



Dangerous Goods - Hazardous Materials Group & Network

Release 2011 – 794 Newsy Stuff

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January 5 2012



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AUSTRALIA, VICTORIA, BOX HILL, DECEMBER 27 2011. CHEMICAL LEAK AT FACTORY IN BOX HILL SOUTH

michelle ainsworth

Firefighters are working to contain a chemical leak in Melbourne's east. A Melbourne Fire Brigade spokesman said about 1000 litres of hypochlorite had leaked at the SCA Hygiene factory in Box Hill South. He said the leak was contained to a controlled area in a basement of the building and did not pose any threat to nearby homes. Hazmat teams and eight fire trucks were on site after they received the first calls around 11.40pm. Hypochlorite is listed as a common ingredient in bleach, disinfectant and common cleaning products. SCA Hygiene produces products under many household brands including Sorbent tissues and toilet paper and Handee paper towels. The company's head office is based at its factory in Box Hill South.

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/more-news/chemical-leak-at-factory-in-box-hill-south/story-fn7x8me2-1226230867386>

ENGLAND, STANFORD-LE-HOPE, DECEMBER 27 2011. NEW TANKER JETTY AT SUPERPORT

A new tanker jetty supplying fuel to the South East's airports opened at London Gateway's superport development. The state of the art jetty is now receiving its first shipments, and will deliver a quarter of all aviation fuel needed by airports in the South East of England. It will offload as much as 90,000 tonnes of fuel at the DP World development, off The Manorway in Stanford-le-Hope, when fully laden. Shell, the previous owner of the site, has worked closely with DP World the project. Rachel Crocker, Shell's UK business development manager said: "This jetty is important for Shell's aviation business in the UK. "We import two million tonnes of aviation fuel a year through this facility and the vast majority of it goes to the UK's south-eastern airports, primarily London Heathrow. This project has created a legacy for the UK that will secure jet supplies for many years to come." The jetty terminal, built on time and budget by DP World, is set to run continually for 365 days a year. With state of the art equipment and control systems, it will be able to handle a range of products in addition to the aviation fuel, such as diesel and petrol. DP World CEO, Mohammed Sharaf, said: "The official opening marks a major milestone in the joint efforts of Shell and DP World to develop London Gateway into an efficient fuel handling facility that will ensure an uninterrupted supply of energy to the UK. "We look forward to working with Shell in the coming years as both our operations continue to progress."

http://www.thurrockgazette.co.uk/news/9437326.New_tanker_jetty_at_superport/

PHILIPPINES, BOCAUE, BULACAN, DECEMBER 27 2011. BULACAN MAN SAYS BYE TO FOOT AFTER STEPPING ON 'GOODBYE PHL' FIRECRACKER

andreo calonzo

 [Watch the Video Man loses foot after stepping on firecracker](#)

A 21-year-old man will have his leg amputated after accidentally stepping on a banned, powerful firecracker called "Goodbye Philippines" — while he was peeing against a wall in Bocaue, Bulacan. Radio dzBB's Carlo Mateo reported over GMA News TV's "News To Go" that Danilo Mansueto will have his left foot amputated at the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center in Manila after the accident happened before dawn on Monday. "Goodbye Philippines," a giant triangle-shaped firecracker which causes a loud and powerful explosion, is among the firecrackers that have been prohibited by the Department of Health (DOH) since last year. Bocaue town is known as the firecracker capital of the Philippines because it is the major supplier of firecrackers in the country. Another casualty, identified as Ronald San Pedro, also had injuries on his face, arms and feet in the accident, the report added.

Boy Loses Two Fingers

Meanwhile, Mateo also reported that a 10-year-old boy in Manila will start 2012 minus two fingers, which he lost to "piccolo." The boy was one of at least four children in Manila who were rushed to the Ospital ng Maynila (OSMA) for fireworks-related injuries, Mateo said. Citing information from OSMA, the report described the boy as a resident of the city's San Andres Bukid area. Last year, the DOH launched an "all-out war" against the sale of "piccolo" after finding that 48 percent of fireworks-related injuries as of late December 2010 were caused by it. "If we do not stop the sale of piccolo, we expect about a thousand casualties or more until January 1," Health Secretary Enrique Ona had said last year.

Banned Firecrackers

The Philippine National Police (PNP) earlier warned that errant firework vendors selling banned explosives will face imprisonment and cancellation of their of business license. In a news release posted on the Philippine Information Agency (PIA) website on December 15, PNP-Region III enumerated the illegal explosives which should not be sold pursuant to Republic Act No. 7183 which regulates the sale, manufacture, distribution and use of firecrackers and other pyrotechnic



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devices. PSupt. Rafmil Corpuz, chief of Fire and Explosives Division of PNP-Region III, said firecrackers with more than one-third teaspoon of gunpowder were outlawed for sale. The banned firecrackers include:

- pla-pla,
- tuna,
- bin Laden,
- big triangulo,
- super lolo,
- Goodbye Philippines,
- Goodbye World, and the piccolo (popular among children).

Under the law, firecrackers which are allowed for sale include baby rocket, bawang, small triangulo, pulling of strings, paper cups, El Diablo, Judas belt, and sky rocket. Among pyrotechnics, those allowed to be sold are sparklers, luces, fountain, Mabuhay, Roman candle, trompillo, airwolf, whistle device, butterfly, and all lighting devices. The republic act, approved in January 1992, also allowed the use of watusi, a small reddish stick usually ignited by friction to produce a dancing movement and a crackling sound. Any person who is caught manufacturing and selling the said illegal explosives shall be punished by a fine not over P30,000, imprisonment up to a year, cancellation of license and business permit, and confiscation of stocks.

Child Victims

Citing Department of Health figures, an environment group, EcoWaste Coalition, said about one-third (or 34 percent) of all firecracker victims from December 21 to January 5, 2010 were children aged 1 to 10. The injuries involved:

- blasting without amputation (79 percent),
- eye injuries (15 percent), and
- blast injuries with amputation (6 percent).

Majority of the 1,022 injuries during that period were firecracker-related (972). The rest were caused by stray bullets (39) and from ingestion of firecrackers (11). The accidents happened in:

- Metro Manila (581 cases)
- Ilocos Region (73 cases),
- Central Luzon and CALABARZON (66 cases each), and
- Western Visayas (65).

<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/242733/news/nation/bulacan-man-says-bye-to-foot-after-stepping-on-goodbye-phl-firecracker>

USA, PA, ALLENTOWN, DECEMBER 27 2011. PUC ISSUES NEW RULES ON GAS LEAK MONITORING >> GUIDELINES AREN'T AS STRICT OR AS COSTLY AS EARLIER VERSION AND ARE CUSTOMIZED FOR EACH UTILITY.

scott kraus,

The state Public Utility Commission last week adopted new leak-detection guidelines that, while not as strict as requirements it proposed in November, would make monitoring more frequent during winter months. The changes, customized for each utility, are aimed at improving pipeline safety and preventing explosions like the one that killed five people on N. 13th Street in Allentown. The Feb. 9 blast remains under investigation. The new standards are not as strict or costly as an initial set of statewide leak-detection and safety requirements issued by the agency in a November tentative order. Gas utilities, including UGI, objected to those across-the-board rules, saying compliance would be too expensive. The company-specific cold-weather "frost patrol" leak-detection requirements will improve safety measures without overburdening customers' pocketbooks, said Jennifer Kocher, a PUC spokeswoman. "We have a responsibility to balance the safety of customers with reasonable rates," Kocher said. "All of this would have been recovered from consumers." Allentown Mayor [Ed Pawlowski](#) scoffed at the notion that UGI couldn't afford to adhere to stricter standards. "I would encourage them to push for even stronger and stricter regulations," Pawlowski said. "I would hope the gas companies would look past this insignificant cost when it comes to overall lives that would be saved. They had the highest dividend they posted in their 30 years of operation. This whole argument that it has to be passed on to the customer is ridiculous." Cold-weather leak patrols are undertaken because ground freezes can put stress on inflexible cast-iron pipes and increase the chance of breaks. In a statement responding to the new guidelines, UGI said it is already doing more than required by federal pipeline safety regulations and



