



Dangerous Goods - Hazardous Materials Group & Network Release 2010 – 605 Newsy Stuff

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May 27 2010



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USA, NY, BROOKLYN, MAY 16 2010. AN OIL SPILL GROWS IN BROOKLYN

alex prud'homme

With an estimated 210,000 gallons of oil spilling from the Deepwater Horizon site every day — for a total of some 3.3 million gallons, so far — the disaster in the Gulf of Mexico may eventually prove to be the largest oil spill in American history. But New Yorkers forget, or don't know, that a much larger oil spill sits in our own backyard: an estimated 17 million to 30 million gallons of oil, benzene, naptha and other carcinogenic chemicals pollute Newtown Creek and a swath of soil roughly 55 acres wide and up to 25 feet deep, in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. People don't often think of urban creeks as biodiverse waterways, but Newtown Creek was once a rich tidal estuary popular among hunters and fishermen. Starting in the 1870s, however, Standard Oil and other refineries began spilling or dumping excess fuels and toxic chemicals into the water or onto the soil, slowly poisoning the ecosystem. For years, people who hung their clothes out to dry found them darkened by chemical fumes. Today, Newtown Creek is a dead zone: when [a dolphin was spotted in the creek](#) in March, experts did not rejoice. They worried about its health. Despite an underground explosion fed by accumulated oil and gas in 1950, as well as persistent health problems among the creek's neighbors, it wasn't until 1978 that officials recognized the problem. That summer a Coast Guard helicopter on a routine patrol noticed a huge black oil plume spewing from the side of Newtown Creek, heading into the East River and New York Harbor. A containment boom was set out, and workers collected 200,000 gallons of degraded gasoline, fuel oil and chemicals, some of which dated to 1948. Today a viscous rainbow sheen floats on its surface, and the area around it is redolent of hydrocarbons. Although Greenpoint has a lower overall cancer rate than much of the city, it has one of the highest incidences of certain cancers, like leukemia in children and stomach cancer in adults. The creek was designated a Superfund site in 2009. The spill has also rendered the Brooklyn-Queens Aquifer, once a valuable store of freshwater, undrinkable. The aquifer serves as a recharge zone for the groundwater stores in southeastern Queens that could provide an important backup supply for the city in a drought. Documents unearthed by local activists show a history of regulators looking the other way to protect oil companies from liability for poisoning the creek. Fortunately, pressure from citizens' groups and city and state lawsuits have wrung a certain amount of compensation from BP, ExxonMobil and other companies accused of being behind the spill. In 2009, a federal jury found ExxonMobil liable for contaminating the groundwater near the creek, awarding the city \$104.7 million. Yet that's nowhere near enough to clean up the site or compensate Greenpoint residents. Nor is the Superfund designation likely to bring immediate improvement in the creek: years of study will be needed before any action can be taken, and the Superfund money can be used only to remove toxic material from the shore and sediments; other water-quality problems aren't eligible. In the long run, the only real solution may be to excavate the entire polluted zone and replace it with clean fill. As President Obama [condemns the "cozy relationship"](#) between federal regulators and Big Oil, we might question why New York regulators and the companies charged with polluting Newtown Creek took so long to acknowledge the problem. We tend to think of oil spills as dramatic events — a sinking ship, a burning rig. So it's easy to forget that across the country, hundreds of spills, many left over from a less regulated time, continue to poison groundwater and leak toxic fumes. Instead of letting the Gulf spill divert our attention yet again from slow-moving disasters like Newtown Creek, we should take it as an impetus to address problems much closer to home.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/16/opinion/16Prudhomme.html>

USA, UT, OGDEN, MAY 16 2010. UTAH TRUCKER FACES DUI DRUG CHARGE IN MARCH CRASH

A Utah truck driver has been arrested after blood tests indicated he was under the influence of illegal drugs when he crashed his rig full of diesel fuel on Interstate 15 in Roy in March. The Utah Highway Patrol says 55-year-old Shane Oliver was booked Thursday into the Weber County jail on charges of driving under the influence, possession of drug paraphernalia and unsafe lane travel. Court records show that a toxicology report found methamphetamine and its metabolite amphetamine in Oliver's blood after the fiery March 17 crash. Oliver told troopers he fell asleep while driving to Ogden with about 5,000 gallons of diesel fuel from Golden Eagle Oil Refinery in Woods Cross. Oliver was not seriously hurt in the 4:15 a.m. crash, and no other vehicles were involved.

http://www.sltrib.com/news/ci_15093268

USA, TX, BEAUMONT, MAY 16 2010. OVERNIGHT EXPLOSION AT CHEMICAL PLANT

Beaumont Fire Investigators say no one was injured when a building exploded at a chemical refinery near Lamar University. Chemtrade Refinery Services called Beaumont Fire firefighters around 3 o'clock this morning to the plant at 1400 block of Olin road. Investigators say flames as high as 60 feet were soaring from a sulphur dioxide unit. It took firefighters about an hour and a half to contain, but much longer to clean up. Chemtrade is located just behind Lamar University's Montagne Center.

<http://www.kfdm.com/news/university-37815-fire-plant.html>

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CANADA, EDMONTON, MAY 16 2010. PROPANE TANK EXPLODES IN CAR SENDING MAN TO HOSPITAL

sonia sunger

 **Watch the Video:**

http://edmonton.ctv.ca/servlet/an/local/CTVNews/20100515/EDM_explode_100515/20100515/?hub=EdmontonHome

A man was taken to hospital with serious injuries after a propane tank exploded in his car Friday evening. Edmonton Fire Rescue officials say the man smelled propane when he got into his vehicle parked in a lot near 90th Street and 105th Avenue at about 10:30 p.m. He proceeded to open his window and start the vehicle and that's when officials say a propane tank sitting in the trunk exploded. The force of the blast caused extensive damage to the car, blowing out the windows and buckling the trunk. The man was taken to hospital with serious non-life threatening injuries. Officials say there were three propane tanks sitting in the man's trunk at the time of the explosion.

http://edmonton.ctv.ca/servlet/an/local/CTVNews/20100515/EDM_explode_100515/20100515/?hub=EdmontonHome

USA, FLA, MIAMI GARDENS, MAY 16 2010. ACCIDENT CAUSES DELAYS ON THE PALMETTO

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.wsvn.com/news/articles/local/MI87428/>

A fuel tanker rolled over onto its side at the on-ramp to State Road 826 near the Golden Glades Interchange at around 2:00 p.m., Sunday. The truck was headed westbound on the Palmetto Expressway. Florida Highway Patrol and Miami-Dade Fire Rescue crews responded to the scene of the accident; HazMat crews reported to the scene after the truck began to leak fuel onto the Tri-Rail tracks. Highway traffic was redirected to 163rd Street. Tri-Rail services were suspended while crews cleaned up the scene, and bus bridges were constructed to transport passengers between the Opa-Locka and Hollywood Tri-Rail stations. Officials said, it will take hours to move the fuel tanker, but they hope to have it moved by rush hour traffic, Monday morning. One person involved in the accident suffered from minor injuries.

<http://www.wsvn.com/news/articles/local/MI87428/>

USA, CA, VENTURA CO, MAY 16 2010. VENTURA COUNTY FIREFIGHTERS EXTINGUISH LAKE PIRU HAZMAT FIRE

A 500-barrel tank of wastewater that contained some oil caught fire near the Lake Piru shooting range Friday afternoon but was quickly contained by firefighters. The tank caught fire for unknown reasons about 3:30 p.m. off Holser Canyon Road, and Ventura County Fire Department firefighters worked to put out the blaze before it reached other nearby tanks, said department spokesman Ron Oatman. The firefighters put out the fire by 4:30 p.m. There are many oil rigs in the area, and it was unclear if the

http://fdnntv.com/news.asp_Q_articleID_E_15926_A_title_E_BRIEF%3A_Firefighters_put_out_tank_fire_near_Lake_Piru

USA, LA, NEW ORLEANS, MAY 17 2010. GIANT PLUMES OF OIL FORMING UNDER THE GULF

justin gillis

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/16/us/16oil.html>



Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar visited a wildlife treatment center in Louisiana on Saturday.

