



Dangerous Goods - Hazardous Materials Group & Network

Release 2011 – 782 Newsy Stuff

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AUSTRALIA, NEW SOUTH WALES, NEWCASTLE, NOVEMBER 21 2011. INQUIRY ATTACK ON 'SHIFTY' ORICA BOSS OVER LEAK

liz foschia

 [Watch the Video Parker accused of missing Orica calls](#)



The head of chemical company Orica has been described as "shifty" and "evasive" by a New South Wales Government Minister over a toxic leak in Newcastle earlier this year. Finance Minister Greg Pearce was among several Cabinet members to give evidence today at an inquiry by the state's Upper House over the August leak of hexavalent chromium. Mr Pearce appeared as the Minister responsible for WorkCover NSW, eating his breakfast as he gave his evidence. He was scathing of Orica's managing director and chief executive, Graeme Liebelt. "Mr Liebelt is someone that one would have difficulty being confident in believing in anything in relation to this," Mr Pearce said. "I saw a little bit of his evidence before this committee the other day. At best you could describe it as shifty and evasive." Mr Liebelt told the inquiry last week he had tried to speak with Environment Minister

Robyn Parker three times after the August leak, but was told she was too busy to take his calls. Ms Parker will appear before the committee herself this afternoon, while Premier Barry O'Farrell also gave evidence this morning. Mr O'Farrell again defended Ms Parker over delays in alerting the public about the leak, telling the inquiry they were the fault of Orica and Government agencies. The Premier also referred to an already completed inquiry he ordered into the leak. "There were unacceptable delays. The notification of Orica to the agencies, the agencies to Government, an elected Government, which I think relates to a culture," Mr O'Farrell said. "A culture that Mr O'Reilly has addressed in his report, a culture that we are changing through those changes to legislation and to arrangements, particularly in relation to cross-agency communication. As Mr O'Farrell walked in to give his evidence he told journalists he did not think the Upper House inquiry was necessary. "The Upper House can do what they want to do," Mr O'Farrell said. "My perspective is though, when I doorknocked Stockton what the residents wanted to know was not about the politics of it, not about the inquiries, but what's going to happen to ensure it doesn't eventuate again. "Through the O'Reilly report we've made recommendations, including strengthening the EPA (Environmental Protection Authority)." An official from one of those Government agencies involved, Chief Medical Officer Kerry Chant, told the inquiry she did not find out about the leak until nearly two days after it happened. "It would have been most appropriate for all agencies to be aware of this event on the Monday," Dr Chant said. Ms Parker and Dr Chant did not make public statements about the leak for another day after they were informed. Dr Chant told the hearing by that time the real risk had passed and Orica had already been door-knocking residents. "In terms of the exposure roots to which people were going to be exposed that evening, given this was in the middle of winter, it was considered... people would not be significantly exposed overnight and it would allow us to give the best possible information to the community first thing in the morning," she said.

Related Links

- [Orica plant shut indefinitely after chemical leak](#)
- [Parker backed over Orica leak performance](#)
- [No longer welcome in Newcastle, Orica told](#)
- [Plant upgrade behind Orica leak, inquiry hears](#)
- [Parker 'too busy' to take Orica's calls](#)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-11-21/inquiry-attack-on-27shifty27-origa-boss-over-leak/3684552?section=business>

PAKISTAN, RAJANPUR, NOVEMBER 21 2011. MILLIONS OF RUPEES OIL PILFERED FROM PARCO REFINERY

An increasingly sophisticated cartel stole oil worth millions of rupees from PARCO facilities in Kot Addu, officials said. Disguising himself as a cotton dealer, one Mir Ahmad, son of Dur Muhammad, constructed a house in Model Town, Jampur. The man allegedly tapped into underlying pipelines which were directly feeding the oil company's refinery. Every morning and evening mini tanker trucks seemingly filled with cotton came to his house. But no-one knew what was going on. On Saturday, one of Ahmad's neighbours saw oil oozing out of his locked house. He then reported to police about the leakage. Jampur DSP Malik Bashir Ahmad and PARCO officers rushed to the house. They broke open the door and found a large quantity of oil in



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the house. Equipment used for pilfering was confiscated. The police suspect that it was a cartel having many members. However, a case has been registered against Ahmed.

<http://nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Regional/Lahore/21-Nov-2011/Millions-of-rupees-oil-pilfered-from-Parco-refinery>

USA, WASHINGTON DC, NOVEMBER 21 2011. CONNOLLY INTRODUCES BILL TO CRACK DOWN ON LEAKS AT TANK FARMS

fredrick kunkle

U.S. Rep. Gerald E. Connolly (D-Va.) has returned to an issue that not only hits close to home but also long ago put him on a path to politics: leaky oil tanks. Last week, [Connolly](#) introduced a bill that would require the federal government to shut down any petroleum storage facility that repeatedly leaks oil in a residential area or contaminates its groundwater. The Protecting Neighborhoods From Oil Pollution Act of 2011, filed Nov. 15, would modify the Federal Water Pollution Control Act by requiring the closure of any plant that is within one mile of 100 or more dwellings and has had two or more discharges within a 10-year period. The measure also would close any oil storage facility that causes groundwater contamination affecting 100 or more dwellings. The bill, [H.R. 3426](#), would require the facilities to close even if the discharges resulted from an act of God, war or negligence by the federal government. Although the proposed law would affect any tank farm in the United States, Connolly's bill takes aim at a storage depot in his back yard: the Pickett Road Tank Farm in the eastern part Fairfax City, which has been fueling tanker trucks since the 1960s. In 1991, Connolly was president of the Mantua Citizens Association when a large, underground spill from the tank farm seeped into his Fairfax County neighborhood, according to a Washington Post account at the time. There have been other leaks, including one in [January 2010](#) that spilled more than 7,000 gallons of diesel fuel on the premises. This year, Virginia's General Assembly, pushed by Sen. J. Chapman "Chap" Petersen (D-Fairfax) and Del. David L. Bulova (D-Fairfax), moved to tighten regulations on the above-ground storage depot. A [law](#) signed by Gov. Robert F. McDonnell (R) in May requires that all tank farms follow current safety codes, such as ensuring that their tanks have double hulls. But one of the companies with operations at Pickett Road suggested that Connolly's bill might go too far. "I think it's important the environment be protected and people's neighborhoods need to be protected, but if you closed it down you'd also have to deal with how you distribute motor fuels in Northern Virginia," said Sam Whitehead, a spokesman for [Colonial Pipeline](#), which operates a pipeline at the tank farm. Five companies — [Citgo](#), a Houston-based petroleum company; [Motiva](#), a Houston-based venture that is jointly owned by Shell Oil and Saudi Arabia Refining; [TransMontaigne](#), a Denver-based fuel supply firm; [Buckeye Partners](#), a publicly traded pipeline company headquartered in Houston; and Colonial Pipeline — use the site, said the city fire marshal, Andrew S. Wilson. Wilson, whose office is charged with inspecting the depot, estimates that the tank farm supplies about 40 percent of the gas used by the region's service stations. Wilson said workers have recovered nearly 7,500 gallons from the Jan. 28, 2010, leak of diesel fuel from TransMontaigne's terminal. The leak was caused by a rupture in underground piping, and none of the spillage left the site, Wilson said. The underground piping has been replaced with above-ground pipes that are easier to inspect. Wilson said the state's [Department of Environmental Quality](#) recently formed an advisory panel, of which he is a member, on implementing the new Virginia law. A spokeswoman for Buckeye Partners said the company would not comment on the measure. Calls to other companies that use the terminal were not returned.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/connolly-introduces-bill-to-crack-down-on-leaks-at-tank-farms/2011/11/18/gIQA9IX4fN_story.html

ENGLAND, GRANTHAM, NOVEMBER 22 2011. MENTALLY ILL FIRE-STARTER SPRAYED FUEL ALL OVER PETROL STATION AND IGNITED IT

A deranged arsonist will be locked up indefinitely after spraying petrol all over a Grantham petrol station forecourt, before setting it alight and fleeing the scene. Mentally ill fire-starter Hussian Murad attacked the Grantham filling station on Boxing Day last year, before driving to Swaffham where he did the same thing again. Recorder of Norwich, Judge Peter Jacobs, praised attendant at the Swaffham filling station, Trudy Smith, who still suffers nightmares from the incident. "She had great presence of mind to turn off the supply to the pumps. That is almost certainly the reason the whole garage didn't blow up," said the judge. During a trial which lasted two days Murad, 33, of Holkham Avenue, Leicester was cleared of arson being reckless as to whether lives were endangered. But he was convicted of two straight forward arson charges which did not involve recklessness. Making an order without a time limit, the judge told him: "If you were released into the community the medicine