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worked with the PUC to develop stronger leak-detection practices. "UGI proposed enhancements to its pre-existing winter survey procedures that increase the frequency and duration of its surveying over pre-existing levels," spokesman Dan Adamo said in an email. "The commission has accepted that proposal with refinements the company finds acceptable." UGI will be required to survey all cast-iron distribution lines every two weeks between Jan. 1 and March 31; conduct an annual survey of all unprotected metallic service lines; and implement a "special business/urban area" leak survey that would involve leak-detection teams on foot. Adamo said UGI will have its first cast-iron lines survey completed by Jan. 3. The urban area survey — conducted between Nov. 1 and March 31 — would initially focus on "mains based upon: proximity to buildings, wall-to-wall paving, amount and classification of open and repaired leaks, main material" and whether they are protected by anti-corrosion measures. The order also directs UGI to maintain a log of all leaks detected and repaired. UGI estimates the enhanced monitoring will cost about \$1 million a year across its three gas utilities: [UGI Utilities](#), UGI Central Penn Gas and UGI Penn Natural Gas. UGI offered to make the changes in its formal response to the initial statewide guidelines. In that response, UGI objected to the blanket requirements, saying compliance would have cost the utility \$5.7 million a year to meet, including the need to purchase 125 pieces of leak-detection equipment. "The UGI [companies] currently have neither the manpower nor equipment available to undertake such tasks within any reasonable period of time," UGI attorneys wrote. "The UGI [companies] initial estimate is that it would have to hire or contract for 135 additional personnel to perform the surveys with the frequency suggested by the Nov. 10 order." The company objected, for example, to a requirement that the frost patrols be conducted starting Nov. 1 and extend until April 30, saying that temperatures in much of that period don't merit them. UGI Utilities maintains 387 miles of cast iron and 395 miles of unprotected steel pipelines, according to the commission's frost patrol order. Counting two other Pennsylvania gas utilities operated by UGI, the company has a total of 527 miles of cast-iron distribution lines.

<http://www.mcall.com/news/breaking/mc-allentown-ugi-gas-leak-patrols-20111225.0.47159.story>

NIGERIA, LAGOS, DECEMBER 27 2011. ROYAL DUTCH SHELL SAYS WORST NIGERIA OFFSHORE OIL SPILL IN MORE THAN A DECADE NOW CONTAINED

 [Photo's Aboard the bonga floating oil vessel](#)



A section of an oil spill is seen off the coast of the Niger Delta in Nigeria, Monday, Dec. 26, 2011. Officials with Royal Dutch Shell PLC say they've contained the worst Nigeria offshore oil spill in more than a decade. Shell officials said Monday that the Dec. 20 spill that saw less than 40,000 barrels of oil pouring into the Atlantic Ocean has been dispersed. Shell officials acknowledged those aboard the Bonga vessel only noticed the spill after seeing it in the morning light, likely hours after it began leaking.

The worst Nigeria offshore oil spill in more than a decade has been contained before reaching the West African nation's coast, officials with Royal Dutch Shell PLC said Monday, less than a week after one of its lines bled crude into the Atlantic Ocean.

An investigation into how the spill of less than 40,000 barrels — or 1.68 million gallons — happened remains ongoing, though company officials acknowledged workers only discovered the leak after seeing a sheen of crude in water surrounding its Bonga offshore oil field. Meanwhile, Shell officials say the company will clean up another spill it discovered while containing its own — highlighting how prevalent pollution remains in oil-stained Nigeria after more than 50 years of production. "We can undeniably say we traced our oil ... and stopped it," said Cliff Pain, who manages the Bonga operation for a Shell subsidiary. Shell organized a helicopter flight Monday for journalists to see the Bonga field — controlled from a large ship as opposed to a stationary rig — about 75 miles (120 kilometers) off Nigeria's coast. There, waters appeared free of the oil sheen as ships continued to patrol along the underwater lines linking the vessel to oil fields and transfer buoys for filling tankers. The leak discovered Dec. 20 came from a break in a flexible line about 360 meters out from the vessel that sends oil to tankers, Pain said. While the vessel has a variety of gauges to check pressure on the line, it wasn't until daylight broke that workers noticed a sheen surrounding the Bonga vessel, he said. It takes about 25 hours to fill a waiting tanker with 1 million barrels of oil from the vessel, Pain said. That means the leak could have spewed for hours before being noticed. At its height, Shell statistics show the sheen spread across about 350 square miles (900 square kilometers), matching an estimate earlier issued by an independent watchdog group called SkyTruth. Nigerian government officials previously said



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the spill only affected an area a third that size Using ships and aircraft, workers spread chemical dispersants to break up the oil, which also evaporated in the region's warm water and air, said Steve Keedwell, a Shell employee who helped oversee the cleanup operation. Shell ultimately stopped the sheen about 11 miles (18 kilometers) before it made landfall, Pain said. However, workers then discovered a separate oil spill around the mouth of a river in Delta state, said Mutiu Sunmonu, Shell's Nigeria country chairman. Sunmonu said samples of the oil showed it came from a different source, though the company would clean it up as well. "When I sighted it myself, my initial reaction was anger, but I told myself: 'You know, you just cannot afford to be angry, just deal with it,'" Sunmonu said. The Nigerian group Environmental Rights Action, which monitors spills around Nigeria's oil-rich southern delta, has blamed Shell for the new spill. Nnimmo Bassey, the group's executive director, could not be immediately reached for comment Monday night. Shell operates the Bonga field in partnership with Italy's Eni SpA, Exxon Mobil Corp., France's Total SA and the state-run Nigerian National Petroleum Corp. It produces about 200,000 barrels of oil a day — around 10 percent of production in Africa's most populous nation. The field remains shut down and Shell officials offered no estimate Monday of when production could resume at a field vital to Nigeria's government finances. Nigeria, an OPEC member nation producing about 2.4 million barrels of crude oil a day, is a top supplier to the United States. However, pollution from spilled oil stains its Niger Delta region, with crude lapping against beaches and leaving a black ring around creeks in an area about the size of Portugal. Some environmentalists say as much as 550 million gallons of oil poured into the delta during Shell's roughly 50 years of production in Nigeria — a rate roughly comparable to one Exxon Valdez disaster per year. Many blame Shell and foreign companies working in Nigeria for the pollution. However, Shell in recent years has blamed most of its spills on militant attacks or thieves tapping into pipelines to steal crude oil, which ends up sold on the black market or cooked into a crude diesel or kerosene. Talking with journalists, Sunmonu acknowledged that the limited spill, open ocean and favorable weather had helped Shell quickly contain the spill. If it had been on land, the oil could have sunk into the soil, remaining there for years, he said. It also would have pushed Shell into negotiations with village elders to clean up the spill, something it often contracts other companies to handle. Many view the company with hostility after its years in the delta, and its employees remain targets of kidnap gangs and militants. "You don't have communities to contend with" on the ocean, Sunmonu said.

