the surface, which means the risks to communities is that much higher." Some people fear an environmental disaster in the Arctic could be even worse than the recent oil spill off the United States' south-eastern coastline. Nearly 20 million litres of oil have spewed into the Gulf of Mexico since a drilling rig exploded last month and sank. The blast killed 11 workers on the Deepwater Horizon rig. The disaster could be one of the worst oil spills in U.S. history if crews aren't able to stop the flow of crude soon. Canada's federal oil and gas regulator is reviewing Arctic safety and environmental drilling requirements following the Gulf spill. The head of the National Energy Board wouldn't rule out a similar accident in the Arctic. "No safety regulator can possibly say that an accident will never happen," Gaetan Caron said recently.

<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/canada/breakingnews/sewage-jet-fuel-among-millions-of-litres-spilled-in-arctic-cp-analysis-95221654.html>

### **USA, N.M, KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE, MAY 31 2010. JET FUEL SPILL THREATENS ALBUQUERQUE GROUNDWATER**

Every day, millions of gallons of jet fuel seep farther into the ground below an Albuquerque neighborhood, a slow-moving plume that already has plopped a foot of petroleum atop an underground reservoir. The source? Leaking pipes from a 1950s-era fuel loading facility at Kirtland Air Force Base. In recent months, New Mexico's top environmental regulator has grown frustrated by what he claims are Air Force delays, saying now it's time to get serious about cleanup. While remediation efforts have continued for years, the project gained a fresh urgency in April when New Mexico Environment Department officials moved oversight of the spill from the agency's groundwater division to the hazardous materials division.

<http://www.newswest9.com/Global/story.asp?S=12567150>

### **AUSTRIA, VIENNA, MAY 31 2010. ENI AGIP GETS APPROVAL TO BUY EXXONMOBIL ESSO NETWORK IN AUSTRIA**

Italian oil giant Eni, which is present in Austria through Agip, has received formal approval by the European Commission to buy ExxonMobil's downstream business in the country. The deal includes a network of 135 Esso retail service stations as well as ExxonMobil's industrial and wholesale business with 36 additional Esso branded retail service stations owned by resellers.

<http://www.petroplaza.com/news/industry/MiZlbiY5ODA4JiYx>

### **PHILIPPINES, MANILA, PASAY CITY, JUNE 1 2010. BFP CLOSES LEAKING GAS STATION IN PASAY**

*jean fernando*

A gas station in Pasay City has been ordered temporary closed by the city's Bureau of Fire and Protection after gas leak occurred early Monday morning. According to SFO2 Feliz Lazarte, operation chief, they recommended the temporary closure

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of Manila Auto Gas Station located along Domestic Road corner Andrew Avenue, Pasay City after a gas leak occurred in one of their tanks at about 5:45 a.m. Lazarte said the leak was immediately prevented at 7:20 a.m. He said that prior to the incident a certain Ruel Santiago called up their office and informed that a gas leak occurred at the given gas station that emitted poisonous gas endangering the health of nearby residents or may be causing big fire. The city's Bureau of Fire and Protection that immediately responded found that the cause of the gas leak was due to the malfunction of the pitting of one of the gas station tanks. Lazarte said the supervisor who was not able to get the name has been ordered immediately to close the main bulb of the tank so as to prevent the gas leak. He said that during the conduct of investigation they found out several violations on safety measures in the said gas station prompting them to order the temporary closure. The Bureau of Fire and Protection operations chief said that the violation they saw was that the gas station has no automatic shut off on their pumping motor in case an incident may occur and the motor is only about 24-feet away from their motor which should be several meters away. Lazarte said that they may also conduct inspection again on the gas station as soon as it opens a to ensure that they have followed precautionary measures.