Scientists are finding enormous [oil](#) plumes in the deep waters of the Gulf of Mexico, including one as large as 10 miles long, 3 miles wide and 300 feet thick in spots. The discovery is fresh evidence that the leak from the broken undersea well could be substantially worse than estimates that the government and [BP](#) have given. "There's a shocking amount of oil in the deep water, relative to what you see in the surface water," said Samantha Joye, a researcher at the [University of Georgia](#) who is involved in one of the first scientific missions to gather details about

what is happening in the gulf. "There's a tremendous amount of oil in multiple layers, three or four or five layers deep in the water column." The plumes are depleting the oxygen dissolved in the gulf, worrying scientists, who fear that the oxygen level could eventually fall so low as to kill off much of the sea life near the plumes. Dr. Joye said the oxygen had already dropped 30 percent near some of the plumes in the month that the broken oil well had been flowing. "If you keep those kinds of rates up, you could draw the oxygen down to very low levels that are dangerous to animals in a couple of months," she said Saturday. "That is alarming." The plumes were discovered by scientists from several universities working aboard the [research vessel Pelican](#), which sailed from Cocodrie, La., on May 3 and has gathered extensive samples and information about the disaster in the gulf. Scientists studying video of the gushing oil well have tentatively calculated that it could be flowing at a rate of 25,000 to 80,000 barrels of oil a day. The latter figure would be 3.4 million gallons a day. But the government, working from satellite

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images of the ocean surface, has calculated a flow rate of only 5,000 barrels a day. BP has resisted entreaties from scientists that they be allowed to use sophisticated instruments at the ocean floor that would give a far more accurate picture of how much oil is really gushing from the well. "The answer is no to that," a BP spokesman, Tom Mueller, said on Saturday. "We're not going to take any extra efforts now to calculate flow there at this point. It's not relevant to the response effort, and it might even detract from the response effort." The undersea plumes may go a long way toward explaining the discrepancy between the flow estimates, suggesting that much of the oil emerging from the well could be lingering far below the sea surface. The scientists on the Pelican mission, which is backed by the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#), the federal agency that monitors the health of the oceans, are not certain why that would be. They say they suspect the heavy use of chemical dispersants, which BP has injected into the stream of oil emerging from the well, may have broken the oil up into droplets too small to rise rapidly. BP said Saturday at a briefing in Robert, La., that it had resumed undersea application of dispersants, after winning [Environmental Protection Agency](#) approval the day before. "It appears that the application of the subsea dispersant is actually working," Doug Suttles, BP's chief operating officer for exploration and production, said Saturday. "The oil in the immediate vicinity of the well and the ships and rigs working in the area is diminished from previous observations." Many scientists had hoped the dispersants would cause oil droplets to spread so widely that they would be less of a problem in any one place. If it turns out that is not happening, the strategy could come under greater scrutiny. Dispersants have never been used in an oil leak of this size a mile under the ocean, and their effects at such depth are largely unknown. Much about the situation below the water is unclear, and the scientists stressed that their results were preliminary. After the April 20 explosion of the Deepwater Horizon, they altered a previously scheduled research mission to focus on the effects of the leak. Interviewed on Saturday by satellite phone, one researcher aboard the Pelican, Vernon Asper of the University of Southern Mississippi, said the shallowest oil plume the group had detected was at about 2,300 feet, while the deepest was near the seafloor at about 4,200 feet. "We're trying to map them, but it's a tedious process," Dr. Asper said. "Right now it looks like the oil is moving southwest, not all that rapidly." He said they had taken water samples from areas that oil had not yet reached, and would compare those with later samples to judge the impact on the chemistry and biology of the ocean. While they have detected the plumes and their effects with several types of instruments, the researchers are still not sure about their density, nor do they have a very good fix on the dimensions. Given their size, the plumes cannot possibly be made of pure oil, but more likely consist of fine droplets of oil suspended in a far greater quantity of water, Dr. Joye said. She added that in places, at least, the plumes might be the consistency of a thin salad dressing. Dr. Joye is serving as a coordinator of the mission from her laboratory in Athens, Ga. Researchers from the [University of Mississippi](#) and the University of Southern Mississippi are aboard the boat taking samples and running instruments. Dr. Joye said the findings about declining oxygen levels were especially worrisome, since oxygen is so slow to move from the surface of the ocean to the bottom. She suspects that oil-eating bacteria are consuming the oxygen at a feverish clip as they work to break down the plumes. While the oxygen depletion so far is not enough to kill off sea life, the possibility looms that oxygen levels could fall so low as to create large dead zones, especially at the seafloor. "That's the big worry," said Ray Highsmith, head of the Mississippi center that sponsored the mission, known as the [National Institute for Undersea Science and Technology](#). The Pelican mission is due to end Sunday, but the scientists are seeking federal support to resume it soon. "This is a new type of event, and it's critically important that we really understand it, because of the incredible number of oil platforms not only in the Gulf of Mexico but all over the world now," Dr. Highsmith said. "We need to know what these events are like, and what their outcomes can be, and what can be done to deal with the next one."

Multimedia Feature Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill Multimedia Collection

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/16/us/16oil.html>

USA, WASHINGTON, D.C., MAY 17 2010. FLORIDA LAWMAKER SEEKS ANY ADDITIONAL VIDEO OF OIL LEAK

Spurred by but a snippet of video BP released this week showing oil spewing from a broken pipe 5,000 feet underwater in the Gulf of Mexico, U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson (D-FL) today asked the oil giant to bring "any and all" additional video the company may have when its president testifies in this city next Tuesday. "The United States government and American people have a right to know what is going on at the Deepwater Horizon well," Nelson wrote today in a letter to Lamar McKay, the chairman and president of BP America. Since the April 20 blowout of the Deepwater rig and growing oil spill, news media, scientists and others have called on BP to make public any video of the leak. The company complied this week by releasing two very short video clips. Immediately, some began questioning whether the leak wasn't far worse than previously thought. For instance, Steven Wereley, an associate professor of mechanical engineering at Purdue University, analyzed videotape of the seafloor gusher for National Public Radio. Using a technique called particle image velocimetry, Wereley came up with a rate for the oil spill of 70,000 barrels a day — much higher than the official estimate of 5,000 barrels a day. Such information "is crucial to our

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... preparing for the impacts the spill may have on our environment, fisheries and coastal communities," Nelson, a member of the Senate Commerce Committee, wrote in his letter to McKay. "I am requesting you bring any and all additional video footage of the Deepwater Horizon wellhead and broken pipe to the Senate Commerce Committee hearing on Tuesday, May 18." For years Nelson has been an outspoken critic of the oil industry's safety claims and lax federal regulation, as the industry has pressed to be able to drill off the coast of Florida.

<http://bignews.biz/?id=872336&keys=Senator-Bill-Nelson-OilSpewing>

AUSTRALIA, VICTORIA, NEWPORT, MAY 17 2010. REFINERY LIGHTS UP ALTONA SKY

james twining

Photo's: <http://hobsons-bay-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/refinery-lights-up-altona-sky/>



The Mobil Refinery in Altona lights up on Sunday night.

A local MP has slammed Mobil's response after its Altona refinery went into emergency mode last night. Firefighters were called the Millers Rd refinery about 8.35pm after a power outage shut down operations. The shut-down sent extra gas to the refinery's two burning towers, resulting in a larger than normal flare-up. Loud popping sounds could be heard in Newport and Altona, as many people rushed out to witness the orange glow. ExxonMobil spokesman Alan Bailey said the flare-up was part of a normal emergency procedure for power outages. "When you lose power, that does affect operation of the refinery," he said. "And that is you lose the equipment you need to handle the gas within the plant and (the gas) is then sent to the towers and burnt off as per normal procedures. "There was certainly no fire or damage to the equipment." Mr Bailey said ExxonMobil had not been told what

caused the power outage. The refinery was back on stream this morning, with the flare significantly reduced. The flare-up also caused smoke to waft over nearby homes in Altona, Newport and Williamstown. But Western Metropolitan Greens MP Colleen Hartland slammed Mobil's response to the incident, saying residents were left in the dark. "The Altona Refinery Hotline was a recorded message, without any information on the incident," Ms Hartland said. "The Hobsons Bay emergency after-hours info line had a real person operator, but they had no information. "Only one of the two Altona Refinery Community Liaison Committee contact numbers was answering his phone, and he hadn't been told what was going on." Ms Hartland said the police emergency information line had a recorded message that "this line is not currently active". "There really is no excuse for Mobil not to have told the Community Liaison Committee members and the Hobsons Bay after hours contact what was going on," Ms Hartland said. Newport resident Murray Newham said there was a drone-like sound coming from the refinery during the flare up. "I'd never seen it like that before," he said. MFB spokeswoman Jennifer Roberts said 000 calls were received from residents who could see lots of smoke and flames. About 16 fire fighters attended and monitored the scene to ensure there was no spotting within the plant. Hobsons Bay Councillor Tony Briffa told residents in an email last night he would take up the matter with the environment watch dog. "The EPA have been notified of the incident and I will be following this up with them during the week," Cr Briffa wrote.