Related Links

- [Navy tightens security at Bonga field over oil spill](#)
- [Shell spots 'third-party' spill near Bonga leak](#)
- [Satellite Imagery Indicates Shell Spill May Be Worse Than Reported](#)
- [Bonga oil spill: 50% oil dissipated](#)

On The Web Royal Dutch Shell PLC

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/royal-dutch-shell-says-worst-nigeria-offshore-oil-spill-in-more-than-a-decade-now-contained/2011/12/26/gIQAHP2IP_story.html

FINLAND, HELSINKI, DECEMBER 27 2011. OIL SLICK REACHING FINNISH WATERS



The oil slick response vessel Louhi in Rauma Harbour on Sunday.

A slick of pine oil discharged from a plant in Sweden continues to expand and thin out. An inspection flight made on Monday afternoon revealed the slick is around 20 kilometres long and about 10 kilometres wide. The Finnish Environmental Institute (SYKE) estimates it will pass into Finnish waters overnight. Finland's two oil spill response vessels are in still in dock at Rauma Harbour on the west coast awaiting winds to decrease. The Institute estimates the slick will reach Finnish shores by the end of the week at the earliest. Westerly winds are blowing it in the direction of Pori on the west coast. About one quarter of the oil split from the Arizona Chemicals

plant in Söderhamn has been cleared away in Swedish waters. Inspector Uljas Hietapakka of Finland's Environmental Institute told YLE the slick could have a large impact on the coast. He noted pine oil, a derivative from wood processing, was a natural substance but dangerous to the environment. He added that if the oil dissolved into a thin film, it would very difficult to clean up.

http://www.yle.fi/uutiset/news/2011/12/oil_slick_reaching_finnish_waters_3128482.html



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BRAZIL, DUQUE DE CAXIAS, DECEMBER 27 2011. PETROBRAS HALTS SOME REDUC REFINERY OPS AFTER FIRE

diana kinch

- Small fire at Reduc Refinery brought quickly under control
- Operations at distilling unit to be restored within hours
- No product shortfalls to be felt, Brazilian company says

Brazilian state-controlled oil producer Petroleo Brasileiro SA (PETR4.BR, PBR), or Petrobras, said it halted operations at a distilling unit at its Duque de Caxias, or Reduc, oil refinery in Rio de Janeiro state Monday due to a small fire. Operations at the distilling unit will be restarted within hours as the fire has been brought under control, a Petrobras press officer said late Monday afternoon. The incident won't cause any shortfall in products output, the officer said. Petrobras is analyzing the causes of the fire, which didn't cause any injuries or environmental damage, the company said in a statement. The emergency was rapidly identified and controlled by the refinery's own staff within 30 minutes, according to the statement. Reduc, which started operations in 1961, is Petrobras' most comprehensive refinery operation, producing 52 products including lubricants, paraffin, natural gas, aviation fuel, diesel and sulfur.

<http://www.marketwatch.com/story/petrobras-halts-some-reduc-refinery-ops-after-fire-2011-12-26>

USA, IN, PUTNAMVILLE, DECEMBER 27 2011. SEMITRAILER CRASH CLOSES INTERSTATE 70

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.wthitv.com/dpp/news/indiana/semitrailer-crash-closes-interstate-70>

A fatal accident on Interstate 70 in Putnam County closes the highway in both directions. Around 4:30 PM Monday afternoon, a semi-tanker heading westbound lost control, hit a bridge abutment, and flipped into the median. The driver of the vehicle was killed in the crash. His name has not yet been released. The tanker was carrying acetone, a chemical twice as flammable as gasoline. Hazmat crews were called to the site to clean up the spill. Officials say not concentrating on the roadway is the number one cause of these accidents. "Be careful. Be a defensive driver. Don't be an aggressive driver, don't be an offensive driver," says State Trooper Marcus Tow. "always be aware of everyone around you. People not paying attention to their surroundings really is what causes the crashes." If you are headed eastbound tonight, you are encouraged to get off at exit 23 by Brazil, IN and take State Road 59 to US 40. If you are headed westbound, get off at exit 41 and take US 231 or get off at exit 37 and take US 243. Crews are still on the scene of the accident. The Indiana Department of Transportation has had trouble containing the spill and are trying to prevent the chemical from entering a local river. They hope to have both lanes open by morning rush hour.

<http://www.wthitv.com/dpp/news/indiana/semitrailer-crash-closes-interstate-70>

AUSTRALIA, NORTHERN TERRITORY, EDITH FALLS RIVER CROSSING, DECEMBER 27 2011. ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN FROM DERAILED TRAIN LEAK

 **Watch the Video** [Two injured after train derails in cyclone flooding](#)



An iron ore train lies derailed by floodwaters in the Northern Territory.

Territory environmental authorities are concerned about reports a chemical is leaking from a derailed freight train into rain-swollen rivers. The NT News reported earlier that police had been told the chemical is copper concentrate. NRETAS chief executive Jim Grant said a full investigation would be undertaken to establish whether there had been any environmental harm. It will include water testing and "bottom of stream" samples. He said copper concentrate was classed as an environmental hazard and could be harmful to marine life when suspended in the water. "But it is not highly toxic at all," he said. Mr Grant said he could not go into

specifics, because the investigation could lead to a prosecution.

Update: 2.30pm -- Copper Concentrate On Train

Commander David Proctor says police have been advised that the train was carrying carbon dioxide and copper concentrate. Some of the copper concentrate is believed to have spilled into the water system. Mr Proctor says the train operators say the copper concentrate in the river system is not harmful to human beings. But the NT Environment Department will send inspectors to the crash scene as soon as it is accessible.

http://www.ntnews.com.au/article/2011/12/27/280271_ntnews.html



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PAKISTAN, LAHORE, DECEMBER 27 2011. PLEA SEEKS ACTION AGAINST MAKERS OF KILLER CNG CYLINDERS

The Lahore High Court sought comments on Monday from federal and provincial governments by Jan 24 on a plea seeking action against substandard CNG cylinder manufacturers. Justice Umar Ata Bandial passed the order on a petition by Rana Mehtab. The plea makes respondents the Punjab chief secretary, chief minister's secretary, the Punjab Transport Authority chairman, the inspector general, the federal petroleum ministry, Oil and Gas Development Authority, and the chief inspector of Explosives and Hydrocarbon Development Institute of Pakistan. The petitioner-counsel referred to a newspaper report that 44 people had died in the last two weeks in explosions of CNG cylinders in public transports. He contended the explosions were taking place due to substandard cylinders as there were 3.2 million vehicles using CNG and almost 35 per cent of these cylinders were substandard. He said the installation of CNG cylinders by unauthorised mechanics contributed to CNG cylinders blasts. The counsel contended the respondent departments were also guilty of negligence as they were not performing their duties in accordance with the law. He pleaded the court that directions be issued to respondents to take action against substandard CNG cylinder manufacturers and workshops. The petitioner also prayed that the responsible for CNG cylinder explosions be punished and compensation be given to the victims' families.