<http://www.mb.com.ph/articles/259957/bfp-closes-leaking-gas-station-pasay>

### UK, COLCHESTER, JUNE 1 2010. DECISION DUE OVER NEW A12 PETROL STATION

A petrol station looks set to be built on the new A12 junction north of Colchester. BP Oil UK has applied for permission to develop the planned filling station next to the junction currently being built in Mile End, giving northbound traffic a new way of getting into the town. The garage would have a forecourt with a canopy, shop, plus lorry refuelling and car washing facilities. Colchester Council's planning committee is being recommended to approve the scheme at its meeting on Thursday. Five letters of objection have been sent to the council, arguing the plan would increase noise disruption, light pollution and health hazards from exhaust fumes. Objectors also raised concerns about the 24-hour nature of the operation, and possible risks posed by underground fuel storage. Myland Parish Council raised the issue of light pollution and suggested special lights should be used which could be dimmed at night.

[http://www.gazette-news.co.uk/news/8193874.Decision due over new A12 petrol station/](http://www.gazette-news.co.uk/news/8193874.Decision+due+over+new+A12+petrol+station/)USA, FLA, ST AUGUSTINE,

### JUNE 1 2010. FIREFIGHTERS CLEAN UP GAS SPILL AT STATION

anthony dematteo



Firefighters with the St. Augustine Fire Department spread an all-purpose absorbent over a fuel spill at a U.S. 1 service station after about 20 gallons of gasoline spilled from a customer's car.

Filling up a Lincoln Town Car is expensive enough without a hole in the gas tank. Firefighters rushed to the scene of a U.S. 1 Citgo station near Arapaho Avenue on Sunday night after about 20 gallons of gasoline went from a pump, through a customer's blue Town Car and onto the station pavement below. "They apparently had some repairs done to the car and as they were filling the tank up, gas started pouring out," said SAFD Lt. Chance Hines. "We stopped it from going in to the storm drain and got up some protective hose lines." The owner of the Lincoln would not give his name for publication but said Sunday was the first time he tried fueling the car since a fuel pump repair last week. He said he was alerted by another

customer that his gas was missing its mark. The station was closed for about two hours as city firefighters worked to secure it. The turn lane off Arapaho was also closed during that time. "We've never had anything like this happen," said Joey Anania, station cashier. "The lever on a pump got stuck once and the fire department had to come out. That was fixed so it didn't happen again. But I've never seen this with a car."

<http://staugustine.com/news/local-news/2010-05-31/firefighters-clean-gas-spill-station>

### AUSTRALIA, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, ADELAIDE, JUNE 1 2010. EMPLOYEE FINED OVER FUMES EXPLOSION

The duties of employees under South Australia's workplace safety laws have been highlighted in a case completed today in the SA Industrial Relations Court. James Lawless was convicted and fined \$4,400 after pleading guilty to a breach of section 21(1a) of the Occupational Health Safety and Welfare Act 1986. This section of the Act details the legal duties of employees to take reasonable care to keep themselves and others safe at work through their actions or otherwise. SafeWork SA prosecuted after investigating an incident in June 2007 at a West Croydon business which manufactures pressure equipment products, such as boilers and air compressor units. Three workers were painting the inside of a large pressure vessel: a task that

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involved pouring paint into the vessel and rotating it to ensure the inner surface was covered. This caused a buildup of fumes, which were released when a flange was later opened. The court heard that the fumes were ignited when the defendant then lit a cigarette lighter while standing nearby, apparently unaware of the presence of flammable vapours and in breach of a non-smoking policy in the workplace. Two workers were injured in the resulting blast; one suffering severe burns to 25 per cent of his body. In his penalty decision today, Industrial Magistrate Michael Ardlie said more serious injuries could have resulted and the defendant "...should not have ignited his cigarette lighter... without first consulting with the other employees..." In November last year, the man's employer was convicted and fined \$30,000 after the company pleaded guilty to failing to provide a safe working environment over the same incident. SafeWork SA says the case underscores the need for employees to play their part in keeping workplaces safe through being aware of the relevant hazards and safety procedures and acting promptly and consistently to keep themselves and others safe. "The legal responsibility for workplace safety is not just confined to employers," says Acting Executive Director, Juanita Lovatt. "Employees also have a duty under the law and where the circumstances warrant, SafeWork SA will prosecute where a serious breach is uncovered."