Related Coverage

- [Petrol pours from Altona Refinery](#)
- [Small blaze at Altona Refinery](#)

<http://hobsons-bay-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/refinery-lights-up-altona-sky/>

USA, MA, CAMBRIDGE, MAY 17 2010. SLIDESHOW: MAPPING THE OIL SPILL

david I. chandler

Slideshow <http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/2010/oil-balloon-0517.html>

MIT student leads project using balloons and kites to provide aerial documentation of the Gulf oil slick's extent and effects. While the world's news media report on the expanding oil slick in the Gulf of Mexico, MIT Media Lab student Jeffrey Yoo Warren and his collaborators are providing their own useful coverage of the crisis. Warren, Oliver Yeh '10 and do-it-yourself cartographer Stewart Long have been using inexpensive cameras attached to ordinary helium-filled weather balloons, or even oversized trash bags, to capture aerial photos that are then stitched together and geometrically corrected using software Warren wrote (to compensate for camera angle and distortions) to make very accurate local maps. For example, last January Warren traveled to Peru to help citizens there meet a requirement to provide accurate maps of the lands they occupied in order to obtain the title to the lands — Warren's mapping software enabled them to create those maps. The team

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realized that in the Gulf oil spill, future lawsuits, as well as monitoring of environmental impacts from the spill, would depend on extensive, accurate documentation. So earlier this month, as crews tried unsuccessfully to contain the undersea oil leak, Warren and his colleagues took their technology to the Gulf Coast. Working with local groups such as the Louisiana Bucket Brigade, an organization in New Orleans that focuses on industrial pollution, they trained volunteers to make and deploy the low-cost photography systems. "Now, they're the local leads on this, and we provide the training and technical support," Warren says. The systems can be suspended from balloons or kites, and all the equipment needed for one monitoring system can be bought for less than \$100. For now, as long as the oil remains offshore, they are using the system to provide detailed imagery of the vulnerable coastal wetlands — essentially, the "before" pictures to be used for comparison with any future damage in the event the oil reaches those areas. They have also hitched rides on private planes to get out far enough to document parts of the spreading oil slick. Using GPS tagging and the software they developed to integrate the images, they hope to create an extensive set of documentation that can be used to monitor the spill's effects, and all the images are being made accessible online for everyone. "To use this in litigation, as well as environmental monitoring, you really need to have maps, not just imagery," Warren explains. He hopes to return to the site next weekend to continue the project. Shannon Dosemagen, a member of the Louisiana Bucket Brigade, says the mapping tool will be useful for local communities that find themselves confronting the crisis. "As the spill spreads gradually, being able to map plots of land over a stretch of time will be incredibly valuable to show how the oil is impacting the coastal environments and thus livelihoods of coastal populations."

<http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/2010/oil-balloon-0517.html>

USA, W.VA, CHARLESTON, MAY 17 2010. CHEVRON PULLING OUT OF RETAIL FUEL BIZ IN MOUNTAIN STATE

george hohmann

Chevron Corp. is getting out of the retail fuel business in West Virginia effective July 1. Company spokesman Gus Santoyo said 87 Chevron and five Texaco stations in the state are affected. Chevron bought Texaco Inc. in 2001. Jan Vineyard, president of the West Virginia Oil Marketers and Grocers Association, said Chevron told retailers of the decision in December and it was a shock. "They'll have to change to another brand or go unbranded," she said. "There are not a lot of brands in West Virginia." She said they have the option of aligning with BP, Exxon, Shell, Marathon or Sun or going unbranded. One Stop operates about 30 of the Chevron-branded stations in West Virginia. Vineyard said she spoke with One Stop President Michael Graney on Thursday. Graney indicated that most of the stations would switch to Marathon and Exxon, with some unbranded, Vineyard said. Vineyard said there are about 1,200 service stations in West Virginia. In a statement issued Dec. 9, Chevron said it had decided to withdraw its motor fuels operations from Delaware, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, New Jersey, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Washington, D.C., and parts of Tennessee. "Approximately 1,100 independently owned and operated retail stations will be de-branded," Chevron said. "We expect all of the stations to continue operating under other brands and we have a program in place to assist retailers with their transition. We expect to complete the planned market exits by mid-year 2010." Chevron said the affected stations account for about 8 percent of its total U.S. sales volume. "The fuel markets in these states are well served and should not be affected by our withdrawal," the company said. "Chevron continues to look at its portfolio and seek ways to better align its marketing assets with its manufacturing system to improve efficiencies, increase enterprise profitability and maintain a strong position in the U. S. marketplace," the company said. "Optimizing our system in this manner means shrinking in some areas, while growing or adjusting operations in others." Chevron recently told its credit card customers that it is leaving the state. In a letter that was included with monthly account statements, the company said, "The current economic conditions have prompted Chevron to re-evaluate our retailing operations."

http://www.downstreamtoday.com/news/article.aspx?a_id=22648

USA, IA, DES MOINES, MAY 17 2010. HAGGLING OVER TOXIN CLEANUP LEAVES DAY CARE IN THE MIDDLE

perry beeman



Workers have injected chemicals to neutralize the benzene near the Richardsons' home. Pollution and possible health risks were created when a gas station was closed 20 years ago and underground gasoline tanks were removed 10 years later.

Connie Richardson runs a child care center in her home, which is surrounded by contaminated soil and toxic chemicals from a front-yard gas station she closed 20 years ago. She has no idea whether the underground benzene or other dangerous gases made it into the home she shares with her husband, Richard. Four children stay in the child care center five days a week, playing with stuffed animals stored in a street-side room that used to hold B&C Services' grocery items and the cash register.