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would not be taken and you would be a real danger to yourself and others." Murad was detained under the Mental Health Act. His motives were not clear due to his illness but the judge said he felt it was predominantly a wish to return to Iraq, from where he came years ago as an asylum seeker. Andrew Oliver, prosecuting, said "Murad started a fire at 11.15pm in very dangerous circumstances after driving into the BP garage on the A47 and went up to pump 7 and another car pulled up behind. "He put petrol in his tank and went to the passenger door, removed the petrol pump and sprayed it for a few seconds into the passenger area, bending down before an explosion and the car going up in flames. "The car behind reversed and Trudy Smith, the attendant, cut off fuel to all the pumps, also ringing the emergency services. He left on foot, being seen walking down the A47 towards Dereham. "Police stopped him 400-500 metres away and he smelled very strongly of fuel and fire – his hair was singed and he had a red lighter in his jacket pocket." When interviewed, he said he had gone to Heathrow and Dover to leave the country to return to his native Iraq. Mr Oliver continued : "He was clearly unwell. He said: 'I didn't want to take my car home and I had an argument with my girlfriend on Christmas Day. I don't know why I caused the fires other than to get arrested so I could go back'." Referring to the earlier incident, Mr Oliver said : "It occurred at 6.30am at Marston, between Newark and Grantham, on the A1 when he sprayed two and half litres of petrol onto the forecourt and caused two feet high flames. The attendant used two buckets of sand to extinguish the flame. Murad ran away but then returned and drove off in his car, Consultant forensic psychiatrist Dr Simon Plunkett said it was clear Murad was ill: "He has responded to treatment and is now aware of the risks of his actions."

http://www.granthamjournal.co.uk/news/local/mentally_ill_fire_starter_sprayed_fuel_all_over_petrol_station_and_ignited_it_1_3267421

AUSTRALIA, NEW SOUTH WALES, BALLINA, NOVEMBER 22 2011. TANKER CRASH CAUSES HWY CHAOS

rebecca lollback

 **Photo's [16]** [Fuel tanker rolls, blocks highway](#)



Emergency workers at the scene of the fuel tanker rollover at the Teven Road interchange on the Pacific Highway south of Ballina yesterday, November 21.

A tanker rollover near the new Teven Rd roundabout at West Ballina yesterday caused major traffic delays in both directions. The accident, involving a fuel tanker, happened about 7.30am. Richmond Local Area Command supervisor Acting Sergeant Stephen Sivewright said the truck was the only vehicle involved in the accident. "The 27-year-old male driver was not hurt," he said. "The tanker was carrying 45,000 litres of diesel but only a small amount of that was spilled. "Most of the diesel was able to be contained." Motorists reported lengthy delays on the highway, with traffic being diverted along Teven Rd while the clean-up was in progress. The Bruxner Highway and Bangalow Road via Lismore were also used

as alternative routes. Alternating traffic conditions remained in place for much of the day, with 5km queues of traffic northbound. A spokesman from NSW Fire and Rescue said the clean-up was mostly finished by 2.30pm. One lane in each direction remained closed throughout the afternoon while emergency crews continued with the work. NSW Ambulance Brunswick Valley zone district manager, Inspector Greg Powell, said two crews from Ballina and a duty operations manager from Lismore initially responded to the reports of a truck roll-over. "Upon arriving at the scene, paramedics assessed the condition of the male driver," he said. "But he was uninjured and did not require any assistance. "One crew remained on the scene to provide medical support to NSW Fire and Rescue during the hazardous clean-up. "We rotated that crew throughout the day."

<http://www.northernstar.com.au/story/2011/11/21/major-traffic-delays-after-truck-rollover-ballina/>

USA, LA, DEQUINCY NOVEMBER 22 2011. VANDALS TARGET BEAUREGARD OIL WELL, CAUSE SPILL

Beauregard Parish sheriff's officials responded early Sunday to a vandalism call from an oil-well site off Highway 389 near DeQuincy. The caller said that someone vandalized the oil site, creating a major spill. Sources say 220 barrels were spilled. Environmental issues are not expected since sites like these are normally encircled by a berm. Hazmat teams were called out to clean up the oily mess. Midstates Petroleum representatives have not commented on the spill.

<http://www.kplctv.com/story/16094506/vandals-target-beauregard-oil-well-cause-spill>



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USA, LA, NEW ORLEANS, NOVEMBER 22 2011. LOUISIANA GROUP RELEASES REPORT ON OIL REFINERY MALFUNCTIONS

A new report from local environmental group [Louisiana Bucket Brigade](#) has called out the state's oil refinery operators for poor accident records. The new report, entitled "Common Ground III: Why cooperation to reduce accidents at Louisiana refineries is needed now," tracked emissions reports from the states numerous oil refining plants. The group looked at excess emissions and their stated causes, including fires and flares caused by tests and repairs to malfunctions and power outages. Over the course of 2010, the report found Louisiana oil refineries averaged nearly daily accidents, with 354 incidents over the course of the year, resulting in nearly 490 tons of gas emissions. "These ongoing, seemingly small problems are warning signs that should alert refinery managers to enact comprehensive solutions," the report says, according to Reuters. With 18 percent of U.S. oil refining capacity, the Bucket Brigade argues even small problems could lead to major disasters, insisting that the refining plants must hire more union workers to better maintain their facilities, while the Environmental Protection Agency should step up reviews and enforcement. However, Reuters reports oil companies have argued with both the reports accuracy and its conclusions, with Exxon Mobil contesting the figures for its refineries and Citgo noting its plant reported no such incidents.

Related Links

- [Louisiana's troubled refineries averaged an accident a day in 2010](#)
- [Surprise inspection of beleaguered Calumet refinery exposes serious problems](#)
- [Read the complete EPA inspection of Calumet Lubricants here.](#)

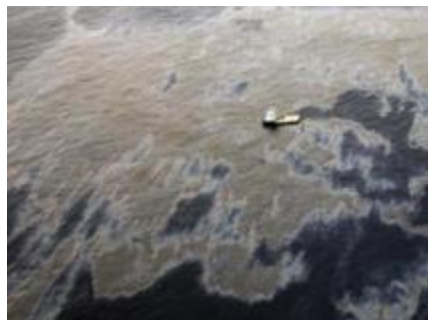
<http://www.pennenergy.com/index/petroleum/display/7233222491/articles/pennenergy/petroleum/refining/2011/11/louisiana-group-releases.html>

BRAZIL, RIO DE JANEIRO, NOVEMBER 22 2011. CHEVRON FINED \$27M FOR BRAZIL OIL SPILL >> US OIL GIANT COULD STILL FACE MILLIONS IN ADDITIONAL FINES IF FEDERAL INVESTIGATION REVEALS FURTHER INFRACTIONS.

• **Watch the Video** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDUxTiXkPB8>

• **Watch the Video:**

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/americas/2011/11/2011112262054557875.html>



An aerial view shows oil that seeped from a well operated by Chevron at Frade, on the waters in Campos Basin in Rio de Janeiro.

Oil giant Chevron has been fined \$27m by the Brazilian government for causing an offshore oil spill, but the penalty could rise as the US company faces a political backlash over the accident. The fine, announced on Monday, comes a day after Chevron accepted full responsibility for the leak of 2,400 barrels at the Frade oil project, 370km off the coast of Rio de Janeiro. The accident at the field, owned in partnership with Brazil's state-controlled oil company Petrobras and a Japanese consortium, had slowed to a "residual" flow, said Haroldo Lima, head of Brazil's National Petroleum Agency (ANP). At it's height, the leak - which began on November 7 after a rupture in the well's structure - released 200 to 330 barrels per day.

Additional Fines

Al Jazeera's Gabriel Elizondo, reporting from Sao Paulo, said that the \$27mn fine was the maximum amount regulators were permitted to impose under Brazilian law. However, additional fines could be levied against Chevron if a federal investigation reveals further infractions. Magda Chambriad, director of ANP, told reporters at a news conference on Monday that Chevron could face two additional fines of up to \$27m each. Meanwhile, Rio de Janeiro's environment secretary said that the eastern state could levy \$16m in fines against the oil giant. A fine of \$27m is roughly equivalent to the value of three-and-a-half days of output from the Frade field, which Chevron says produces 79,000 barrels per day.