Related Links

- [Import of cylinders - As many as 50 innocent persons have been killed by cylinder explosions in vehicles in different parts of our country just in a span of one month.](#)
- [Transporters refuse to stop CNG use despite accidents - transporters have made it clear that they will not stop using CNG in their buses and will resist any such move](#)
- [Report sought from fed, Punjab govt on sub-standard cylinders - low standard cylinders were playing havoc with the lives of innocent people, pointing out that 44 people lost their lives in cylinder explosions fitted in public transport vehicles during the last two weeks.](#)

<http://www.dawn.com/2011/12/27/plea-seeks-action-against-makers-of-killer-cng-cylinders.html>

CHILE, SANTIAGO, DECEMBER 7 2011. NEWSPAPER ORDERED TO PAY READERS BURNED BY TRYING OUT A RECIPE

mohan ramraj



Churros are sometimes known as the Spanish doughnut.

The Supreme court of Chile upheld on Monday a verdict ordering a newspaper to pay damages to 13 people hurt in explosions that resulted from preparing fritters according to a recipe they found in the daily. The readers were trying out a published recipe for churros, a popular Latin American snack of dough fried in hot oil. The high court's ruling was announced Monday, seven years after the readers burned themselves while trying out the recipe. La Tercera, published by Copesa, must pay a total of \$163,460 to the 13 victims. The claims of two other plaintiffs' were rejected. The case dates back to July 25, 2004, when La Tercera published in its women's supplement a recipe for caramel-filled fritters that called for frying a

mass of dough at a temperature of 250 C (482 F). Judges determined that the newspaper failed to fully test it before publication, and that if readers followed the recipe exactly, the churros had a good chance of exploding once the oil reached the suggested temperature. Grupo Copesa, which publishes the paper, said it will abide by the ruling. The procedure set down in the recipe produced "explosions so violent that the splatters reached the ceiling and bathed the person preparing it," investigating magistrate Ximena Diaz concluded in 2008 after a four-year investigation. "Faithfully following the recipe published in the daily, it would be impossible to have avoided this damage," the judge wrote, noting that La Tercera's instructions were wrong on the quantities of ingredients to be used. People who used the recipe suffered burns to the arms, face and chest. Days after the recipe was published in the paper's "Woman" magazine in 2004, hospitals around the country began treating women for burns suffered when the dough boiling in oil suddenly shot out of kitchen pots. The individual plaintiffs will receive damages ranging from \$1,923 to \$48,076.

Related Links

- [Churros recipe blows up in newspaper's face](#)
- [Chile exploding churros recipe case resolved](#)



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- [Chile newspaper must pay readers burned by exploding churros due to faulty recipe](#)
- [Chile newspaper ordered to pay damages over 'exploding churros'](#)

<http://truthdive.com/2011/12/27/chile-newspaper-ordered-to-pay-readers-burned-by-trying-out-a-recipe.html>

USA, TX, JEFFERSON CO, DECEMBER 27 2011. K-SEA TRANSPORTATION SEEKS TO TRANSFER BENZENE SUIT

david yates

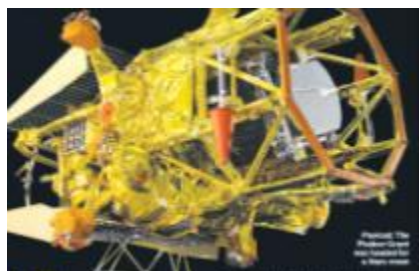
K-Sea Transportation has filed a motion to transfer a suit filed by seaman Devon Magill, who alleges he was exposed to benzene while serving aboard a K-Sea vessel in 2010. As [previously reported](#), Magill filed suit against the company on Aug. 8 in Jefferson County District Court. Court records show that K-Sea filed its motion to transfer on Nov. 7, asserting that it is not a Texas based company and conducts no business in Texas, making jurisdiction improper in Texas. K-Sea also takes special exception to the fact that Magill's suit does not give dates and locations of his alleged benzene exposure, court papers say. Magill claims in his suit that he now suffers from leukemia and links the cause of the disease to his service aboard the Dublin Sea in 2010. During that time period, he served as a deckhand aboard the Dublin, which transported benzene and other chemicals across the Gulf of Mexico. He alleges K-Sea Transportation negligently failed to train him on how not to be exposed to the benzene. The plaintiff is suing for his alleged past and future medical expenses, mental anguish, pain, impairment, disfigurement and lost wages, plus all court costs. Houston attorney Brian Beckcom of Vujasinovic & Beckcom represents him. K-Sea is represented by Houston attorney James Blain of the Looper Reed & McGraw law firm. Judge Gary Sanderson, 60th District Court, is assigned to the case. Case No. B190-654

<http://www.setexasrecord.com/news/240579-k-sea-transportation-seeks-to-transfer-benzene-suit>

AUSTRALIA – DECEMBER 27 2011. TOXIC SPACE INVADER: FAILED MARS PROBE PHOBOS-GRUNT COULD CRASH LAND IN AUSTRALIA

malcolm holland

- Retains Six tonnes of a poisonous propellant consisting of unsymmetrical dimethylhydrazine (UDMH) and dinitrogen tetroxide (DTO).



A failed Russian Mars probe laden with toxic fuel could crash land in Australia when it falls back down to Earth in the next three weeks. Scientists are hoping the planet's atmosphere will do its job and incinerate the trouble-plagued Phobos-Grunt, currently hurtling around the Earth at 30,000km/h. Six tonnes of the 8.5 tonne spacecraft is made up of a poisonous propellant consisting of unsymmetrical dimethylhydrazine (UDMH) and dinitrogen tetroxide (DTO). James Oberg, a NASA veteran who now works as a space consultant, said the tonnes of toxic fuel could make the Phobos, which has suffered total battery failure, "the most toxic falling satellite ever" when it re-enters the atmosphere between January 6 and January 9. The Mars probe has been plagued by problems since it blasted off from the Russian-

leased Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan on November 9. It was designed to land on Phobos, one of two moons circling Mars, and gather rock and soil samples before returning to Earth in 2014. But when Russia's space agency Roscosmos tried to fire its rockets for a second time to send it on the second stage of its journey, nothing happened. Phobos-Grunt is moving around Earth at an altitude between 201km and 275km, meaning it will fall anywhere between latitude 51 degrees north and latitude 51 degrees south, which encompasses all of Australia. But Australia's Spaceinfo.com.au editor Jonathan Nally believed the propellants would burn up entirely as the probe fell through Earth's atmosphere. "These chemicals are just lethal, very nasty, but we should be safe from them because of the incredible heat of re-entry. After all, this stuff is meant to burn and this probe doesn't have heat shields," he said. "They still don't know if it was a hardware failure or a software failure." The plotted landing zone is as accurate as scientists can be - until the final few days and hours before the probe falls from orbit. "Tracking stations can locate satellites which send and receive signals," Mr Nally said. "But Phobos can't do that, so they must rely on specialist radar stations. And they have very limited coverage, so there will be gaps in where we might know it is." "Also, we know surprisingly little about the Earth's upper atmosphere. It can even be changed by hot days and puffs up higher into space, and the air within that upper atmosphere causes friction that slows the probe's speed. "There are a lot of unknown variables when it comes to satellites and space craft coming down. "It's orbiting at 30,000km/h, that's travelling 10,000km



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every 20 minutes, so if someone's calculations are out by just 20 minutes that means where they predict the probe will fall could be 10,000km out." Roscosmos space agency said it expected only about 200kg of the craft to survive re-entry. Mr Nally said that with more than 70 per cent of the Earth's surface covered by water, it was likely any fragments would hit ocean.