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Tests in 2006 within 10 feet of the house's foundation found high levels of benzene in soil vapors. "No one has tested the house, that I know of," Connie Richardson said. She closed the station in 1990. It took 10 years for a privately run state cleanup program to pull the tanks. A cleanup is now under way, but it literally took an act of Congress to get the money, from federal stimulus legislation. Delays in addressing the benzene plume at the Richardson home have raised new questions about the effectiveness of Iowa's system for cleaning up fuel-tank sites. Responsibility is split between the Department of Natural Resources and the privately run Iowa Comprehensive Petroleum Underground Storage Tank Fund. Motorists pay a penny-a-gallon gas tax to pay for the cleanup work. Officials from both agencies point fingers at the other for foot-dragging. The Richardsons say they have smelled no gas in the house and have had no symptoms of illness. But three layers of Iowa Department of Natural Resources staffers couldn't turn up evidence that the Richardson house was ever tested. A key staffer said she didn't know Connie Richardson was running a licensed child-care center at the site until recently. The Iowa Department of Public Health doesn't monitor pollution at leaking-tank sites and didn't assess the dangers to the Richardson family because no one asked for the work, said Ken Sharp, director of environmental health. "On the surface, that doesn't smell good," DNR director Richard Leopold said of the fact the Richardsons don't know whether dangerous fumes have crept into their home. Benzene, a main part of gasoline, is known to cause cancer, and the fuel contains other hazardous chemicals. Benzene has a strong odor; it's one of the chemicals people smell while filling their vehicles' gas tanks. Pumping controversy into the situation: a huge difference of opinion between the insurance company that runs the tank fund program and the DNR about priorities. The resources department is in charge of assessing sites. Staffers, in documents obtained by The Des Moines Register, say the privately run tank fund should have cleaned up the site years ago, as the DNR requested. "It is clear that the environment and the welfare of the human beings who are affected by the contamination at (leaking underground storage tank) sites is not the Fund's top priority," DNR staffers wrote in a report obtained by the Register. "Connie has been literally living on top of the contamination for 11 years." Tank-fund administrator Scott Scheidel, who works for Aon Risk Services of West Des Moines, said he never saw the document and declined to comment on the allegation. He noted that some states - Nebraska and Illinois among them - let a single agency clean up tanks. Iowa decided to split the work to promote "checks and balances." The tank fund board includes representatives of the DNR, the state auditor, state treasurer and tank interests. Scheidel said the state decided to split the duties to balance efforts to protect the environment with the responsibility to get taxpayers the most efficient cleanup work possible in a short-term program. The tank fund expires in 2016. The tank fund runs in some ways like an insurance agency, and can take only cases that meet specific criteria laid out in state law, Scheidel said. Many e-mails and documents reviewed by the Register show DNR staffers asking the tank fund to clean up the Richardsons' site. Scheidel, however, contends the DNR never made a formal request under the proper program for the tank fund to do the cleanup. Scheidel questioned whether the couple or the children are at any risk. Studies have shown the model used by the state to project the location of underground plumes often suggests risks where they don't exist, he said. The tank fund cleans up sites where the plumes were discovered before October 1990. Owners of newer tanks have to buy insurance or post a bond to prove they can pay for cleanup. Wayne Gieselman, the state's top environmental protection official, said his staff wants to clean up hazardous chemicals left by fuel tanks, even when there isn't an immediate risk to people. The tank fund has more narrow interests, in his view. "They look at these things like an insurance company," Gieselman said. "They don't want to spend more than a penny more than they have to. "We look at it more from an environmental perspective," Gieselman said. "We don't think it's a good thing to have gasoline floating around in the groundwater, regardless of whether there is a water supply there. It takes a long time to get them to participate when people don't have money. Of course, Kum & Go and Casey's have insurance." Not that the resources department is without blame, he acknowledged. Asked to grade his department's work to assess tank sites, Gieselman said his department deserves a C. "We have tended to be very detail-oriented," Gieselman said. "We probably should do a better job of prioritizing the sites by risk." Elaine Douskey, a tank-program supervisor at DNR, said the agency figures residents would smell gas if there were a problem, and call the fire department. (Richard Richardson is on the fire department.) Some protocols, but not all, call for structures to be tested, she said. Scheidel, whose contract to run the fund is up for renewal, said foot-dragging at DNR often causes the bulk of the delay in cleaning up a site. The tank fund frequently takes action within 60 days of getting a request that qualifies, he said. The Lockridge site is one of 1,350 sites around Iowa still waiting for someone to clean up the petroleum-laced remnants of gas stations run by people who have disappeared, can't pay, or won't pay. About 1,000 are eligible for assistance, and most should be cleaned by the time the tank-fund program expires in 2016, Scheidel said. About half of the sites are classified as "high-risk," generally meaning there is a risk they will send pollution into water supplies or dangerous gases into a storm sewer, for example. The state and tank fund have cleaned 4,600 leaking underground storage-tank sites, or ruled that no action was necessary. About 140 sites are addressed each year, but the state finds about 50 new ones a year, Douskey said. Gieselman said someone should have tested the Richardson home, though he's not sure anyone did. The tank fund refused to pay to clean up the Richardson site,

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e-mails obtained by the Register show. So the years passed, until the DNR got \$2.5 million in federal stimulus money to clean up the Richardsons' property and perhaps 25 others. The department found 50 sites in similar predicaments, most involving former family operations. Connie Richardson seemed surprised when a reporter asked recently whether air in the house had been checked. "You're the first person who has raised that question," she said. The department highlighted the Richardsons' case as staffers unsuccessfully tried to push through legislation in the 2010 legislative session to take control of all tank work. The idea was to save half of the \$1.4 million a year now spent on private administration. Department staffers accused the fund of being more interested in helping large convenience store chains than ma and pa station owners. "I certainly would beg to differ," Scheidel said. "We spent more of our staff time, and our money, on the independently run operations than on the large companies' sites." Lawmakers decided to stick with the present arrangement, opting to trust neither the resources department nor the tank fund solely to address the sites, Scheidel and Gieselman said. Connie Richardson said she doesn't really know what to make of the underground plume of benzene gas, which exceeded health standards when results from a large battery of samples were checked in 2006 as follow-up to the tank removal. When a private firm showed up last month to drill 180 holes in the Richardsons' property, she wondered what all the fuss was about. "I don't know why they dumped all that stuff down there," Connie Richardson said. "If it leaked, it leaked. What could we do? Why did they pick on me?" "They talked about removing the soil, but we would have had to move for three weeks," she said. "And they weren't going to pay for a motel room." The couple noticed odors when the crews were drilling. The private firm dumped chemicals down each of the holes in the Richardsons' yard. The hope is that the ensuing jolt of oxygen will help bacteria break down the gas plume. Studies of the technique have shown mixed results. Douskey said crews might need to inject chemicals a second time to complete the cleanup. "In some places it has worked really well, and in others not so much," said Douskey, DNR's supervisor for tank work. <http://www.desmoinesregister.com/article/20100517/NEWS/5170316/-1/FAMOUSIOWANS/Haggling-over-toxin-cleanup-leaves-day-care-in-the-middle>

USA, TX, WISE CO, MAY 17 2010. RUPTURED PIPELINE LEAKS INTO CREEK

brandon evans

Steve Cook with Enbridge Energy leaned over the side of a bridge on County Road 1700 Friday afternoon "I don't know what it is," Cook said. Opaque pearl sheens snaked over the surface of the mud-colored creek rushing high beneath the bridge. Every few seconds more puddles of the substance skimmed across the surface of the creek racing east to Lake Bridgeport. An acrid fuel smell skipped in the breeze. A busted pipe trickled an unknown oily substance into Jasper Creek in far west Wise County on Friday. Local investigators attempted to pinpoint the energy company who owned the busted pipe in question and what exactly was leaking from it

<http://www.wcmessenger.com/news/content/EkZFAuFpyuSvmjvrrM.php>

AUSTRALIA, VICTORIA, MELBOURNE, MAY 18 2010. 7-ELEVEN AUSTRALIA MAY BUY EXXON FUEL OUTLETS, AUSTRALIAN SAYS

ben sharples



7-Eleven Australia is close to acquiring most of [Exxon Mobil Corp's](#) local filling stations, the Australian newspaper reported on its [website](#), without saying where it got the information. Caltex Australia Ltd., the nation's biggest oil refiner, last month scrapped plans to buy 302 filling stations from Exxon Mobil for A\$300 million (\$257 million) after the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission opposed the transaction on concerns the deal would lead to higher prices. Exxon Mobil is looking at the options for its retail fuel business, [Alan Bailey](#), a spokesman in Melbourne for the Texas-based company, said by telephone today. He declined to comment on potential buyers of the filling stations. 7-Eleven is interested in acquisitions and has looked at a "multitude of opportunities," Melbourne-based spokeswoman Tracy Hammon said by telephone. No agreements have been reached, she said. Exxon Mobil Australia wants to focus on natural-gas projects, with plans to spend "many billions of dollars" in Australia and Papua New Guinea in three to five years, the company's Australian Chairman [John Dashwood](#) said in an interview in Brisbane yesterday. Filling stations are "not our business model," Dashwood said "I guess the distinction I make is, are you an oil and gas company or are you a groceries company? The industry has changed to the point where the two meld, and some have used the shop to move fuel. We're not in the business of being a shop."

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Withers and Barlow

Dashwood declined to reveal potential buyers. 7-Eleven Stores Pty. had 182 filling stations at the end of 2007 and was the second-largest of "independent" retailers that represent 7 percent of the market, according to the nation's antitrust regulator. Mobil had 11 percent compared with the 16 percent outright share of Caltex and 22 percent it holds through a venture with Woolworths Ltd. The Australian 7-Eleven is closely held by the Withers and Barlow families which brought the brand to Australia in 1976 through a license agreement with the U.S. company, then known as Southland Corp., the company said on [its website](#).

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601081&sid=aAAzipAPLqzo>

AUSTRALIA, VICTORIA, MAY 18 2010. [UPDATE] EXXON RESTORES POWER AT ALTONA REFINERY IN VICTORIA *ben sharples*

Exxon Mobil Corp., operator of the Altona oil refinery in Australia's Victoria state, said power at the plant is restored after an outage yesterday shut a "number of units." The units were "getting back to normal" by midmorning today, [Alan Bailey](#), a Melbourne-based spokesman for the Irving, Texas-based company, said by telephone. The outage occurred shortly before 9 p.m. local time yesterday, he said. Altona, the smallest of Australia's seven refineries, is 13 kilometers (8 miles) west of Melbourne and supplies half of Victoria's fuel needs, according to Exxon's [website](#). The plant makes about 13 million liters (3.4 million gallons) of products a day. "It took some time for the power to be restored and then it took us a little while to get the plant up and running again," Bailey said. "It does have a short-term impact, but we're not anticipating any measurable supply impacts out in the market place as a result of this."