'On Watch'

Brazil's biggest oil spill since 2000 is a threat to Chevron's credibility in the country after the company acknowledged it had caused the accident by wrongly estimating pressure and rock strength in the reservoir it was targeting. While Chevron's



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current production in Brazil is relatively small, at less than one per cent of its 2010 worldwide output, the company has invested heavily in the country's offshore fields. The total cost of Frade has been put at \$2.8bn, while Chevron also has a 37.5 per cent interest in the \$5.2bn Petrobras-operated Papa Terra project in the Campos basin - which could double Chevron's production from the country. Chevron, which faces a police probe and has been called to testify in Brazil's Congress, initially said it believed the leak was a natural seepage. Our correspondent said that at least one Chevron contract could be re-evaluated as a result of the spill. "If they mess up again...it's like they're on watch now. So they have to be careful," said Phil Weiss, oil analyst at Argus Research in New York.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/americas/2011/11/2011112262054557875.html>

USA, MI, SAGINAW, THOMAS TWP, NOVEMBER 22 2011. CHEMICAL VAPOR LEAK AT HEMLOCK SEMICONDUCTOR GROUP

maria amante



Hemlock Semiconductor in Thomas Township, view is to the west.

A chemical vapor leak at Hemlock Semiconductor Group's manufacturing site Saturday morning forced the Saginaw County facility to close for approximately 30 minutes. No injuries were reported, but roads were blocked around the factory and nearby residents were told to stay indoors. Michael R. Cousins, Thomas Township fire chief, said the call came in at 10:40 a.m. from HSC seeking backup as a precaution. The Richland Township fire department also responded to the call. "I like them to take precautionary measures just in case, but it does put undue panic into the community, so we're working with them on that," Cousins said. "The actions the other day was appropriate response to their problem." The leak was a minor

vapor release that extended beyond the plant's fence line, Leslie Orozco, spokeswoman for Hemlock Semiconductor, said in a statement. Residents within one mile northeast of the plant were asked to stay in their homes, but Cousins said none of the gas release was detected off HSC property. The contaminant leaked was [chlorosilane](#), Cousins said. He said it gives off an odor similar to ammonia and is irritating to eyes and throat. Cousins said workers at HSC were conducting a maintenance operation and cleaning a vessel, but specific details were unavailable about how the leak happened. He has requested an investigation and HSC also is conducting an internal investigation. The fire department is working with HSC to ensure such situations are less inconvenient for residents surrounding the plant in the future, Cousins said. "I certainly admit it can be bothersome. It's inconvenient when something like this takes place," he said.

http://www.mlive.com/news/saginaw/index.ssf/2011/11/chemical_vapor_leak_at_hemlock.html

CANADA, B.C, LANGLEY, NOVEMBER 22 2011. COMMERCIAL VEHICLE INSPECTION FINDS RANGE OF VIOLATIONS



An RCMP Traffic Section officer draws a bead with a radar gun during a Thursday (Nov. 10) speeding crackdown on 200 St. near the Langley Events Centre. It was part of a province-wide ICBC-backed campaign.

Drivers and vehicle owners are hauling cargo that is overweight, insecure, and in the case of one hazardous load, proper safety valving was absent. Some of the drivers caught in a commercial vehicle check earlier this month in Langley were speeding, talking on a cellphone while driving, and failed to properly fill out forms. Ten of 13 vehicle inspected were found to have violations under the federal and provincial transportation of dangerous goods laws and regulations. These violations included non-compliance with documentation, quantities of dangerous goods onboard, safety marks, load security, and means of containment. The most serious violation involved a high hazard dangerous goods cargo tank which was found to have open internal self-closing valving. Langley RCMP Traffic Services dedicated three days at the end of October to commercial vehicle inspections, in partnership with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement (CVSE), Federal Dangerous Goods Inspectors ([Transport Canada](#)) and Fraser



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Valley Integrated Road Safety Unit. Of the 2,141 commercial vehicles checked 129 were selected for further inspection. Of these, 10 vehicles passed, 59 required minor repairs and 60 required repairs before being allowed to proceed. While the transportation ministry inspectors were more focused on commercial transport safety infractions, RCMP officers were checking both commercial and passenger vehicles. The RCMP say that they will remain vigilant in their pursuit of impaired drivers as well as their commitment to public safety, making impaired driving by drugs and/or alcohol, and driving while fatigued a high priority during inspections. Tickets and warnings were issued to 70 drivers for not wearing a seat belt, and 25 to those who were using a cell phone as they drove. Eighteen drivers were given tickets for driver's licence infractions, 11 were caught speeding, three had no insurance, and one was served notice of a driving ban. Vehicle inspections were ordered for 67 vehicles, 13 drivers were ticketed for pre-trip and log-book violations, six for having an insecure load, and four for carrying a load that was too heavy. Cpl. Holly Marks, who speaks for Langley RCMP, said that officers and inspectors were particularly concerned about the number of drivers distracted by cellphones, given that 47 per cent of traffic fatalities in the Lower Mainland are caused by cell phone use. Marks added that there has been an increase in the number of serious injuries and/or fatal collisions involving commercial vehicles. She noted, however, that despite the large number (273) of violation tickets issued "it is important to remember the overwhelming majority of vehicles checked were being operated in a professional manner."

<http://www.bclocalnews.com/news/134289403.html>

USA, VA, CHESAPEAKE, NOVEMBER 22 2011. FUEL TANK FIRES COULD SPELL CATASTROPHE FOR CHESAPEAKE

david ham

 **Watch the Video:**

<http://www.wvec.com/my-city/chesapeake/Fuel-tank-fires-could-spell-catastrophe-for-Chesapeake-134285273.html>



13News has learned that Chesapeake firefighters do not have the necessary equipment and training to properly fight a fuel tank fire. In an application for FEMA's Assistance to Firefighters Grant, Chesapeake Fire Department wrote:

"We have determined a worst case scenario that places our community and firefighters at great risk... Currently, neither the Chesapeake fire Department nor the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Area has the equipment or training needed to mitigate a potential catastrophic incident such as a tank fire." There are 12 fuel farms along the Elizabeth River in Chesapeake. Firefighters say a fuel tank at the Hess Terminal is the most hazardous in the city. A spokeswoman for Hess told 13News by e-mail

that the company believes it is prepared to handle a tank fire. "At our Chesapeake Terminal, we maintain fire-fighting capabilities to be prepared to handle the largest potential tank fire at the facility," said Lorrie Hecker Hess spokeswoman. However, if that equipment failed, city equipment may not be enough to contain the fire. Nearby Fire hydrants only provide a flow of water at 1,500 gallons per minute. Firefighters say a flow of 7,000 gallons per minute is necessary to contain the tank fire because of the highly flammable nature of the mixture of fuels. "The difference is that we were fighting a different type of fuel at the time. Gasoline 20 years ago is different from gasoline today," said Deputy Chief Dan Fermil of the Chesapeake Fire Department. Chesapeake Fire Dept. is applying for \$726,000 in FEMA grant money to buy equipment and training. Firefighters are asking for foam eductors, foam concentrate, pumping system and additional training to update what is already in place to fight fuel fires. "Foam is really the only way you can really contain the fire and extinguish it," said Fermil. Council member Cliff Hayes says getting the equipment and training has been talked about for years but has never been done. "I think we can always do better and here's a chance for us to do that - whether it's applying for this grant or even finding other funding alternatives - heightening the awareness in the region so we can handle this situation," said Hayes. Chesapeake's tank farms have experienced a disastrous situation just four years ago. Two million gallons of fertilizer spilled into the nearby South Hill neighborhood. "Today we're wondering - is it in the ground, in the river? Where is it? Nobody knows," said Chakeeta Rivers who lives on Banks Street. She did not know the city didn't have the equipment necessary to quickly contain fuel tank fires. "The one right there in front of my house, if that was to erupt, we wouldn't have a chance," said Rivers. Air quality could also suffer if a fuel tank fire were to burn for days. "It can cause irritation to your nose, throat, eyes and skin," said Dr. Anna Jeng, a health sciences professor at Old Dominion University. Dr. Jeng also outlined how spilled fuel could also impact water quality in



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the Elizabeth River. "That's enough to deteriorate water quality of the Elizabeth river to a very severe degree," said Dr. Jeng. A spokesperson for FEMA says it will announce grant awardees within the coming weeks. Nationally, \$380,747,000 is available for fire departments for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant.