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/technology/danger-of-a-toxic-space-invader-as-failed-russian-mars-probe-phobos-grunt-could-crash-land-in-australia/story-fn7celvh-1226230955728>

USA, CA, SAN FRANCISCO, DECEMBER 27 2011. BAY OIL SPILL KILLED HERRING, NOAA SCIENTISTS REPORT

dan bacher



Pacific Herring.

"Based on what we know about the effects of crude oil on early life stages in fish, we expected to find live embryos with abnormal heart function, so it was a surprise to find so many embryos in the shallow waters literally falling apart," said Dr. John Incardona, a toxicologist with NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center and lead author of the study.

Pacific herring embryos in shallow waters died in unexpectedly high numbers following the Cosco Busan oil spill in San Francisco Bay in November 2007, according to NOAA scientists and their collaborators in a study published in the scientific journal PNAS on December 26. "The majority of embryos in samples from oiled sites were dead on examination in the laboratory," the study's authors wrote. The study suggests an interaction between sunlight and the chemicals in oil might be responsible for the unexpected deaths. The study also potentially explains why the herring population in the bay declined to a record low in 2009, prompting the closure of the valuable commercial herring roe fishery. This was the first time a herring roe fishery closure was approved by the Commission since the fishery began in 1973-74. The container ship Cosco Busan released 54,000 gallons of bunker fuel, a combination of diesel and residual fuel oil, into San Francisco Bay in November, 2007. The accident contaminated the shoreline near the spawning habitats of the largest population of Pacific herring on the West Coast, according to a statement from the NOAA Fisheries Service, Northwest Fisheries Science Center. "In this study, scientists found that herring embryos placed in cages in relatively deep water at oiled sites developed subtle but important heart defects consistent with findings in previous studies," said NOAA. "In contrast, almost all the embryos that naturally spawned in nearby shallower waters in the same time period died. When scientists sampled naturally-spawned embryos from the same sites two years later, mortality rates in both shallower and deeper waters had returned to pre-spill levels." "Based on what we know about the effects of crude oil on early life stages in fish, we expected to find live embryos with abnormal heart function, so it was a surprise to find so many embryos in the shallow waters literally falling apart," said Dr. John Incardona, a toxicologist with NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center and the study's lead author. "The study has given us a new perspective on oil threats in sunlit habitats, particularly for translucent animals such as herring embryos. The chemical composition of residual oils can vary widely, so the question remains whether we would see the same thing with other bunker fuels from around the world," he said. Two decades of toxicity research since the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill has shown that fish embryos and larvae are particularly vulnerable to spilled oil, according to NOAA. Most catastrophic spills, such as the Exxon Valdez, involve large volumes of crude oil. "However, residual oils used in bunker fuels are the leftovers of crude oil refining, and are not as well studied as crude oils. Bunker fuel is used in maritime shipping worldwide, and accidental bunker spills are more and more common and widespread than large crude oil spills," NOAA reported. San Francisco Bay has the largest herring spawning stock south of British Columbia and historically produces more than 90 percent of California's herring catch. The San Francisco Bay herring population rebounded during the 2009-10 spawning season, due to a strong recruitment of the 2-year old herring (2007-08 year class) to the spawning population, as well as improved physical condition of the fish in the population, according to the California Department of Fish and Game. The study, "Unexpectedly high mortality in Pacific herring embryos exposed to the 2007 Cosco Busan oil spill in San Francisco Bay," was jointly undertaken by scientists with NOAA, the Bodega Marine Lab (University of California at Davis) and Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife and will be available in the PNAS Early Edition at <http://www.pnas.org>. MLPA Initiative won't protect marine waters from oil spills The study was released as Governor Jerry Brown and Natural Resources Secretary John Laird, in the footsteps of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, are forging ahead with the implementation of controversial "marine protected areas" under the privately funded Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Initiative. The corrupt initiative, overseen by a big oil lobbyist, marina developer and coastal real estate executive, fails to protect California marine waters from oil spills and drilling and all other human impacts on the ocean other



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than fishing and gathering. The questionable "marine protected areas" (MPAs) now in place on the Central Coast and North Central Coast - and the new MPAs that will go into effect from Point Conception to the Mexican border on January 1 - will do little or nothing from stopping another Cosco Busan, BP Horizon and Exxon Valdez type of disaster from taking place in California waters. The MLPA Initiative won't protect fish embryos and other marine life from oil spills and drilling because the corporate operatives who oversaw the initiative, funded by the shadowy Resources Legacy Fund Foundation, went out of their way to eliminate true, wholistic protection in the creation of so-called "marine protected areas." Missing from corporate media reports on the MLPA Initiative is the alarming fact that Catherine Reheis-Boyd, the president of the Western States Petroleum Association, chaired the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force for the South Coast that oversaw the creation of the so-called "marine protected areas" that will go into effect in on January 1. She also served on the North Coast and North Central Coast marine task forces. Grassroots environmentalists and fishermen strongly opposed the egregious conflict of interest posed by allowing a big oil industry lobbyist to oversee the creation of marine protected areas (MPAs), especially when these MPAs fail to protect the ocean from oil drilling and spills, pollution, corporate aquaculture, military testing, wind and wave energy projects and all other uses of the ocean other than fishing and gathering. In contrast, representatives of corporate environmental NGOs, funded by the Walton Family Foundation and other Wall Street-funded foundations, did nothing to contest Reheis-Boyd's appointment as a "marine guardian." Reheis-Boyd is a vocal advocate of new drilling off the California coast, Canadian tar sands drilling and the gutting of environmental laws, curious positions for a "marine guardian" to take. Socal oil co. wants to expand drilling into state waters. Dave Gurney, independent journalist and publisher of the Noyo News (<http://noyonews.net>) recently commented on a plan by a southern California oil company, Pacific Operators Offshore LLC, to drill further east onto state property off the coast of Carpinteria, California. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management said the company could drill as many as 25 underwater wells from Platform Hogan <http://www.keyt.com/news/local/Proposal-to-Expand-Oil-Drilling-136015403.html>. "We now witness the fruit born of a Marine Life Protection Act 'Initiative' that was hijacked by oil interests," said Gurney. "A southern California oil company wants to expand its operations - from 3.7 miles out in federal waters, further east, to within the 3-mile limit of California state waters. They are proposing to drill up to 25 new offshore oil wells." "The southern California MLPAI Blue Ribbon Task Force was chaired by Catherine Reheis-Boyd, the president of the Western States Petroleum Association," said Gurney. "She was appointed to make sure these so-called 'Marine Protected Areas' did nothing to stop oil drilling or pollution. Public outcry over a blatant conflict of interest on the MLPAI's 'Blue Ribbon Task Force' fell on deaf ears." Federal officials are evaluating the potential environmental impacts of the project. A meeting on the proposal is scheduled for January 19 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Carpinteria City Council Chambers. For more information on NOAA, go to: <http://www.noaa.gov>, on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/usnoaagov>, or on Twitter at @NOAA_NWFSC. For more information on the herring embryo study, contact: Dr. John Incardona, NOAA Fisheries Service, Northwest Fisheries Science Center, office (206) 860-3347, cell (206) 708-9723, email [John.Incardona \[at\] noaa.gov](mailto:John.Incardona@noaa.gov). <http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2011/12/26/18703425.php>

BRAZIL, SAO PAULO, DECEMBER 27 2011. BRAZIL SLAPS CHEVRON WITH \$5.4 MILLION FINE FOR ALLEGED MISHANDLING OF OIL LEAK OFF COAST



This photo taken Nov. 18, 2011 and released by Rio de Janeiro's government, shows an aerial view of a boat crossing an area of the oil spill in an offshore field operated by Chevron at the Bacia de Campos, in Rio de Janeiro state, Brazil.