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601081&sid=axWI8nx2QR0U>

USA, WA, PORT GAMBLE, MAY 22 2010. GROUNDING BOAT CAUSES FUEL LEAK NEAR KINGSTON

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.king5.com/news/environment/Grounded-boat-causes-fuel-leak-near-Kingston-94542324.html>

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.pnwlocalnews.com/kitsap/nkh/news/94538859.html>



A privately owned Navy surplus boat got loose and ran aground in Wednesday's storm in Port Gamble Bay near Kingston. The boat was apparently leaking fuel from a vent. The fuel spill happened on reservation land. The S'Klallam Tribe has placed absorbent booms around the boat. Ecology spokeswoman Barb MacGregor says the tribe has closed shellfish harvest in the area. She says a caretaker for the boat has agreed to hire a contractor to plug the vents and help clean up the fuel. MacGregor says the amount spilled is under investigation. The vessel reportedly had 1,000 gallons of fuel on board. A sheen has traveled out the north end of the bay.

Barge Breaks Loose


Also in Thursday's storm, a barge carrying construction supplies broke free. Coast Guard crews are keeping close watch as a tug boat crew is trying to regain control of the runaway barge which is floating about 20 miles off the coast of Grays Harbor.

<http://www.king5.com/news/environment/Grounded-boat-causes-fuel-leak-near-Kingston-94542324.html>

USA, TX, TYLER, MAY 22 2010. FUEL SPILL FROM 18-WHEELER CRASH CONTAINED, INTERSECTION CLOSED INDEFINITELY

ellen krafve

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.kltv.com/Global/story.asp?S=12522876>

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.cbs19.tv/Global/story.asp?S=12522920>



Update 10:30 Pm 5/21/10 - Both of the trucks involved in the accident, have been towed away from the scene. All lanes on Troup Highway are now open. All west bound lanes of Loop 323 are open. The two outside lanes on eastbound Loop 323 will remain closed until further notice. The driver of the gasoline tanker was issued a citation for failure to control speed. The truck was on its way to Whitehouse. It was carrying 8500 gallons of gasoline, and spilled approximately 300 gallons after the accident.

Update 05:30 Pm 05/21/10 - Some of the businesses near the intersection of Loop

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323 and Troup Highway have been evacuated. Walgreen's, KFC, Braum's, Tobacco Junction, and Kidd Jones Exxon are closed until further notice. The truck that spilled fuel is with Duncan Thompson Transports. The other 18-wheeler is with TNI. Emergency officials are working to clean up fuel that spilled from an 18-wheeler on it's side at Troup and Loop 323 in Tyler after it somehow flipped over while turning and then collided with another 18-wheeler. HazMat is on the scene. Witnesses say the smell of gasoline was strong earlier, but is lessening. City crews are shoveling dirt onto the spill to keep it from spreading. Authorities say they don't know how much fuel has spilled. They say the clean-up will take an extended period of time. Authorities say that another wreck with injuries has already happened as a result of drivers looking at the 18-wheeler crash.

<http://www.kltv.com/Global/story.asp?S=12522876>

USA, N.J, CHESTERFIELD, MAY 22 2010. ONE KILLED IN TANKER TRUCK ACCIDENT ON NEW JERSEY TURNPIKE

dave levinsky



Three trucks were involved in an early morning accident on the New Jersey Turnpike here, killing one driver and causing a large kerosene spill that has closed all northbound lanes. State Police Sgt. Julian Castellanos said the accident occurred at 1:09 a.m. at around milepost 56 near the Exit 7A interchange and involved a box truck, and two tractor-trailers, including one hauling kerosene. The driver of the box truck was killed in the collision and one of the tractor-trailer drivers was seriously injured and taken to Cooper University Hospital in Camden, Castellanos said. No identities or conditions were immediately available. The kerosene spill has forced the closure of all northbound lanes turnpike between Interchanges 4 and 7A. State police said the lanes are expected to remain closed for several hours and motorists are encouraged to use Interstate 295 as an alternative route. An investigation into

the accident is ongoing.

http://www.phillyburbs.com/news/local/burlington_county_times/bct_news_details/article/2465/2010/may/21/one-killed-in-three-truck-accident-on-new-jersey-turnpike.html

USA, AL, DOTHAN, MAY 22 2010. NORMAL TRAFFIC RESUMES DOWNTOWN AFTER AUTHORITIES INVESTIGATE GAS SMELL



Police have blocked off parts of several streets in downtown Dothan, including North Saint Andrews. To the right of the yellow tape is the Miracle Finance building where authorities appear to be concentrating their efforts to locate the source of a strong gas smell. Emergency personnel worked to clean a gasoline spill Friday that caused a significant portion of downtown Dothan to be blocked off. A strong gas odor was detected in the 200 block of North Saint Andrews Street around 8 p.m. Friday, prompting Dothan police to block off portions of Saint Andrews, Troy, Adams and Cherry streets as well as Museum Avenue. Dothan police closed Parts of Saint Andrews, Troy, Adams and Cherry Streets as well as Museum Avenue for precautionary reasons. The area remained closed off for the rest of the morning and into the afternoon. Dothan Fire Personnel and the Emergency Management Agency determined the source of the odor was spilled gas at the pumps used by city vehicles behind Dothan the Dothan Civic Center. It is not known how much gas was spilled. Personnel were able to dissipate the gas and allow normal traffic to resume Friday afternoon. Along with Dothan Police, Fire and the Emergency Management Agency, Public Works, Public Health, Environmental Services and the Salvation Army also assisted in the operation.

http://www2.dothaneagle.com/dea/news/local/article/part_of_downtown_blocked_off_as_authorities_investigate_gas_smell/155128/

USA, PA, LAUREL GARDENS, MAY 22 2010. LAUREL GARDENS GASOLINE SPILL TRIAL SET FOR SEPT. 8

jill whalen

A trial date has been set for a handful of plaintiffs in the Laurel Gardens gasoline spill case. Luzerne County Judge Lewis Wetzel will hear the 9-year-old case beginning with jury selection Sept. 8, according to a spokesman from the law firm representing the plaintiffs. The case involves more than 1,100 plaintiffs and a handful of defendants, including Exxon Mobil. It stems from a gasoline spill in a 12- to 20-block area of the Laurel Gardens development in Hazle Township and Hazleton.

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Detected in 1993, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection determined the largest leak originated from holes in underground tanks owned by the former Tranguch Tire and Service Station, North Church Street. An official from the Locks Law Firm, Philadelphia, confirmed that four plaintiffs will proceed with their cases in September. While spokesman Jared Klose confirmed the date, he declined further comment, calling it a "sensitive time for all parties involved in this ongoing litigation." Wetzell, who was sworn in to the county Court of Common Pleas in March, will take over the case from former Judge Joseph Musto, who has retired. The last action in the case came in November when Musto scheduled a trial to hear three lawsuits. Just as jury selection was about to begin, the suits were settled out of court. While no details of the settlement reached with Exxon Mobil were released, attorneys from Philadelphia law firm called the offers "fair." At that time, Musto said the settlements would serve as a "template of how to get the cases moving." Lawyers representing the plaintiffs said in November they expected to try the case against Exxon Mobil in the future. The lawsuits seek compensation for injuries, property damage and medical monitoring. Some plaintiffs have blamed the spill for causing illnesses such as cancer and leukemia. The first phase of the trial will look at who is responsible for the spill. The second phase will determine whether the contamination is to blame for the illnesses. If plaintiffs succeed in the first two phases, compensatory damages will be set and the jury will decide whether plaintiffs are also entitled to punitive damages.