[http://www1.worksafe.vic.gov.au/vwa/vwa095-001.nsf/Admin/Attachments/DD038795FEB80763CA257731000CD603/\\$FILE/Lawless%20penalty.pdf](http://www1.worksafe.vic.gov.au/vwa/vwa095-001.nsf/Admin/Attachments/DD038795FEB80763CA257731000CD603/$FILE/Lawless%20penalty.pdf)

#### USA, IN, MISHAWAKA, JUNE 1 2010. MISHAWAKA MAN SEVERELY BURNED WHILE CLEANING VAN'S GAS TANK



*Fire severely damaged the garage and home at 812 West Fifth Street in Mishawaka Monday.*

A 57-year-old Mishawaka man suffered severe burns after using a vacuum to clean out his vehicle's gas tank and gas pump Monday afternoon. Chuck Chapman was doing repair work on his Chevy Astro van about 4 p.m. Monday at his home at 812 W. 5th Street, according to his family. He was cleaning out the van's gas pump, which was clogged with dirt and grime and not working properly, said his stepdaughter, Angel Wallace, 23. After suctioning out the gasoline, Chapman attempted to use a vacuum cleaner to get out the excess grime, but there was still gasoline inside the tank, Wallace said. The vacuum sucked up the gasoline and ignited into flames, which completely destroyed the van and garage and spread into the four-bedroom house. Chapman was thrown from the car and

landed on the driveway. He had extensive burns on his chest, arms, and face, his family said. He was not wearing a shirt at the time of the explosion. Chapman was taken to Memorial Hospital, then flown to a burn center in Fort Wayne because his burns were so severe, his family said. No one else was injured, though the family was concerned about cats inside the house at the time of the fire.

<http://www.wsbt.com/news/local/95271084.html>

#### USA, NY, NEW YORK, JUNE 1 2010. GARAGE STORING FIREWORKS EXPLODES IN NYC; 1 BURNED

An explosion has destroyed a garage where fireworks and fuel were being stored at a New York City home, setting off a fire and severely burning one man over 50 percent of his body. The 31-year-old unidentified man was taken to Jacobi Medical Center's burn unit in critical condition. There were no other injuries. Police and a fire official says the cause of Monday night's explosion at the Murray Street home in the Flushing neighborhood of Queens was under investigation. But police say a preliminary investigation determined that the victim was storing fireworks and fuel in the garage when it exploded about 7:03 p.m. A fire that erupted in the debris of the building was brought under control about a half hour later.

<http://www.timesunion.com/AspStories/story.asp?storyID=936504>

#### CANADA, ALTA, FORT SASKATCHEWAN, JUNE 1 2010. RCMP CLOSE HIGHWAY 21 NEAR EDMONTON AFTER TRUCK CARRYING DANGEROUS GOODS CRASHES

Alberta RCMP closed Highway 21 near Fort Saskatchewan for several hours after a truck carrying dangerous goods ran off the road. Police won't say what type of dangerous goods, however the area is home to numerous chemical plants and refineries. Police say the truck flipped on its side but the material didn't spill. No one was hurt. A hazardous materials team was on the scene. The highway was reopened about 8 p.m. Monday night.

<http://www.metronews.ca/vancouver/world/article/539214--rcmp-close-highway-21-near-edmonton-after-truck-carrying-dangerous-goods-crashes>

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### USA, LA, NEW ORLEANS, JUNE 1 2010. GULF OIL LEAK SETS OFF 'UNBELIEVABLE ARRAY' OF LEGAL ISSUES