Brazil's environmental protection agency has slapped a new fine on Chevron for what it says was the U.S. oil company's poor handling of a spill last month off the coast of Rio de Janeiro state. Chevron was fined 10 million reais (\$5.4 million) due to an alleged "breach of its environmental license" — It did not have the necessary equipment and was slow to respond when the leak was detected, the agency announced Saturday on its website. Chevron said in an e-mailed statement it implemented its emergency plan in a "timely manner." "The plan was deployed rapidly and standard procedures were

quickly carried out in order to stem the source of the leak," the statement said. "In just four days, a period considered excellent by industry experts, the company managed to control the source of the leak, starting the process to significantly check the flow from the seeps, which has now diminished to intermittent droplets." The government agency had already fined Chevron Corp. 50 million reais (\$27 million) for the oil spill, which began at the site of a Chevron appraisal well Nov. 7, about 230 miles (370 kilometers) off the northeastern coast of Rio de Janeiro state. Transocean Ltd. is the drilling contractor for the well. Earlier in



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the week, federal police asked that prosecutors charge Chevron and Transocean with crimes against the environment. Authorities also asked that charges be filed against 17 people for allegedly failing to provide information to the police. Among those cited is George Buck, chief operating officer for Chevron Corp.'s Brazilian division. If indicted and convicted, he and the others could face jail terms of up to 14 years each. Buck has not personally responded to the allegation, but Chevron said the indictments sought were without merit. "We will vigorously defend the company and its employees," the company said Thursday in an emailed statement. "Chevron is confident that once all the facts are fully examined, they will demonstrate that Chevron responded appropriately and responsibly to the incident." A federal prosecutor also has filed an \$11 billion lawsuit against Chevron Corp. because of alleged environmental harm caused by the leak. "During an investigation, the attorney general's office found that Chevron and Transocean were not capable of controlling the damage caused by the spill of nearly 3,000 barrels of oil, proof of a lack of environmental planning and management by the companies," said a statement from the prosecutor's office. Chevron has said the spill occurred because the company underestimated the pressure in an underwater reservoir. Most of Brazil's oil drilling is conducted offshore, and that is where Chevron's work is concentrated. The company does own lubricant-manufacturing plants in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. It wasn't clear if these operations would be affected by any decision a judge makes on the federal prosecutor's lawsuit.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/industries/brazil-slaps-chevron-corp-with-54-million-fine-for-oil-leak/2011/12/24/gIQAtaicFP_story.html

USA, OH, LISBON, DECEMBER 28 2011. PROPANE TANKER OVERTURNS, CLOSES PORTION OF ROUTE 172



Speed was likely a factor in a rollover accident involving a tanker truck that was carrying propane in Lisbon Tuesday morning. About a half mile of state Route 172 in the Baker Road area was closed while officials could clean up the scene. According to Ohio State Highway Patrol, at about 9:15 a.m. a driver making a local propane delivery failed to negotiate a sharp turn and overturned his tanker truck into a ditch. The man was taken from the scene by ambulance and was then taken by medical helicopter to St. Elizabeth Health Center. He was conscious at the scene. Officials said there was an odor of gas at the scene, so police weren't letting anyone close to the site. An empty truck was on its way to pick up the load before the tanker could be

flipped upright and the scene could be cleared. Police said the driver will likely be charged.

<http://www.wyvtv.com/content/news/local/story/Propane-Tanker-OvertURNS-Closes-Portion-of-Route/qM06Svt1FUGOsgHSYmj19A.csp>

USA, OH, COLUMBUS, DECEMBER 28 2011. STATIC ELECTRICITY COULD SPARK GAS-PUMP FIRES, EXPERTS WARN

robert vitale

As you brace yourself for the hazards of winter driving, here's another to keep in mind: Static electricity can spark havoc at the gas pump. Incidents of static sparking fuel vapors into fires are rare, but the danger is real. Experts say the risk might be greater in central Ohio, because the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has never required gas stations here to install nozzles with equipment that reduces vapor emissions. The risk of static rises when the air is dry. Most of the 176 fires cataloged by the Petroleum Equipment Institute over the past decade have occurred in December, January and February, when people also are more likely to get back into their cars while filling the tank.

Why is that a Danger?

Think of how you used to rub a balloon on your shirt to create static electricity. Now think about what part of your body acts like that balloon as you slide in and out of the car seat. Many people push off the door or door frame as they get out of the car, and that touch usually discharges any static that has built up. If they don't, a crackle or spark can be let off when they grab the gas nozzle. And that can ignite vapors around the pump. Ohio law requires gas stations to post warning signs at the pump advising people to stay outside while refueling. At least one GetGo station in Columbus has signs warning customers that clerks will shut off pumps if they see drivers return to their vehicles. It seems thinner, younger people are more at risk, because they don't need the extra leverage to get out of the car and therefore are less likely to discharge any static before touching the gas pump, said Robert Renkes, executive vice president of the Petroleum Equipment Institute. His Tulsa-based trade group represents companies that make equipment used by gas stations and other businesses. "People start fueling, get back in the



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car, (do) not shut the door, turn around, take care of the kids, reach over, grab the credit card," he said. "They don't need to push themselves out of the car. They pivot 90 degrees to the left and don't touch anything." Renkes started studying gas-pump fires in the 1990s, when email and the Internet helped spread isolated stories. The myth persists that cellphones are somehow to blame, but Renkes said none of the fires studied by his association was traced to cellphone use. "Cellphones do not cause these fires. Static electricity does," he said. Filling gas canisters is another potential danger, Renkes said. People should set them on the ground or touch the nozzle to the lip of the canister to ensure the can is grounded, he said. Battalion Chief Mike Fowler of the Columbus Fire Division couldn't recall any fires in the city caused by static electricity at the gas pump. Shane Cartmill, spokesman for the State Fire Marshal, said there have been 20 fires across the state from 2008 to 2010, although only two caused injuries. "We don't see a lot of fires from it, but the potential is there and the result is frightening," he said. Most cars built since 1998 include anti-emissions technology that sucks fuel vapors into the tank. Renkes said that has reduced static-sparked fires. The problem "hasn't gone away, but it has been greatly, greatly minimized," he said. There are about 82 million vehicles still on the road today that don't have vapor-recovery equipment.

<http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2011/12/26/static-electricity-could-spark-gas-pump-fires.html>

USA, N.Y, FORT EDWARD. DECEMBER 28 2011. HUNDREDS EVACUATED IN FORT EDWARD, HUDSON FALLS DUE TO GAS LEAK

jamie munks

Watch the Video

- [Crews responding to gasoline leak in Hudson Falls](#)
- [Ft. Edward roads re-open and evacuees return home](#)