<http://citizensvoice.com/news/laurel-gardens-gasoline-spill-trial-set-for-sept-8-1.799758>

TURKEY, INSTANBUL, MAY 22 2010. TURKEY FINES PETROL OFISI 20 MLN LIRA IN TAX PROBE

Petrol Ofisi, which runs Turkey's biggest chain of gas stations, said on Friday the Finance Ministry fined it 19.9 million lira (\$12.6 million) due to alleged tax irregularities. The fine, which includes back taxes and penalties, is the latest against a company controlled by Dogan Holding, which owns Turkey's biggest media group. Petrol Ofisi will pursue its legal options, including a settlement, and will not pay the fine now, according to a filing with the Istanbul Stock Exchange. The alleged irregularities occurred in 2005, 2006 and 2007, it said. The Finance Ministry last year fined Dogan Yayin, which controls about half of the Turkish media market, 5.7 billion lira (\$3.8 billion) over alleged tax irregularities, raising concerns in the European Union about press freedom in Turkey, which is a candidate for membership. Dogan has said it was singled out because of its critical coverage of Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan's government. Erdogan denies that charge, but has accused Dogan newspapers and channels of acting like an opposition party. His government has pledged to crack down on the country's unregistered economy, which accounts for more than half of gross domestic product. Last year, a court canceled fines totalling 600 million lira against Petrol Ofisi for alleged violations of fuel-distribution regulations. Another court lifted a ban against its participation in state tenders. Dogan Holding controls 53 percent of Petrol Ofisi, while Austria's OMV owns 34 percent.

<http://www.iii.co.uk/news/?type=afxnews&articleid=7906883&subject=economic&action=article>

NEW ZEALAND, WELLINGTON, MAY 22 2010. DOCUMENTS REVEAL PETROL STATION HAZARDS FOR STAFF, PUBLIC

edward gay



Six investigations have been launched into injuries at petrol stations in the last two and-a-half years but less than half involve staff, according to documents from the Department of Labour. The injuries to petrol station employees included a fractured wrist after falling from a step ladder and a fractured right foot when an employee was run over on the forecourt. The other four injuries were to members of the public after slipping on wet surfaces. All six investigations carried out by the Department of Labour between January, 2008 and April this year found no breach of the Health and Safety in Employment (HSE) Act. The information was contained in an Official Information Act Request by nzherald.co.nz after the issue of poor service at petrol stations was raised earlier this month. Aucklander Calvyn Jonker contacted the Herald after being "appalled" by the attitude of staff at one BP station, who refused

to check the water level of a woman's car in case they were burned. BP defended the lack of service. Company spokeswoman Diana Stretch said checking water levels was a no-go zone for service station staff - along with checking tyre pressure. "OSH regulations state that we are required to do an assessment of hazards and take steps to mitigate those hazards. "In those assessments BP has identified that checking of water in radiators, changing tyres and filling tyres with air are all potential hazards to our staff," she told the Herald at the time. Information from ACC shows there were 435 injuries to "petroleum fuel retailing staff" between January 1, 2008 and May this year. Spokesman Fiona Robinson said these numbers cover all employees from petrol pump operators to baristas and mechanics who work in a petrol station. The injuries include 19

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fractures or dislocations and 15 burns but strains and sprains were the most common with 321 cases recorded. There were 348 claimants who claimed a total of \$682,576 from ACC. However, this money does not include costs of transporting the injured people to hospital by ambulance or their hospital care.

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10646630

USA, N.Y, GERMAN FLATTS, MAY 22 2010. THRUWAY REOPENS AFTER ETHANOL TRUCK FIRE

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.wktv.com/news/local/94563319.html>

The Thruway has been reopened after being shut down in both directions while crews transferred a load of ethanol from a tanker truck that caught fire. State Police say a truck hauling 11,000 gallons of ethanol broke down in the right lane of westbound Interstate 90 when its brakes caught fire around 12:30 a.m. Friday in Herkimer County. Police say the highway was closed around 4:40 a.m. between Exit 29A at Little Falls and Exit 30 at Herkimer as a safety precaution while the ethanol was transferred from the disabled truck to another tanker truck. The highway reopened in both directions around 7 a.m. No one was injured in the truck fire.

<http://www.wktv.com/news/local/94563319.html>

USA, CA, PASADENA, MAY 22 2010. WORKER INJURED IN PASADENA CHEMICAL FACTORY EXPLOSION

A worker was hospitalized with minor injuries after an oven explosion at a chemical manufacturing plant, authorities said. The incident was reported about 6 p.m. Wednesday at Materia Inc., 60 N. San Gabriel Boulevard, Pasadena Fire Department spokeswoman Lisa Derderian said. The worker, a man in his 20s, suffered minor lacerations and possible inhalation injuries, she said. A small explosion and fire had occurred in one of the company's processing ovens, Derderian said. The fire was out when firefighters arrived, but the building remained full of smoke. Derderian said the fire remained contained to the oven and caused about \$7,000 worth of damage.

http://www.pasadenastarnews.com/news/ci_15130459

USA, MS, MAY 22 2010. OSHA FINES MISSISSIPPI SHIPBUILDER \$1.3 MILLION

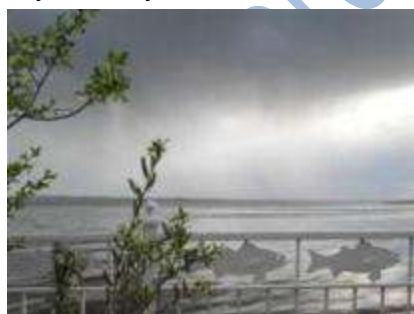
matthew richmond

In response to a 2009 explosion that killed two workers at a Mississippi shipyard, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration [announced](#) a \$1.3 million fine against the employer, VT Halter Marine Inc. The workers were inside of a tugboat under construction, preparing a tank for painting, when the explosion occurred. Two other workers were seriously injured. OSHA cited the company with 17 willful violations, which are given when employers show extreme disregard for safety rules, and 11 serious violations. VT Halter sent the workers, who were subcontractors for the shipbuilder, into an unventilated area with flammable lighting and vapors without testing it first, OSHA said. VT Halter does not have a recent history of major safety violations, [according to the Mississippi Press](#). The company received a \$975 fine from OSHA in 2008 and had a \$15,000 proposed fine reduced to \$5,000 in 2001.

<http://www.fairwarning.org/2010/05/osha-fines-mississippi-shipbuilder-1-3-million/>

CANADA, ALBERTA, LAKE WABAMUN, MAY 22 2010. LAKE WABAMUN RESIDENTS WARNED ABOUT OIL SUBSTANCES

karyn mulcahy



Alberta Health Services is urging Lake Wabamun residents to beware of oil left over in the lake.

Five years after a train derailment spilled bunker c oil substances into Lake Wabamun, Alberta Health Services is reminding residents to beware of visible bunker c oil, oil sheen, tar balls, and oiled vegetation that may be on the beach or in the shallow water along the beachfront. Humans or pets who come into contact with any of the substances in question should clean the area with a product designed to clean oily substances and then rewash the same area with soap and water. Anyone who swallows one of the forms of oil still remaining in the lake or develops a skin rash after coming in contact with the products should seek appropriate medical attention. Residents can contact Health Link Alberta to speak to a registered nurse 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at 780-408-LINK (5465) or, outside the local

calling area, toll-free at 1-866-408-LINK. Visit www.albertahealthservices.ca for health information online. "Alberta Health

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Services continues to monitor the lake water at Lake Wabamun, and we ask users to take appropriate precautions to avoid contact with remaining forms of derailment bunker c oil when they are enjoying recreational activities at the lake," said Dr. Gerry Predy, Senior Medical Officer of Health in a news release. Lake Wabamun is open for recreational use.