<http://www.wvec.com/my-city/chesapeake/Fuel-tank-fires-could-spell-catastrophe-for-Chesapeake-134285273.html>

USA, CA, TORRANCE, NOVEMBER 22 2011. CLEANUP AT CARSON'S CAROUSEL HOUSING TRACT STILL STALLED AFTER 2 YEARS

More than two years after oily sludge was discovered trapped in the soil several feet below Carson's 50-acre Carousel housing tract, plans to clean up the mess are still moving slowly. The bureaucratic process, beset by delays and weighed down by demands from numerous regulatory agencies, is frustrating residents who occupy the 285-home community. "How much more does anyone think we can take?" Barbara Post, president of the Carousel Homeowners Association, wrote in an email. "Our lives have been turned upside down, we are between a rock and a hard place, we are trapped in here. We are stressed and so frustrated." Work on the final sitewide cleanup could be months - or even years - away. The next step is a test on three to six homes that will analyze several methods to determine the best way to go about removing and replacing contaminated soil. That pilot plan is finished and awaiting final approval from state regulators. Once given the OK, work should begin within a few weeks. That phase is set to take 120 days but will first require homeowner approval. Residents are involved in an ongoing lawsuit against Shell Oil Co., which operated an oil tank farm on the property from the 1920s to the 1960s and caused the existing problems. That suit is being litigated by Girardi Keese, the firm that famously won a case against Pacific Gas and Electric for contaminating drinking water in Hinkley, Calif. That case was dramatized in the 2000 feature film "Erin Brockovich." Tom Girardi, who represents the residents, has argued that Shell should immediately relocate them and compensate them for their homes. He has argued that the contamination is more dangerous than state officials have acknowledged. "We have more testing of the Carousel stuff than I've ever seen in my life," he said. "We have everything we need to show that this place is not livable. No question about it. Shell even put out a memo that says not to let your children dig in the backyard. This area is not fit to have a family living in it." State environmental regulators have said that testing, which is ongoing and includes four phases of soil and air monitoring, has revealed little risk to human health. "We've found problems below the houses but they are not affecting the air inside the house," said Gene Freed, program manager for Shell Oil Products' Environmental Services division. Contamination is also unevenly spread, Freed said. Testing will determine where cleaning will take place. The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board - the agency charged with approving cleanup plans - ordered Shell to clean affected soil to 10 feet deep, and to possibly remove concrete reservoirs left in the ground when the tank farm was demolished and homes were built at the site in the late 1960s. It sits north of Lomita Boulevard between Marabella and Panama avenues. Freed said the pilot program will give the company an opportunity to determine which of three methods of removing the soil and debris works best. One way would be to dig narrow, deep holes and remove concrete with backhoes. Another would involve shoring trenches with material to keep dirt from falling in on workers who will climb in and dig out the debris. A third method involves digging a huge hole that progressively gets smaller with depth in order to keep the walls from falling in on workers. Once the test plan is completed, Shell officials must submit a final work plan to the water board for approval. Freed said four rounds of soil and air tests have been taking place at the Carousel tract since last year in an effort to determine whether hazardous methane and hydrocarbons from underground oil are seeping into the air inside people's homes. However, Shell officials said that while 90 percent of the homeowners have allowed testers to check the soil around their houses, only about 15 percent have permitted an extensive indoor air sampling test that requires them to leave the house for a day while testers remove all chemicals in the home and leave machines to monitor for any and all hazardous particles. "The testing of the inside of our homes means packing up all kinds of items. (They) go through our drawers and closets to make sure we haven't overlooked anything. We have to board our pets and then pack up and go to a hotel," Post wrote in an email. "We do not like it but I am not aware of any refusals." Shell, state environmental regulators and residents' attorneys are at an impasse about the level of risk to human health. While Shell officials continue to argue that more testing is needed to determine if there is any immediate hazard in the air inside homes, Girardi said that they are simply stalling to complete work. "We have benzene coming up in the cement grooves of patios," Girardi said. "This is an abandoned oil field with nothing but benzene and other products harmful to people. I think that the water board has their rules and the people have theirs. "Shell is the most miserable, rotten defendants we've ever sued. The law says you can't pollute or expose people to benzene and arsenic. That's what the law says."

http://www.dailybreeze.com/news/ci_19386157



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AUSTRALIA, A.C.T, CANBERRA, NOVEMBER 22 2011. AUSTRALIA LIFTS OIL SPILL FINES TO \$11 MILLION



MV Shen Neng 1 aground on the Great Barrier Reef, April 2010.

Australia has increased maximum fines for ships that spill oil from \$1 million to \$11 million (US \$11 million) in response to a Chinese coal carrier grounding on the Great Barrier Reef. Parliament passed new laws late Monday for the discharge of oil or oil residue by ships in Australian waters. Shipping companies will also have to contribute to cleanup costs. The change follows last year's grounding on the world's largest chain of coral reefs by the Shen Neng 1, which spilled nearly 3 tons of fuel oil. The ship's officers were fined about \$50,000.

Related Links

- [Australian Parliament Jacks Up Maximum Oil Spill Fines](#)
- [Australia lifts oil spill fines to \\$11 million](#)

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http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hzA45t7Ropvt7X2_Jo5jIKuioZ6Q?docId=2e129b28de734f1792b8d6f491b902ee

ENGLAND, BATH, NOVEMBER 23 2011. WOMAN, 55, DIES AFTER SETTING HERSELF ON FIRE AT PETROL PUMPS



Tragedy: The petrol station where the woman set herself on fire in an apparent suicide.

A woman died after setting herself on fire at a petrol pump. The 55-year-old from Bath, Somerset, was seen at the Sainsbury's filling station strolling across the forecourt and dousing herself with fuel and setting herself alight. Two workers staff tried to put the fire out by spraying her with bottles of water. Two fire engines were called to the store in Green Park, Bath, and the woman was rushed to hospital with severe burns. She later died at the nearby Royal United Hospital from her injuries. The Avon Coroner's office is now investigating the horrific incident with police but there are said to be no suspicious circumstances. Sainsbury's store manager Lindsey Roughsedge said they would be doing what they could to support

colleagues who were involved in the incident. She said: 'This was a terribly sad incident and it has been very traumatic for the colleagues in our petrol filling station who tried desperately to help. 'Our focus now is to help and support colleagues who have been affected in whatever way we can.' Police say they are not treating the death as suspicious but are investigating the circumstances surrounding the incident.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2064878/Woman-55-dies-setting-petrol-pumps.html?ito=feeds-newsxml>

USA, MO, KANSAS CITY, NOVEMBER 23 2011. SEMI CARRYING RUBBING ALCOHOL OVERTURNS

chris oberholtz

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.kctv5.com/story/16100074/semi-carrying-rubbing-alcohol-overtURNS>

 **Watch the Video** <http://fox4kc.com/2011/11/22/tanker-truck-crash-closes-front-street-for-time/>

The intersection of Riverfront Road and Front Street is back open after a crash scrambled a hazardous materials team. Police said a tractor-trailer carrying rubbing alcohol overturned there at 3:45 a.m. Tuesday. The hazardous materials team was called in case the alcohol, which is flammable, spilled, but no leaks were found. The driver was not hurt and crews were able to get the truck back up and rolling two hours later.