Several hundred residents of Fort Edward and Hudson Falls were evacuated Tuesday night from their homes after a fuel leak got into the sewer system and caused numerous underground explosions. The leak started before 8 p.m. at the Cumberland Farms on Main Street in Hudson Falls. Police said a gas pump was damaged and several hundred gallons of gasoline spilled before the pump could be shut off. A large amount of gasoline leaked into nearby streets, and then into the sewer and storm drain system, according to Fort Edward Fire Chief Matt Hurlburt. The gasoline caused some explosions in the sewer system, blowing manhole covers off roads and shooting up flames as high as 10 to 15 feet, according to Hurlburt. In other locations, the pressure from the blasts caused manhole covers to pop off, according to Hudson Falls police. In Fort Edward, residents living between Liberty and Lock streets -- about 300 to 400 people -- were evacuated to Fort Edward High School. As of 6 a.m. Wednesday morning, only Washington Street in Fort Edward remained closed. All other affected roads have reopened. Fort Edward resident Amy Walker, who lives on East Street, said she didn't think anything of the booms she heard because she lives near the train station. Then, she received a call

saying she would be evacuated because of the leak -- and what she was hearing were explosions. "We were frantic, telling my niece we weren't going to die," Walker said Tuesday night at the high school. "We were nervous but staying calm for her." Despite the spill starting in Hudson Falls, the danger of explosion was considered greater in Fort Edward because the gas was pooling in the sewers there, said Washington County Sheriff Capt. Byrn Reynolds. The county used the reverse 911 system and sent firefighters door-to-door to inform residents of the evacuation order, and school buses were sent out to pick people up and bring them to the school, Reynolds said. Lynn Coon said she heard a loud "boom boom boom" and then a fireman came to her apartment and told her she had to leave. "I was scared," she said. People from around the region, including in Saratoga and Warren counties, reported hearing booms, although the National Weather Service radar showed storm activity with thunder and lightning going on at about the same time. No injuries had been reported in Fort Edward or Hudson Falls because of the leak, and no fires or damage had been reported in any homes or businesses as of early Wednesday morning. Washington County Public Safety Director Bill Cook said crews were dropping meters into sewers to test the gas levels before sending evacuated residents home. "We have to get to a safe level, to get people back into their homes," Cook said, adding people might be forced to stay at the school overnight. Route 4 was closed between Fort Edward and Hudson Falls, and State



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Police and the state Department of Transportation had closed off several other roads into the area, including routes 196 and 197 into Hudson Falls and Fort Edward, as of late Tuesday night. A large number of police, fire and EMS squads responded to the incident from Warren, Saratoga and Washington counties. Many were still at the scene early Wednesday morning, though police said as of 6 a.m. most had been released from the scene.

http://poststar.com/news/local/hundreds-evacuated-in-fort-edward-hudson-falls-due-to-gas/article_1ae17770-30f9-11e1-9631-0019bb2963f4.html

USA, CT, SOUTHTON, DECEMBER 28 2011. GAS TANKER FIRE UNDER CONTROL AFTER BEING STRUCK BY CAR FLEEING POLICE IN SOUTHTON

 **Watch the Video**

- [Gas Tanker Fire Under Control](#)
- [Police chase ends in tanker fire](#)



An SUV burns under a tanker truck full of gasoline at the intersection of Meriden Waterbury Turnpike and Old Turnpike Road in Southington, Tuesday afternoon, Dec. 27, 2011. State police were pursuing the allegedly stolen SUV when it struck the tanker truck turning onto Meriden-Waterbury Tpke.

A tanker truck full of gasoline caught fire Tuesday after being struck by an SUV at the intersection of Old Turnpike Road and Meriden-Waterbury Turnpike. People within at least a quarter-mile of the scene were evacuated from their homes after the crash due to concerns of an explosion. Shortly after 3:30 p.m., the tanker was struck by an SUV that was fleeing from police. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection was notified due to a significant spill. The tanker was resting on the road over the Quinnipiac River. Power was knocked out in the area.

Several fire department crews responded from Southington, Cheshire and Waterbury. State Police Lt. J. Paul Vance said the crash occurred after a brief police chase. "A trooper was chasing a stolen car, it crashed and the suspect was taken into custody." Zeke Vlasi was on the way to his Waterbury home from Hubbard Park with his family when he came upon the accident. "We got off 691, and got caught up right in the middle," Vlasi said. Vlasi said there were police officers on the scene, but not firefighters yet, and the tanker was fully engulfed. "The officers were telling us to back away and put the car in reverse," he said. An amateur photographer, Vlasi left the scene and went to a nearby overpass and began snapping photographs. "We heard some big booms," he said. "It sounded like a shotgun going off." The car was stolen from Woodbury, Vance said in a statement. It was spotted shortly thereafter in Waterbury where the trooper attempted to stop the stolen car when it fled. A second trooper observed the stolen car in Southington by the Travel Centers of America truck stop around 3:30 p.m., Vance said. The driver again fled police with the chase lasting "about a minute." The suspect and trooper were taken to St. Mary's Hospital Emergency Department for unknown injuries. There were no other injuries reported. Nearly 1,100 Connecticut Light & Power customers were without power in Southington, as well as 144 in Cheshire.

http://www.myrecordjournal.com/southington/article_eceb8b80-30cb-11e1-a074-001871e3ce6c.html#.TvpX7TUzC8A

USA, IA, CRESCO, DECEMBER 28 2011. FIREFIGHTERS RESPOND TO TWO EMERGENCIES IN ONE DAY

keri bugenhagen



Firefighters responded to a destructive blaze at an auto shop in Cresco last week. Officials verified that a gas tank exploded inside the shop. The structure was fully engulfed as members of the Cresco Fire Department arrived on-scene.

Firefighters responded to two unrelated back-to-back explosions in Cresco, Tuesday, Dec. 20. Fire Chief Neal Stapelkamp says the first call came in at about 3:45 p.m. for a structure fire at a 30-foot by 60-foot auto body shop located in Cresco, near the Hideaway Lounge at 212 S. Elm St. "The structure was fully engulfed upon arrival," stated Stapelkamp. "We knew everything would be a complete loss at that particular fire, including four vehicles, all of the contents of the shop and the structure." The building was owned by Derek Deden of Cresco and



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operated by James Johnson, also of Cresco. Tuesday afternoon as Johnson watched local firefighters fight the blaze, he stated a gas tank had exploded inside the shop. "I don't know much else, my cousin Joe [Hurst] was the one working," he added, and he, himself, had not been inside the shop at the time. Johnson's cousin had sustained smoke inhalation and was transported to Regional Health Services of Howard County (RSHC), however his injuries were not listed as serious and Hurst was subsequently discharged from the hospital. Johnson says the incident was disheartening. "Everything I worked for and had is gone," he said. Chief Stapelkamp says the house situated directly to the west of the auto shop did sustain a fair amount of damage on the eastern exposure to the flames. The Cresco Fire Department remained on-scene until approximately 6:15-6:30 p.m. before heading back to the station. The crew was assisted by RSHC Ambulance, Cresco Police Department and the Iowa State Patrol. The second fire call came in around 7 p.m. Tuesday evening following an unrelated explosion that occurred at Cresco Food Technologies, located along Highway 9 east in Cresco. "We had just gotten back to the station as we normally do, loading our trucks back up and getting ready for the next call," stated Stapelkamp. "Prior to getting completely back in service where we like to be, we did receive a page to Cresco Food Technologies." Stapelkamp says they responded to a report of an explosion with a burn victim. "We made an immediate response to the scene," he stated. "Upon arrival a number of firefighters assisted with patient care of the burn victim, and helped haul him into the ambulance so the individual could be transported to the hospital." The burn victim was then airlifted to a burn unit in Minneapolis, Minn. His condition remains unknown as of the Times' early holiday deadline Friday. Stapelkamp did confirm the burn victim was an employee of Cresco Food Technologies. "Our efforts and concerns then switched towards potentially hazardous materials," stated Stapelkamp, who explained they had not known how or why the blast occurred. There is risk in dealing with hazardous materials, including potential exposure to firefighters whose gear may or may not be able to handle unknown chemicals. "Given the fact we didn't know some of the chemicals that could be present, we needed to gather as much information as possible in talking with employees." Darrell Knecht of Howard County Emergency Management and the Waterloo Fire & Rescue Hazardous Materials Team were also contacted. "Frequently with an explosion you may end up with a working fire," stated Stapelkamp. "In this case it was a little different. There was not a working fire." Still, Stapelkamp says Cresco Food Technologies was subject to "a massive explosion." "It likely was a very quick flash fire. In speaking with some of the employees who were inside, there was indeed fire present for a very, very short period of time." Stapelkamp says a flash fire quickly burns up the fuel that created the dangerous situation and it extinguishes itself prior to getting into other structural fuels. Cresco firefighters were concerned about exposure to potentially hazardous materials Tuesday. "We've got protection from smoke and fire, but we do not have protection from chemical exposure," stated Stapelkamp, which is why Waterloo Fire & Hazmat Team was called in to respond to the scene for an advisory role. "They brought two members of their team to assist us as part of the contract we have with them," stated Stapelkamp. He adds, "The employees at Cresco Food Technologies were very helpful and very organized. They were able to obtain material safety data sheets that provided us with detailed information as far as what [hazardous] products were inside." Upon their arrival, the Waterloo Fire & Hazmat Team along with Cresco firefighters made entry into the building together. Readings were then taken with meters throughout the plant including toxicity and oxygen levels. "They were able to get to what we call the 'boom room' where the incident occurred," stated Stapelkamp. "They observed that as well as the chemical room directly adjacent to the boom room, which then created the 'what if' factor that other chemical containers and vessels may have been damaged." However, Stapelkamp says the metered devices were all reading at acceptable levels and the situation was deemed "stable." Heavy structural damage was also observed. "We then secured the building and put it off limits until we could do a visual in the morning," stated Stapelkamp. The last unit arrived back at the Cresco Fire Station at approximately 1:20 a.m.