<http://www.globalwinnipeg.com/Lake+Wabamun+residents+warned+about+substances/3057347/story.html>

USA, PA, WILKES-BARRE, MAY 22 2010. 16 CLAIMS OVER HAZLETON GAS SPILL ARE SETTLED >> THE ACTION RELATES TO THE LEAKING OF GASOLINE INTO THE GROUND IN HAZLETON.

sheena delazio

More than a dozen plaintiffs in a nine-year-old lawsuit where more than 1,000 plaintiffs allege they were sickened after a gasoline spill in Hazleton have settled their claims. Attorneys Mike Leh and Jonathan Miller, attorneys with the Locks Law Firm in Philadelphia, said Friday that 16 plaintiffs have settled their lawsuits filed against Exxon Mobil for the spill, commonly called the Laurel Gardens gas spill, in Hazleton that leaked hundreds of gallons of gasoline into the ground. "(We) are very pleased that after nearly 10 years of litigation, we have resolved these personal injury cases, arising out of the Laurel Gardens gasoline spill," the attorneys said. "We believe the 16 settlements achieved in these cases are very fair." The attorneys could not disclose the monetary settlement made in the cases. The Locks Law Firm will be representing four plaintiffs in the case in September at a trial recently scheduled by Luzerne County Court Judge Lewis Wetzel. "We continue to look forward to trying the case in September and hope someday to resolve all cases of merit," the attorneys said. "Each of the victims had an individual case, and are entitled to make their own decisions on how to proceed." According to court records, the Locks Law Firm currently represents Hazleton residents Sharon Armstrong, Sidney Steinberg, John Salata, Ruth Ann Generose, Lucy Mikula, Joseph and Regina Gabriel, Mauro Disabella, Michael Pcolinsky, John Yurkanin, Marion Ney, Earl Slusser, Sharon Cicioni, Maria Grace Mussoline, Francis Libonati, and others. The law firm still has a handful of personal injury cases relating to the gas spill that are awaiting a resolution. The original suits date back to 2001, when the plaintiffs alleged that fuel leaks at the former Tranguch Tire and Service Station on Church Street entered the ground, causing residents to fall ill with diseases, including cancer. The case involves the Tranguch business, which closed in 1995 after filing for bankruptcy. The building that still remains on the site is in the process of being torn down. In November, former county judge Joseph Musto said there are approximately 270 cases still pending, and that each may take up to four to six weeks to complete because there are three phases to each case. The first phase includes the jury determining whether Exxon Mobil and other defendants are responsible for the spill and contamination. The second phase determines whether the contamination caused the injuries the plaintiffs allege; while the third would consist of determining the compensation to which the plaintiffs are entitled, including possible punitive damages.

http://www.timesleader.com/news/16_claims_over_spill_are_settled_05-21-2010.html

USA, ILL, ALTON, MAY 22 2010. DIESEL FUEL SPILL CONTAINED

linda n. weller



Alton firefighter Cliff Holshouser spreads oil-absorbent material Friday around a drain to the city sewer to keep pooling diesel fuel from leaking into the sewer. A fuel tank on a tractor-trailer was punctured on Pearl Street after it delivered a load to the Frontier's Home Furnishings Co. warehouse, spilling several gallons of fuel.

Firefighters worked quickly and successfully Friday morning to keep diesel fuel leaking from a truck out of the city's sewer system. However, the entire process of stemming the leak, transferring fuel twice, cleaning up and removing the truck from Pearl Street north of Bozza Street took much of the morning. Assistant Chief Tom House of the Alton Fire Department said truck driver Ryan Dietrek of Fairfield, Ill., had dropped off a delivery to Frontier's Home Furnishings Co. warehouse. At 8:04 a.m., when Dietrek was leaving, he hit a metal vault containing a water meter, rupturing one of the truck's saddle gas tanks, House

said. He said Dietrek works for Sun Container of Mount Vernon. House said the tank that ruptured contained 80 to 100 gallons of fuel, but a professional environmental cleaning company had not determined exactly how much had leaked out onto the street and soil. None got into the sewer system, House said. Firefighters first plugged the hole with putty, then pumped the fuel from the tank into temporary storage barrels. House said they also put down dirt, sand and "oil dry" to absorb the fuel. Safety Partners Ltd. of Godfrey was called to complete the cleanup, also putting down kitty litter to soak up the fuel, House said.

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"They had to transfer fuel from the barrels into (Illinois) Department of Transportation-approved barrels," he said about Safety Partners. The company also notified the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, House said. The area where the fuel leaked was being tested to determine whether a more intensive cleanup is required.

<http://www.thetelegraph.com/news/fuel-40446-house-truck.html>

USA, VIRGIN ISLANDS, ST. THOMAS, MAY 23 2010. SPILLED GASOLINE CAUSES BOAT FIRE

sean mccooy



Onlookers gather at the site of a boat fire on Friday evening in Frenchtown.

One boat was destroyed and others damaged when a gasoline spill caused a fire on the top of the water near a Frenchtown dock on Friday evening. The fire started when a man was siphoning gas from one boat to another and a spill coated the surface of the water, according to several witnesses, and another boat operating nearby caused a spark that ignited the gasoline. That in turn ignited a gas tank, boats and parts of the dock. Contractors with Sea Tow, a boat recovery, salvage and towing service, saw the blaze from Frenchtown and quickly responded to put out the fire with a portable pump. "Those guys did a great job of getting the fire out," said Deputy Fire Chief David Hodge of responders Chris Gagliani, Ann Allard and Chris Urbasek. The most seriously damaged boat was a rigid inflatable about 15 feet in length. That boat sank and a charred hull and engine were all that remained

in the water. A line boat marked as C&C Port Services' Lipstick was damaged in the blaze. Other small boats at the dock appeared to have received cosmetic damage. Officials from the Department of Planning and Natural Resources Enforcement Division, V.I. Police Department and V.I. Fire Department responded to the blaze. "We saw it from the station," Hodge said.

<http://virginislandsdailynews.com/news/spilled-gasoline-causes-boat-fire-1.803124>

USA, MI, JACKSON, MAY 23 2010. UPDATED: LIGHTNING BLOWS HOLE IN PARKING LOT OF ADMIRAL GAS STATION



Jackson Fire Department responded to a lightning strike around 6:30 p.m. Friday, which ignited gas fumes, creating an explosion in an underground gas tank at the Admiral gas station, 1910 E. Michigan Ave. No one was injured in the explosion or strike.

A lightning strike caused an explosion at a Jackson gas station shortly after 6:30 p.m. Friday, leaving a gaping hole surrounded by twisted concrete. Witnesses reported the lightning struck the parking lot of the Admiral station at 1910 E. Michigan Ave. near the station's underground storage tanks, Jackson Fire Department Capt. Dave Van Stempvort said. The lightning evidently ignited gas fumes, blowing the concrete upward, he said. "We're not sure about any leaking at this point," Van Stempvort said. Though firefighters could see no sign of gasoline

pouring out of the tanks, the smell of gas fumes lingered in the air for about 15 minutes after the explosion. R.W. Mercer Co. of Summit Township, which services the station's tanks, was called to inspect them. In the meantime, the fire department evacuated the building, shut off electricity and taped off the surrounding area. "The whole place is shut down until further notice," Van Stempvort said. Ashley Bassett was sitting on her porch across the street from the station when the lightning struck. "That's messed up," Bassett, 17, said. "That hole was not there before that happened." Donald Watson, 49, was inside. "It shook the house," he said. The explosion caused no other damage or injuries. Other lightning strikes caused issues at residences. Blackman Township Public Safety responded to a gas leak at a home on Knightsbridge Lane in the Windham Hills subdivision, and the Summit Township Fire Department responded to an electrical fire in a home on the 1400 block of Wickwire Road.

http://www.mlive.com/news/jackson/index.ssf/2010/05/lightning_blow_hole_in_parkin.html

OIL DISASTERS BY LA TIMES

 **Photo Gallery** <http://bit.ly/d3gHLA>

Drilling and transporting oil around the world has led to disastrous accidents over the years.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-oil-spill-history-html,0,3901663.htmlstory>

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GERMANY, WILHELMSHAVEN, MAY 23 2010. CONOCOPHILLIPS SHUTS REFINERY IN GERMANY FOR MAJOR REPAIRS AFTER FIRE, SOURCES SAY

rachel graham & nidaa bakhsh

ConocoPhillips' biggest European refinery will be closed for weeks of repairs and inspections after fire damage at the plant, two people familiar with the situation said. The crude-distillation unit at the refinery in Wilhelmshaven, Germany, will stay offline at least four weeks while the site is cleaned, inspected and fixed, one of the people said, declining to be identified because the information is not public. ConocoPhillips spokesman Bill Stephens at company headquarters in Houston wouldn't comment, saying the "repair and restart plans, including the schedule, are proprietary and subject to change." The oil giant is considering selling the refinery. The fire occurred in the refinery's primary unit on May 1, days after the plant returned to service following a six-month shutdown because of maintenance and declining demand for fuels. The unit was enclosed in steel scaffolding, which was "heavily damaged" by the fire's heat, creating a risk of collapse, the local fire department said at the time. The closure will reduce demand for crude from the North Sea. The 260,000 barrel-a-day plant makes about 102,000 barrels of distillate fuels a day and an additional 36,000 barrels of gasoline, according to data on ConocoPhillips' website. Moscow-based OAO Lukoil may be among prospective buyers for the site, ConocoPhillips CEO Jim Mulva said May 12. The U.S. refiner may decide later this year on alternatives for the plant, including further investments or a possible sale, Mulva said at the company's annual shareholders' meeting.