<http://www.kctv5.com/story/16100074/semi-carrying-rubbing-alcohol-overtURNS>

USA, PA, PHILADELPHIA, NOVEMBER 23 2011. THREE OIL REFINERIES ON US EAST COAST FACE POSSIBLE SHUTDOWN

trent novak

Three major oil refineries in the Philadelphia area are slated to close by the end of next summer unless a buyer steps in to purchase them. If these refineries shut down, 2,000 oil workers will immediately find themselves unemployed, and the nearby



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communities are expected to lose about 20,000 more jobs due to economic aftershocks. On September 6, Sunoco announced it planned to sell its refineries in Marcus Hook and South Philadelphia. Later in the month, ConocoPhillips followed suit by putting its Trainer refinery up for sale and having its workers set the facility to idling. Together, the three refineries are estimated to comprise roughly a third of the East Coast's refining capacity. In recent weeks, labor union officials have organized a public rally in Marcus Hook with the declared intention of demonstrating local support for oil workers, even as a group of prominent Pennsylvania politicians have requested a federal analysis on the possible consequences of the refineries' closure. Hundreds of workers, union members, and local residents turned out for the November 6 rally, marching several blocks from a United Steelworkers (USW) meeting hall to Market Square Memorial Park alongside the Delaware River. Members of the USW, United Auto Workers and other unions participated. Afterward, politicians and union officials gave brief speeches professing their support for American workers and the Marcus Hook oil workers in particular. Although the rally was billed as an effort to mobilize workers and residents, the implicit agenda was to market the community to potential buyers as a willing and ready labor pool. An article in the Philadelphia Inquirer quotes David Miller, president of a USW local, announcing that Marcus Hook and the other refinery areas are more than willing to help any buyer who takes over the sites. "Anyone who's looking to make money, c'mon down and we'll all help," he declared. "Buy all three and you can be the biggest, baddest dog on the block." The mayor of Marcus Hook, James D. Schiliro, declared the purpose of the rally to be "coming together to show the buyers that we can make it work and we can make them money." Senator Bob Casey (Democrat) and Congressman Pat Meehan (Republican) were also present. Both men are included on the list of lawmakers seeking a US Energy Information Administration assessment on how the loss of the refineries would affect energy prices throughout the region. While workers came out of concern over potential job losses, they were provided with no means of fighting. Instead, the rally was a platform for the two parties of big business and the nationalist orientation of the labor unions. One USW local president insisted that "keeping jobs in the US is an absolute priority," while other speakers emphasized that the refinery closings are not a "partisan" issue, but a matter of "whoever we can work together with." The absurdity of a nationalistic approach and one that uncritically accepts the corporate control of the energy giants and banks becomes obvious the moment one examines the economic factors behind Sunoco and ConocoPhillips's decision. All three of the Philadelphia refineries are only equipped to process a lighter, sweeter variety of crude oil instead of the heavier, more sour kind used by most refining facilities. Lighter crude is more expensive, has to be shipped from a handful of countries, and makes up the vast majority of Sunoco's crude oil purchases. An article by a Reuters market analyst notes that, in July, Sunoco was getting most of its oil from Nigeria, Norway, and Azerbaijan, with access to Libya's light crude hampered by NATO's military intervention. Because its East Coast refineries have to import oil from overseas and lack the technical capability to process heavier varieties, Sunoco's expenses on crude ranked among the highest of all energy companies. The author concludes that "Philadelphia and Marcus Hook are the two worst refineries to own in the United States" and predicts they will be converted into storage terminals for transporting natural gas and other materials from the Marcellus Shale. The cost involved in updating the refineries to process heavier crude would be prohibitively expensive, the author wrote, due to international market pressures facing North American and European companies. Since the economic crisis began, the longstanding "peak" in crude oil prices has been replaced with a marked decline in US demand for refined petroleum products. Refineries across the nation are now confronted with the possibility that consumer demand will remain at a long-term low. This is especially true of Sunoco, which has a refining and supply sector that has been unprofitable for 9 out of the past 11 quarters. Sunoco CEO Lynn Elsenhans has accordingly pursued a determined policy of manufacturing divestitures. Sunoco has already sold off two refineries in the Midwest, closed another Pennsylvania refinery, and pulled out of metallurgical coke, home heating oil, and chemicals manufacturing. Elsenhans has stated that the company's future lies in retail fuel, convenience store sales, and fuel transportation. The potential closure of these three refineries and the economic devastation that will be visited on the towns that depend on them is just a single facet of the movements of international capital. There is no "all-American" alternative, especially when it comes to oil, a natural resource that has led the United States to pursue war throughout the Middle East and, most recently, in Libya. From the standpoint of the nationally based unions, "keeping jobs at home" means transforming the US into a platform for cheap labor, as has already happened in the auto industry, not uniting energy workers around the world to defend jobs for all. Bruce, who has worked in both the Marcus Hook and trainer refineries for most of his life, said his situation is representative of most workers at the refinery. In many cases, workers have been there for 24-25 years. He also expressed his worries that education in the area would be gutted as local schools lose their tax base. Nick, a union member at the Marcus Hook rally, remarked that even if the refineries are used to transport natural gas or for some other alternative, all of the estimates he has seen show that only about half of the labor force would be retained. Nick went on to say, "large companies take the human element out of it" and "just



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leave without preparing the people or helping them retrain." This is precisely the problem with a social system based on the profit motive rather than genuine human need. The ruling class has no room for a "human element" in the present economic crisis because it has to scramble and fight for its own interests. Sunoco incurred a \$17 million loss in refining and supply last quarter. From the perspective of the company and its executives, the livelihoods of thousands of people are insignificant in comparison. If the right to good-paying and secure jobs, decent schools and neighborhoods is to take priority, the working class must fight for the nationalization of the oil monopolies under democratic control, as part of the socialist reorganization of economic life in the US and internationally.

<http://www.wsws.org/articles/2011/nov2011/phil-n22.shtml>

USA, WI, MILTON, NOVEMBER 22 2011. DIESEL TANK OVERTURNS AND SPILLS 250 GALLONS OF FUEL

On 11/20/11 at 1758 hours, deputies from the Rock County Sheriff's Office responded to the area of E. M-H Townline Road approximately .2 of a mile east of N. Henke Road, in Milton Township, for a report of a diesel fuel spill. Milton Police and Fire Departments also responded to the scene to assist. The preliminary investigation shows a 2003 Chevy Silverado, driven by James E. Wollstrum, age 77, of Milton, was traveling eastbound on E. M-H Townline Road pulling a trailer carrying a 300-gallon tank full of diesel fuel. As Wollstrum's vehicle crested the hill, the pin on the trailer broke, causing the trailer to become dislodged from the truck. The trailer overturned in the ditch and came to rest on the road, spilling approximately 250 gallons of diesel fuel onto the asphalt and into the surrounding ditch. Emergency crews remained on scene for approximately 1 ½ hours cleaning up the spill and the road was reopened at 1930 hours. The incident remains under investigation by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and no citations have been issued at this time.

http://www.nbc15.com/janesville/headlines/Diesel_Tank_Overturns_and_Spills_250_Gallons_of_Fuel_134219803.html

CANADA, ALBA, CALGARY, NOVEMBER 23 2011. TESTS AT GAS PLUS STATION REVEALED CONTAMINATION 10 TIMES ABOVE GUIDELINES

sean myers

Click-2-Listen <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/story/2011/11/22/calgary-gas-plus-hearing.html>



In May 2010, Alberta Environment and Water learned of a 9,000-litre gasoline leak at the Gas Plus station at 6336 Bowness Rd. N.W.

Testing of groundwater last summer near a Gas Plus station in Bowness revealed contamination levels 10 times above provincial guidelines, according to testimony at an Environmental Appeals Board hearing Tuesday. "The situation appears to be deteriorating," said Dennis Stefani, supervisor of risk management for Alberta Health Services. "And this data was collected over a year after the contamination was first reported." The 9,000-litre leak dates back to at least May 2010, when Alberta Environment and Water first learned of it and told the owner of the Gas Plus at 6336 Bowness Rd. N.W. to clean it up. Stefani said some

water tests even showed levels of hydrocarbons measured in July had increased from the previous month. He said the leak poses a continuing threat to public health and must be remediated "efficiently and effectively." But the owner of the site had experts in underground fuel storage removal testify that a different remediation method, that could take up to three years to complete, should be used over the one that Alberta Environment has ordered. Sal Handel, who owns Gas Plus and Handel Transport, was issued an environmental protection order in December after the province decided he hadn't done enough to determine the extent of the leak and develop a plan to remediate it. Handel appealed that order and challenged all three subsequent amendments. Gas Plus is now appealing the type of remediation required to neutralize the leaked gas. After being ordered to dig up the site and remove the contaminated soil, Gas Plus asked to build a containment wall around the site instead. The province agreed, but now Handel wants to use the less expensive but lengthy method of injecting bacterial or chemical material into the soil to neutralize the leaked hydrocarbons. Alberta Environment, AHS, the city and residents have all said they support either complete removal of the soil or a containment wall. Ken Hugo of Levelton Consultants was originally hired by Handel to assess the leak and he said some remediation was done by his team last year. Hugo said on Tuesday, the way the leaked gas has now spread lends itself to bio-remediation. "Because the plume has gone off-site to a great deal, digging up the one site area and putting up a secant (containment) wall won't help those areas off-site," said Hugo.