Fishermen and property owners along the Gulf Coast have filed hundreds of lawsuits since April against oil company BP and its contractors amid a legal landscape that has changed dramatically since the Exxon Valdez tanker spill sullied [Alaska's Prince William Sound](#) 21 years ago. The Valdez spill prompted Congress to pass the 1990 Oil Pollution Act — intended to give fishers and others harmed by such spills a quicker route for settling their claims — and nearly two decades of litigation over that spill also has redefined centuries-old maritime law on the issue. Now, as hundreds of spill victims test those laws, attorneys say many questions remain about how far the protections will go and how long it will take to compensate the fishers, landholders and beachside cities that have suffered from the spill. "There are an unbelievable array of issues in this case," said Stanford law professor Jeffrey Fisher, who argued the Exxon Valdez case for the commercial fishermen and other Alaska businesses before the Supreme Court. "One of the most painful things about the Exxon case was that it took us 20 years to get the case finished and get the money in the pockets of the victims. One can't help but wonder if the same thing is going to happen here." Transocean — the owner of the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig, which exploded April 20 and sank two days later — already has asked a judge to limit claims against it to \$27 million under an 1851 law that limits liability. A judge has suspended more than 100 claims against Transocean until that issue is decided. "Maritime law back then was meant to protect shipowners. Like oil companies today, they had all the money and all the power," said Stuart Smith, an environmental attorney in New Orleans. Smith is working with 12 other law firms to sue BP, which leased the rig, on behalf of Gulf Coast commercial fishermen and other businesses on grounds including public nuisance. "The Valdez situation resulted in what Congress obviously felt was an injustice," he said.

#### Hefty Damages Owed

Under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, the company the Coast Guard says is responsible for a spill must pay up to \$1 billion to clean it up and repair natural resource damage and up to \$75 million in economic damages to compensate victims for lost income. BP and its contractors could be forced to pay even more than that if the federal government's investigation finds widespread negligence, deliberate misconduct or violations of federal regulations. The U.S. government also could bring criminal charges under the Clean Water Act, Migratory Bird Act, Endangered Species Act and other laws, Fisher says. The [Justice Department](#) did not return a call for comment. BP American Vice President Darryl Willis last week told the House Judiciary Committee that his company expects to "exceed" the \$75 million in damages required by law. He added: "BP's obligations are not, however, limitless." BP began paying claims five days after the April 20 explosion, Willis said. The company has 700 people processing claims and had paid nearly \$36 million to more than 12,000 people, he told the House committee. Fishers and shrimpers can get expedited payments of one month's income until more complete claims can be processed, Willis said. "The pace and scale of our claims effort is unprecedented," he said. Stephen Stone, a laborer for Transocean working on the rig when it exploded, told the House panel he hired a lawyer after a Transocean representative asked him to sign a document saying he was uninjured to get \$5,000 for loss of his personal property. "I never would have expected for my company, Transocean, to ... try to tempt or trick me into giving up my legal rights by signing forms without a lawyer present," Stone said. Transocean spokesman Mike Geczi said the company does not comment on pending litigation.

#### States Plan Strategy

Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida also can seek compensation. Mississippi Attorney General Jim Hood said he hopes BP will resolve state claims without a lawsuit, but if not, the state is preparing to sue under state environmental laws. Hood has asked Congress to pass a law that would allow state claims to remain in state courts. He said companies in the past used legal tactics in federal courts to stall litigation. "The strategy of large corporations is to delay, to drag it out in federal court so states and individual plaintiffs are just worn down and settle," Hood said. Shrimpers, oystermen and others whose incomes are harmed by the spill should first take their claims to BP, said Dave Oesting, an Anchorage attorney who was the court-appointed lead counsel for the fishermen and other victims in the Exxon Valdez case. If BP, Transocean or other contractors deny a claim, victims can seek money from a trust fund established by the 1990 law and financed by a federal 5-cents-per-barrel tax on petroleum produced in or imported to the USA. The lawsuits may take years because of the number of victims and because five states have jurisdiction, said Brian O'Neill, a Minneapolis lawyer who represented victims in the Exxon Valdez case.

**Dispersants:** [Experts weigh risks](#)

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/environment/2010-05-31-spill-lawsuits\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/environment/2010-05-31-spill-lawsuits_N.htm)

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