<http://www.istockanalyst.com/article/viewiStockNews/articleid/4145681>

USA, N.Y, NEW YORK, MAY 23 2010. TASK FORCE TO RELEASE NEW ESTIMATE OF USG OIL LEAK NEXT WEEK

A revised estimate of how much oil is leaking from BP's Macondo well in the Gulf of Mexico will be released by a federal task force sometime next week, not Saturday as initially believed, a spokeswoman for the Joint Incident Command said Saturday. The timeline was widely reported Friday after BP issued a statement saying the US government's Flow Rate Technical Team would release its report by the end of business Saturday. The spokeswoman for the JIC, who did not want to be identified because she's not authorized to have her name appear in print, said those reports about a Saturday release were "erroneous." "They decided they don't want to rush things," she said of the task force, which is comprised of the US Coast Guard, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Minerals Management Service, the US Department of Energy and the US Geological Survey. The team has been evaluating satellite imagery, photos taken from aircraft and other data to produce an independent estimate of the oil leak rate. BP said it was providing documents and other data to the panel. The task force's work took on added urgency in recent days after BP said a siphon it was using to collect oil at the seabed hit a rate of 5,000 b/d - the official estimate of the total spill - and yet oil continued to leak. BP executive Doug Suttles said Friday the 5,000 b/d rate through the siphon was a peak figure, and that the flow through the tube has averaged about 2,000 b/d. The JIC spokeswoman said the siphon's average for the 24 hours ended at midnight CDT Friday was 2,200 b/d. BP also said Friday that third-party estimates of the overall leak rate -- some as high as 100,000 b/d - were inaccurate if they are assuming a 19.5-inch diameter on the well riser and not taking into account a significant amount of natural gas that is leaking with the oil. BP noted that while the riser's original diameter was 19.5 inches, damage sustained during the Deepwater Horizon's April 20 explosion "distorted" the diameter at the end of the pipe by about 30%. And a drill pipe trapped inside the riser has cut the flow area by another 10%, said BP. "Thus, some third party estimates of flow, which assume a 19.5-inch diameter, are inaccurate," the major said. "As well, there is natural gas in the riser. Data on the hydrocarbons recovered to date suggests that the proportion of gas in the plume exiting the riser is, on average, approximately 50 percent."

Obama Creates Commission To Probe Spill

Earlier Saturday, President Barack Obama said he had created, through an executive order, a bi-partisan commission to investigate the spill. The panel will be chaired by former Florida governor and senator Bob Graham, a Democrat, and former Environmental Protection Agency administrator Bill Reilly. Reilly, a Republican, was EPA chief in 1989 during the Exxon Valdez disaster. He serves on the board of directors of ConocoPhillips. "Folks on the Gulf Coast and across America are rightly demanding swift action to clean up BP's mess and end this ordeal," Obama said in his weekly radio address. "But they're also demanding to know what happened in the first place and how we can make sure it never happens again." Obama said the massive oil slick in the Gulf and the ongoing spill were caused by "a breakdown in responsibility on the part of BP and others, including Transocean and Halliburton." Transocean owned the Deepwater Horizon; Halliburton performed well casing work. "If the laws on our books are inadequate to prevent such a spill, or if we didn't enforce those laws, I want to know it," Obama said. "I want to know what worked and what didn't work in our response to the disaster and where oversight of the oil and gas industry broke down." The president said he will appoint five other people to the commission in the coming days, including scientists, engineers and environmental advocates. The group will report back in six months. "The purpose of this

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commission is to consider both the root causes of the disaster and offer options on what safety and environmental precautions we need to take to prevent a similar disaster from happening again," Obama said.

<http://www.platts.com/RSSFeedDetailedNews.aspx?xmlpath=RSSFeed/HeadlineNews/NaturalGas/6060236.xml>

MEXICO, MEXICO CITY, MAY 23 2010. MEXICO'S IXTOC 1 OIL SPILL A DISTANT MIRROR TO BP DISASTER

Until the BP disaster, the leak in Campeche Sound was the largest spill ever. Scientists were surprised how fast things improved. The Ixtoc 1 oil spill in Mexico's shallow Campeche Sound three decades ago serves as a distant mirror to today's BP deep-water blowout, and marine scientists are still pondering what they learned from its aftereffects. In terms of blowouts, Ixtoc 1 was a monster — until the BP leak, the largest accidental spill in history. Some 3.3 million barrels of oil gushed over nearly 10 months, spreading an oil slick as far north as Texas, where gooey tar balls washed up on beaches. Surprisingly, Mexican scientists say Campeche Sound itself recovered rather quickly, and a sizable shrimp industry returned to normal within two years. Luis Soto, a deep-sea biologist, had earned his doctorate from the University of Miami a year before the June 3, 1979, blowout of Ixtoc 1 in 160 feet of water in the Campeche Sound, the shallow, oil-rich continental shelf off the Yucatán Peninsula. Soto and other Mexican marine scientists feared the worst when they examined sea life in the sound once oil workers finally capped the blowout in March 1980. "To be honest, because of our ignorance, we thought everything was going to die," Soto said. The scientists didn't know what effects the warm temperatures of gulf waters, intense solar radiation and other factors from the tropical ecosystem would have on the crude oil polluting the sound. There were political implications as well; the spill pitted a furious shrimping industry, reliant on the nutrient-rich Campeche Sound, against a powerful state oil company betting its future in offshore drilling, particularly the continental shelf in the Gulf of Mexico it began developing in the late 1970s. In the months after Ixtoc 1 was capped, scientists trawled the waters of the sound for signs of biological distress. "I found shrimp with tumor formations in the tissue, and crabs without the pincers. These were very serious effects," Soto said. Another Mexican marine biologist, Leonardo Lizarraga Partida, said the evaluation team began measuring oil content in the sediment, evaluating microorganisms in the water and checking on the biomass of shrimp species. As the studies extended into a second year, scientists noticed how fast the marine environment recovered, helped by naturally occurring microbes that feasted on the oil and degraded it. Perhaps due to those microbes, aquatic life along the shoreline in Texas had returned to normal within three years — even as tar balls and tar mats remained along the beaches, sometimes covered by sand, according to Wes Tunnell, a marine biologist at Harte Research Institute of Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M University in Corpus Christi. "We were really surprised," Lizarraga said. "After two years, the conditions were really almost normal." The Gulf currents and conditions of the Ixtoc 1 spill helped. Unlike the BP blowout, which has spewed at least 5,000 barrels of oil a day, and perhaps many times that, at depths near 5,000 feet, the Ixtoc 1 oil gushed right to the surface, and currents slowly took the crude north as far as Texas, killing turtles, sea birds and other sea life. "I measured 80 percent reduction in all combined species that were living in the intertidal zone," Tunnell said. While that was severe, Tunnell noted natural oil that seeps from the seabed releases the equivalent of one to two supertankers of crude in the Gulf of Mexico each year. "It's what I call a chronic spill," Tunnell said. "The good side of having all that seepage out there is that we've got a huge population of microbes, bacteria that feed on petroleum products in the water and on shore. So that helps the recovery time."

Related:

- [Frustration mounts as oil seeps into Gulf wetlands](#)
- [Despite spill, Louisiana is still devoted to oil](#)

http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/nationworld/2011931961_ixtoc23.html

AUSTRALIA, VICTORIA, SHEPPARTON, MAY 23 2010. FUEL TANKER CRASHES IN NORTHERN VIC

A fuel tanker has rolled near Shepparton in northern Victoria, spilling fuel onto the road. The accident happened on Doyles Road in Orrvale just before 6:00am (AEST). The Country Fire Authority says two 8,000-litre fuel tanks have ruptured and are leaking unleaded petrol and diesel. Fire crews have blanketed the spill with foam to avoid an explosion. Police have closed the bypass road around Shepparton. The truck driver has been taken to hospital with minor injuries.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/05/23/2906851.htm>

USA – LA, MAY 23 2010. LIVE VIDEO LINK FROM THE ROV MONITORING THE DAMAGED RISER

http://www.bp.com/liveassets/bp_internet/globalbp/globalbp_uk_english/homepage/STAGING/local_assets/bp_homepage/html/rov_stream.html

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