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He complained that Alberta Environment requirements were too onerous and ultimately quit when the environmental protection order was issued last December. Leon Mah, an engineer with Tiamat Environmental Consultants, took over for Hugo in the spring. During his testimony, he also complained about Alberta Environment, calling a meeting he had last summer "a waste of time" because "they spent most of the time challenging the validity of our findings rather than focusing on what the data was trying to say." Three homes on Bow Crescent N.W. were found to have contaminated air quality following discovery of the leak. Although indoor air contamination has been brought under control, the city still won't issue a development permit for a lot in the area bought by Andy Ross, stalling construction on his house. Four home and land owners have intervenor status at the hearing and will give evidence today following cross-examination of Handel and his experts. The hearing is scheduled to wrap up Friday.

<http://www.calgaryherald.com/business/Tests+Plus+station+revealed+contamination+times+above+guidelines/5751148/story.html>

USA, N.J., GARFIELD, NOVEMBER 23 2011. A NEIGHBORHOOD IN PERIL: DANGEROUS CHROMIUM SPREADS THROUGH GARFIELD GROUNDWATER

scott fallon



Contractors testing the contents of abandoned industrial drums stored at the closed E.C. Electroplating site in Garfield last month.

A highly toxic industrial chemical has been spreading under a [Garfield](#) neighborhood for almost three decades, slowly seeping into homes and threatening the health of thousands. Residents live in fear that hexavalent chromium is infiltrating their basements, that their families could get cancer and that their property values have been destroyed. And state officials allowed it all to happen. What occurred in [Garfield](#) over the course of 28 years is a story of an environmental oversight system that failed the people it was supposed to protect. In instance after instance, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection showed poor judgment, lax enforcement and bureaucratic indifference to an emerging public

health threat. Three tons of cancer-causing chromium leaked from a tank at the E.C. Electroplating plant on Clark Street in 1983. Despite evidence that it was migrating under an entire neighborhood, the DEP let the company stop the cleanup after just 30 percent had been recovered. "The expense of such an effort might not be justified by the result," DEP Principal Environmental Specialist John DeFina wrote in a May 1985 letter to E.C.'s attorney. Because there were no wells for drinking water in the area, DeFina and others concluded "there is no threat to the public health." Today, this neighborhood of 600 homes and businesses is New Jersey's newest Superfund site. Federal officials have warned residents that the contamination in their homes poses "a significant threat" to their health. The DEP "dragged their feet," said Jennie Coulter, whose Grand Street house was contaminated. "They could have solved this 20, 30 years ago. Now I won't go down to my basement until a man from the government puts his hand on the Bible and says everything is safe." The Record spent months investigating the spill, reviewing hundreds of DEP documents. It found: Engineers reported early on that the chromium had migrated underground from the E.C. plant toward the [Passaic](#) River, but nobody at the DEP or the company mentioned the hundreds of homes and businesses that stood between the plant and the river. The initial investigation was deeply flawed. Monitoring and recovery wells were drilled at the factory site — but not in the neighborhood — and the first wells were dug far too shallow for engineers to be able to reach the bulk of the chromium. Four months after the spill, high levels of chromium were found in E.C.'s basement after a heavy rain — but this didn't trigger any action to prevent that pollution from seeping into other basements. A decade later, chromium was discovered in a firehouse a mile away — and despite this evidence that the chemical had spread, no testing was done in the neighborhood. Years went by without the DEP checking on the site. For instance, it took four years for the state to notice that E.C. was not testing its monitoring wells for chromium, even though the company was supposed to file regular reports with the DEP. Now, almost 30 years after the spill, teams of men in hazmat gear are a common sight in the neighborhood. The contamination has been found in an apartment building, in homes and in stores. In one basement, the chromium pollution exceeded the federal safety standard by 2,500 times. North Jersey has a history of failed cleanups, including a Superfund site in [Ringwood](#) that was declared clean when it was still polluted. But [Garfield](#) has the awful distinction of being one of the few places in America where an entire neighborhood sits atop a Superfund site. It didn't have to be this way, regulators said. "Clearly it would have been good had [the DEP] been looking at this site 20, 30 years ago



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in a more aggressive way," said Walter Mugdan, who oversees the [Garfield](#) cleanup for the federal Environmental Protection Agency. It could cost taxpayers tens of millions of dollars to clean up the neighborhood. State environmental officials recently admitted to The Record that the DEP failed in [Garfield](#). Assistant Commissioner David Sweeney called the case a "poster child" for mismanagement. "It's clear that when this case was being handled, I don't think the right decisions were made," said Sweeney, who oversees site cleanups. "It wasn't handled with the urgency that it needed." In a recent interview, E.C.'s attorney, Dennis Krumholz, disputed the EPA's claim that the company was the main source of the contamination. Chromium was used at several industrial facilities in [Garfield](#) over the years. Krumholz also said the company "went to great lengths" to comply with the DEP. "They were good corporate citizens," he said. "They always had the best interests of [Garfield](#) at heart in everything they did." Like many towns along the [Passaic](#) River, [Garfield](#) exploded with textile mills, chemical plants and other industry in the early 20th century. It was a factory town with workers living in modest homes built, in some cases, right next to the plants. A home that once sat on a large parcel of land at 125 Clark St. was eventually replaced by chicken coops and, later, a machine shop. In 1935, Edward Calderio opened E.C. Electroplating at the address. There, a small band of workers went about the often dangerous work of chemically plating copper and chromium onto machine parts so they would last longer. The company, which would pass down through generations of the family, became a successful small business, serving clients from the plastic, paper and film industries. Chrome plating can be done using two types of chromium — trivalent and hexavalent. Both provide excellent resistance to corrosion. Hexavalent — which is cheaper but far more toxic — became the chromium of choice at E.C. At 4:30 p.m. on Dec. 14, 1983, a tank outside the factory was close to capacity with about 7,280 gallons of chromium plating solution. Around 2 a.m. the following morning, the tank was found to have lost half its contents — 3,640 gallons. An inspection would later reveal that a flange had broken, causing the solution to leak into the ground for hours. Computations would show that 5,560 pounds of the chemical, also known as chromium 6, had spilled. E.C. alerted city officials and the DEP that day. The DEP's role was to gauge the extent of contamination, approve a cleanup plan and make sure the work was done. The department would fail on all three counts. Over several months in 1984, E.C.'s contractors pumped 85,000 gallons of contaminated groundwater from beneath the site and hauled it away. But only 30 percent of the hexavalent chromium was recovered, state records show. That spring, heavy rains caused a problem on the E.C. property that would eventually plague the neighborhood: Chromium-contaminated groundwater seeped into the basement, according to a letter from E.C.'s contractors to the company's lawyer. E.C.'s engineers reported to the DEP in January 1985 that test wells showed the chromium was migrating into the neighborhood, documents reveal. The revelation didn't trigger any testing of the homes next to the plant or at the 350-student elementary school a half-block away. Instead, the company asked the DEP to allow it to end the cleanup. "We believe that E.C. Electroplating has taken all appropriate steps to deal responsibly with this situation and we are eager to put this matter to rest," the company's attorney, Krumholz, wrote to the DEP in January 1985. E.C. Electroplating submitted a report that said most of the chromium had moved beyond the plant through the bedrock toward the [Passaic](#) River. But the report's authors at Princeton Aqua Science said they couldn't tell the exact pathway of the chromium because the monitoring wells weren't deep enough. "Clearly, rapid contamination migration is possible," the report stated. Although maps of the area were provided in the report, nowhere did it mention the densely packed neighborhood of hundreds of homes and retail businesses that stood between the E.C. plant and the river. The DEP decided the cleanup could stop. "Little additional recovery is possible without a major effort," DeFina, the DEP environmental specialist, wrote. "Presently the upper aquifer appears clean, there is no threat to the public health, no private or public wells in the immediate area." No red flags were raised even though 70 percent of the chromium was still missing. There was no mention of the shallow monitoring wells. No talk of whether the groundwater that contaminated E.C.'s basement could also infiltrate homes. By the end of 1985, two things were certain about the E.C. spill: Almost 4,000 pounds of the dangerous chemical was still unaccounted for, coursing its way under [Garfield](#). And no one was planning to do anything about it. It took the DEP four years to check back on E.C. Electroplating. During that time, none of the wells at the site had been tested, as required. No well logs had been kept. A DEP investigator noted in June 1989 that the company had ignored the DEP's plan. But records show the DEP didn't do anything about it. And so everything continued. E.C. kept plating rollers and screws. The contamination continued to move under the neighborhood. In the spring of 1993, firefighters at Fire Company 3 on Willard Street noticed greenish water seeping into the basement during heavy rainstorms. The city took samples and found it contained 250 times the level the state considered safe for chromium. A decade after the spill, here was evidence the contamination had spread: The firehouse was located nearly a mile from E.C. Electroplating. The city immediately sealed the basement. Weeks later, amid concerns about the potential health hazard, the firehouse was boarded up. It remains so today. The DEP told city officials that if they wanted the firehouse cleaned up, [Garfield](#) would have to conduct, and pay for, the work. The city would also have to reimburse the



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DEP for reviewing the case. The city declined, with officials explaining the municipal government could not afford it. Despite the discovery of contamination at the firehouse, no one talked about testing the many homes between the plant and the firehouse. The DEP merely required E.C. to sample groundwater — at its plant. When someone finally came to test homes, it wasn't the DEP — it was the [Bergen County](#) Department of Health. Worried about residents living near the firehouse, County Health Official Anthony DeCandia and his team began surveying homes within a six-block radius in 2000. They tested the basements of two homes on Palisades Avenue about a half-mile from the plant — and discovered high levels of chromium 6 in both. In addition, crystallized residue containing very low levels of a less dangerous form of chromium was found in the basements of four other houses. Hexavalent chromium can change under certain conditions. For the first time, the DEP considered the possibility of a public health threat. "There may be other buildings in the city that have exhibited these problems that the NJDEP or the [Bergen County](#) Health Department does not know about," Brian Crisafulli of the Bureau of Ground Water Pollution Abatement wrote in late December 2000. "E.C. has been progressing too slow with a potential hazardous risk to the people and environment of the City of [Garfield](#)," he wrote. Still, it wasn't until December 2001 — 14 months after the county Health Department made its report public that the DEP visited and tested the two contaminated homes on Palisades Avenue. The contamination had increased. The DEP also began finding high levels of chromium at contaminated sites it was monitoring in [Garfield](#) that had never been polluted with the chemical. Chromium was detected in monitoring wells at an Amoco service station on Monroe Street, two blocks from the firehouse. It was also found in test wells at an auto repair shop on Midland Avenue, two blocks west of E.C. On Sept. 19, 2002, the DEP issued a formal notice of violation to E.C. "The slow rate of progress and lack of long term planning by E.C. Electroplating is unacceptable," a DEP memo stated. E.C. responded immediately, denying responsibility and arguing it was unable to pay for a massive cleanup. Faced with a polluter crying poverty and the possibility of a large-scale cleanup that could cost tens of millions of dollars, the DEP turned to the federal government. In an Oct. 7, 2002, letter asking the EPA to take over, DEP official Janet Smolenski acknowledged what she called a "lack of progress" by her agency over the previous two decades. "The slow progress of the case is perceived as a reluctance and failure on the part of NJDEP," Smolenski wrote. "Should the case continue down the present track, this perception shall only grow." The pace didn't quicken much after the feds came on board. In January 2003, yellow dust found on the basement floor of the Golden Tower senior apartments after a flood was determined to contain hexavalent chromium as well as a less toxic form of chromium. The basement was cleaned up by contractors and a wall was caulked to keep out the groundwater. By August, the building was contaminated again. The 10-story building on Midland Avenue is three blocks from E.C. It took the EPA more than a year to examine the building. Air, dust and water tests in November 2004 showed no chromium in the apartments. But samples taken four months later found contamination in the basement. Every time the basement was cleaned up, the contamination would return. The chromium would seep into the basement via floodwater and, when the water evaporated, chromium dust was left on the floor. Some of the dust would become airborne and settle on other surfaces. It became clear to the EPA that whenever it flooded — and it floods often in this neighborhood — chromium would find its way into Golden Tower's basement. And if it was happening all the time at this building, what about all the other buildings in the neighborhood? The EPA asked the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and the New Jersey Department of Health to review the case and its potential risk to the community. Meanwhile, E.C. Electroplating was faltering financially. After the DEP issued a notice to E.C. for failure to pay \$9,200 in oversight costs, the company's president, Anthony Calderio, sent a letter to the state in August 2008, saying the company was "experiencing a cash flow problem of catastrophic proportions." "We have always tried to put our best foot forward at all times to comply with the DEP," he wrote. The next month, the EPA began surveying the neighborhood. Within days, contamination was found in three basements. On March 3, 2009, E.C. Electroplating quietly closed its doors after 74 years, according to a report from its engineer, Richard Chapin. Joshua Gradwohl, a DEP site-remediation supervisor, e-mailed Chapin expressing concerns that a "lack of funding may again be used to stall any investigations." Chapin fired back. "It is a bit disconcerting that you've chosen to use terms such as 'stall' and 'routinely used to delay' in your last e-mail ... you must understand it was never a matter of stalling or delaying anything" Chapin wrote. "It was a matter of what the company could afford to do given their financial resources. 'Can you spent [sic] hundreds of thousands of dollars you don't have and have no prospect of earning because your business, the source of cash to fund that work, is slowly being destroyed by fundamental changes in the economy of the State of New Jersey?' he wrote. Meanwhile, the investigation of the neighborhood continued. Harmful levels of chromium had now been found in 13 homes. In one alarming instance, EPA investigators found contamination that was 2,500 times the federal safety standard for chromium on the basement stairs of a building near Midland Avenue and Grand Street that housed a retail business and apartments. Within days, a team of EPA workers began cleaning up the building's basement. The



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wooden staircase was torn down and replaced. All surfaces were washed down. Sump pumps were installed to prevent flooding and walls were painted to add a barrier of protection. In 2010, the ATSDR took the rare step of issuing a public health warning for the neighborhood and recommended that the area be placed on the Superfund list. "We consider the site a serious threat to human health," wrote Dr. Thomas Frieden, director of the ATSDR. Twenty-seven years after the spill, the government told the people in the neighborhood: Stay out of your basement because it presents "an immediate and significant threat" to your health. The extent of the contamination is worse than envisioned in any of the documents. It is deeper than first believed, according to EPA scientists. And they now think the 1983 spill was only part of the story, and that chromium may have been leaking from the plant for years. "What we suspect now ... is that, in fact, that there were frequent leaks or stuff was dumped down drains," said Mugdan, head of the EPA's Superfund cleanup for New Jersey and New York. "We have reason to believe this had been a messy operation for some time." E.C. Electroplating contends it is not solely to blame for the chromium pollution in the neighborhood. As evidence that some other factory may have polluted the area, Chapin points out that a city drinking well on Willard Street was closed off in the mid-1960s because of chromium contamination from a source that was never determined. Chromium 6 was used at other facilities in the area, including a tannery and at least one other electroplating company. Krumholz, E.C.'s attorney, said the company was "an easy target" because of the spill. While the EPA is looking into the possibility of other sources for the contamination, Mugdan said the focus is on E.C. When the EPA got access to the E.C. Electroplating property in August, they found an environmental mess. Almost 1,000 buckets, drums and other containers were discovered at the site, filled with liquid and other substances the agency is still trying to identify. Seven large mixing vats were still partially full. Drums labeled as hazardous waste from when the plant closed in 2009 were found — long past their 90-day limit for removal and disposal, an EPA official said. In April, firefighters and a hazmat team had been called to the site after water leaked from the roof into a 5-gallon bucket of concentrated acid, causing it to smoke. The EPA is testing to make sure the chromium hasn't spread further. Federal investigators recently discovered that the chromium may be as deep as 100 feet underground. That is too deep for a cleanup-process that has worked well at other Superfund sites, one that involves digging a ditch and placing a "permeable reactive barrier" that turns chromium 6 into non-toxic trivalent chromium. "It's not good news," Mugdan said of finding chromium so deep. "It's harder to deal with. You can't drill a trench 100, 200 feet down." The EPA is now considering a "pump and treat" system, which would require extraction wells to siphon the contaminated groundwater to the surface. The water would then be treated at a nearby plant, which would have to be built, likely at taxpayer expense. Until then, the EPA believes residents are at significant risk any time it rains heavily. The state Health Department analyzed its cancer registry and did not find elevated rates of disease in the area. But health officials also said it may be too soon for such cancers to have appeared and that it is difficult to track the many people who have moved away. The Passaic River is not in danger, however, according to officials. They believe the hexavalent chromium will turn into the less toxic trivalent chromium if it reaches the river. The chemical can break down when exposed to "a more oxygenated environment," Mugdan said. Officials contend that no one in the regulatory or scientific community knew back in the 1980s that chromium had the ability to infiltrate homes through floodwater and crystallize into a toxic dust. Still, DEP officials admit they should have done more since the danger of hexavalent chromium was common knowledge and given how much had spilled. "Absolutely, poor decisions were made," Sweeney said. The DEP doesn't have much of a role anymore in the case. Based on other Superfund sites, it may be a decade — or more — before the neighborhood is cleaned up. At last year's community meeting Mugdan introduced his staff to the audience. He told the residents they'd better get to know these people "because folks, you're going to be living with this for years."

READ MORE

This list provides links to key documents used by The Record in the preparation of this story. They come from the public records section of the state Department of Environmental Protection. In some cases, pages have been edited for brevity's sake.

- [Waste Conversion document 1: March 28, 1984](#)
Four months after the spill, E.C.'s engineers report that chromium was migrating away from the plant on Clark Street based on well tests.
- [Waste Conversion document 2: April 26, 1984](#)
Five months after the spill, E.C.'s engineers report that chromium-contaminated groundwater seeped into the company's basement after heavy rains, something that would eventually occur elsewhere in the neighborhood.
- [Report on Site Evaluations: December 1984](#)



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- E.C.'s engineers conclude in a report to the NJDEP that the chromium is moving towards the Passaic River and only 30 percent was ever siphoned from the ground.
- [DEP letter to E.C. Electroplating May 24, 1985](#)
The DEP allows E.C. to suspend all recovery activities. The agency asks E.C. to continue to test its wells for chromium.
- [DEP internal memo \(Wulff to Hayes\) re E.C. inspection 1989](#)
Four years after the DEP told E.C. to keep testing its wells for chromium, a DEP trainee inspects the plant and finds that the company has no records of any test results. The trainee asks his superiors for guidance on how to proceed, but nothing in the DEP's case file shows a response.
- [DEP internal memo \(Crisafulli to MacBlane\): Dec. 20, 2000](#)
Seventeen years after the spill, the DEP acknowledges that the original monitoring wells were dug too shallow by E.C.'s engineers to find the chromium (page 5 of the document). Also with in that document: For the first time, the agency also considers that the chromium may have spread and could threaten public health (page 8 of the document).
- [DEP letter to federal EPA asking them to take E.C. off its hands, 2002](#)
In asking the EPA to take over, the DEP acknowledges its own shortcomings with the case.

http://www.northjersey.com/recap/134196898_toxic_landscape_A_NEIGHBORHOOD_IN_PERIL.html

USA, WASHINGTON D.C, NOVEMBER 23 2011. EPA PROPOSES OPERATOR TRAINING, STRONGER CONTAINMENT REGULATIONS FOR STORAGE TANKS

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The Environmental Protection Agency is proposing to strengthen regulations governing underground storage tanks, adding new rules for backup containment and extending training requirements to more storage tank owners and operators (76 Fed. Reg. 71,708). State agencies that accept federal UST grant money are required under current regulations to set operator training requirements under the Energy Policy Act, but the requirements do not cover underground tanks on tribal lands and in states that do not accept federal funds. The proposed revisions would implement training requirements nationwide. The proposed regulations would apply to tanks that hold petroleum or hazardous chemicals, which are regulated under Subtitle I of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. They would not affect underground storage tanks containing hazardous waste, which are regulated under RCRA Subtitle C. The proposed revisions are designed to better prevent and detect leaks from UST systems, which can cause groundwater contamination, EPA said. The proposal represents the first major revisions to federal UST regulations since 1988. The proposed rule at 40 C.F.R. Part 280 includes periodic testing of UST system components. The 1988 regulations required tank owners and operators to have spill, overfill, and leak detection equipment, but did not have operation and maintenance requirements for some of that equipment. EPA published the proposed rule Nov. 18. The agency expects to issue a final rule in 2013, an agency spokeswoman told BNA Nov. 21. There are approximately 595,000 active USTs at an estimated 214,000 sites in the United States, according to EPA. EPA estimates that the compliance costs of the proposed rule would amount to \$210 million annually, but said the proposal would lead to \$300 million to \$770 million in avoided remediation costs. Motor fuel retailers, which account for approximately 80 percent of UST systems, are expected to bear a majority of the cost.

EPA Adds Training Requirements

The proposed rule would impose minimum training requirements for three classes of UST operators. The revisions would reflect existing requirements for state operator training programs contained in EPA grant guidelines. Class A operators, which are primarily responsible for a UST system and typically manage resources and personnel, would be required to be trained on spill and overfill prevention, release detection, corrosion protection, emergency response, notification and storage tank registration, temporary and permanent closure, and other issues. Class B operators, which typically perform day-to-day operation, maintenance, and recordkeeping duties, would be required to receive training on system operation and maintenance, release detection and reporting, corrosion protection and testing, and other issues. Class C operators, which typically dispense or sell substances contained in USTs, such as petroleum at filling stations, must be trained on emergency response to UST system spills or leaks. The training requirements would go into effect over the next one to three years, depending on when the regulated storage tanks were installed.



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Rule Would Mandate Secondary Containment

The proposed rule would add secondary containment and monitoring requirements for new and replaced tanks and piping. Owners and operators would be required to use equipment to catch spills when installing new dispenser systems. Additionally, owners and operators would be required to perform monthly walk-through inspections to examine spill prevention, leak detection, and other equipment. Spill prevention equipment would have to be tested annually or, alternatively, owners would have to monitor equipment continuously. Owners and operators would also be required to test leak detection equipment every year and test overfill prevention equipment and secondary containment areas every three years. The 1988 regulations do not require regular testing of leak detection and overfill equipment, EPA said. The proposed rule also would remove certain exemptions from leak detection requirements for tanks that store fuel for use by emergency power generators, wastewater treatment tanks, airport hydrant fuel distribution systems, and tanks that are constructed on-site. The tanks were exempted from leak detection requirements under the 1988 rules because the technology was not available to monitor the systems, EPA said, but the technology is now available.

Comments Due in February

EPA also is proposing to update requirements for states seeking to obtain EPA approval of state storage tank programs. States would have to adopt the regulations in order to be approved. A total of 37 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico have approved programs. Comments on the proposed rule are due Feb. 16, 2012. Comments may be submitted at <http://www.regulations.gov> under Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-UST-2011-0301. Approximately 7,000 cases of petroleum and hazardous substances leaking from UST systems are discovered each year, according to 2009 EPA data. Leaks from piping, spills, and overfills during delivery are the most common emerging problem, EPA said. Leak detection equipment is only catching about half of leaks, EPA said, partly due to improper operation and maintenance. The proposed regulations are designed to improve operation and maintenance of UST systems, the agency said.

Related Links

Documents related to the proposed changes identified above, including a comparison of the current and proposed regulations and a Regulatory Impact Analysis, are available on [EPA's Web site](http://www.epa.gov). Comments to the proposed rule must be received by EPA on or before Feb. 16, 2012.

<http://www.bna.com/epa-proposes-operator-n1288490444/>

NIGERIA, LAGOS, NOVEMBER 23 2011. PANDEMONIUM AS OIL VESSEL EXPLODES IN LAGOS

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The victim being rescued by security operatives.

A deafening explosion rocked Marina area of Lagos Island, yesterday evening, after an oil vessel undergoing repairs in a dock caught fire. The incident, which took place around 5p.m, resulted in a pandemonium as passers-by and motorists ran for safety. Unconfirmed reports said there were many casualties after the explosion which also shook the headquarters of a first generation bank and other surrounding buildings in the area. When Vanguard visited the scene around 5.30pm, a team of plain-clothed security agents and officials of Lagos State Emergency Management Agency, LASEMA, were seen around the scene. But officials of both agencies and reporters were prevented from having access to the vessel by the security agents who cordoned

off the area. Eyewitnesses said the vessel reportedly owned by a retired Police officer, exploded after a gas leakage in one of the compartments of the vessel undergoing repairs. The leakage was followed by a loud explosion. However, CEO of Lasema, Mr Olufemo Oki, told reporters later that "there was only one casualty, no mortality and the victim is responding to treatment. He assured that investigations were going on to ascertain whether the vessel was laden with petroleum products or not.

<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2011/11/pandemonium-as-oil-vessel-explodes-in-lagos/>



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