<http://www.crescotimes.com/articles/2011/12/27/news/doc4ef9f3288b4e9362019023.txt>

USA, AKA, ANCHORAGE, DECEMBER 29 2011. JUDGE RULES BP'S '09 NORTH SLOPE SPILL AN ACCIDENT

richard mauier

A federal judge in Anchorage on Tuesday rejected an effort by prosecutors to hold BP criminally negligent for a 2009 pipeline rupture, one of a series of mishaps and disasters that have dogged the company over the past decade. In ruling that federal prosecutors failed to prove their case, U.S. District Judge Ralph Beistline released BP from probation over a 2007 criminal conviction. But he warned the oil giant that it was on notice and had better not make the same mistakes that led to the 2009 spill, when about 15,000 gallons of crude contaminated a frozen wetland on the North Slope. "It is incumbent upon BP to make sure this does not happen again," he admonished. Beistline's order followed seven days of hearings -- in effect a mini-trial --



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into allegations that BP violated probation conditions from its conviction in 2007 for violating the Clean Water Act with a 250,000-gallon spill. The Justice Department and the Environmental Protection Agency sought to have the 2007 probation revoked and reinstated with new conditions -- additional fines and an extended period of compliance. Like most other criminal defendants, BP's probation agreement required it to obey state and federal laws. The 2009 spill amounted to just such a violation when crude spilled from a transport line that was plugged with ice after operators failed to address repeated alarms that sometimes lasted for months, prosecutors charged. BP argued that its workers had followed normal procedures and that the line was engineered properly, so it was not negligent. The company also tried to get off on a technicality, claiming the wetland drenched with oil was not "federal waters," a prerequisite for a violation of the Clean Water Act. Beistline rejected the technicality, saying at least a plume of oil flowed from the immediate vicinity of the spill. But he agreed with BP on the question of negligence. "While the Court would prefer a fail-safe system where accidents never happen, it recognizes that human beings and engineering practices are not perfect and that, on occasion, unexpected or unanticipated accidents can and will happen," he wrote. "Certainly, in retrospect, things could have been done differently that may, or may not, have prevented this spill. But in the instant case, the Court concludes, based on the evidence presented, that BP was following accepted industry practices at all relevant times and could not have reasonably expected a blowout similar to the one that occurred on November 29, 2009." After the spill was discovered, BP acted responsibly in cleaning up its mess, Beistline said. "An untrained observer would likely be unable to find any indication that a spill had occurred," the judge wrote. "The restoration efforts were impressive and indicate that every reasonable effort was taken to restore the land to its pre-spill condition." At the same time, Beistline said, prosecutors acted properly in bringing the case to his courtroom. "There can be no doubt that the Government takes its responsibility seriously to monitor the industry and to ensure compliance with environmental laws. While this entire endeavor has been costly for all involved, it has been worthwhile if only to demonstrate the high regard society places on the environment as the nation's natural resources are harvested," Beistline said. In a brief prepared statement, BP Exploration (Alaska) spokesman Steve Rinehart said, "We are pleased with the decision and appreciate the court's attention. We know that the privilege of working in Alaska comes with a responsibility to maintain high standards. We will continue our commitment to running safe and compliant operations." The Nov. 29, 2009, spill occurred in a pipeline feeding into BP's Lisburne Production Center. BP has had a bad experience before with a frozen line. In 2001, 10,000 gallons of oil and methanol spilled when workers tried to thaw a freeze-choked pipeline near a North Slope well. BP has been hauled before Congress over North Slope pipeline corrosion that led to two spills and an oil-field shutdown in 2006. One of those spills resulted in the 2007 conviction. BP's decade of visits to the criminal dock began when it pleaded guilty to a felony in 2000 for failing to immediately report illegal dumping of hazardous waste by a North Slope drilling contractor. The company was convicted of a felony for the 2005 Texas City refinery explosion that killed 15 people. It remains under investigation for the Deepwater Horizon explosion in the Gulf of Mexico that killed 11 people and led to a massive oil spill.

<http://www.thenewstribune.com/2011/12/27/1960160/judge-rules-bps-09-spill-an-accident.html>

USA, MT, MISSOULA, DECEMBER 29 2011. MISSOULA WOMAN KILLED IN RESERVE ST. CRASH

irina cates

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.kpax.com/news/missoula-crash-rude-awakening-for-one-resident/>



Missoula Police report that a 22-year-old Missoula woman died after she collided head-on with a semi truck hauling propane on Reserve Street early Tuesday morning. The semi truck driver told investigators he saw the woman's car cross all lanes of traffic before she collided with his semi. He also told authorities that woman didn't have her headlights on. The woman was pronounced dead on the scene, but the semi driver was able to walk away from the accident. The woman's name is not being released at this time and the crash is still under investigation. Reserve Street between Mullan Road and Third Street was still closed as of 12:30 p.m. and fire officials tell us that the road isn't expected to reopened until later in the evening.

<http://www.kpax.com/full-coverage/missoula-propane-tanker-accident/>



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USA, TX, HOUSTON, DECEMBER 29 2011. COUNTY SUES OVER TOXIC STORAGE ON RIVER

allan turner

Angered that a riverside industrial waste pit leached potent toxins into the San Jacinto River for almost half a century, the Harris County Attorney's Office is asking that those responsible be fined as much as the law allows - \$25,000 a day - all the way back to the site's 1965 opening. Named as defendants in a lawsuit filed in Judge [Caroline Baker](#)'s 295th state District Court are International Paper Co., [McGinnes Industrial Maintenance](#) Corp., Waste Management of Texas, and Waste Management Inc. "The day of reckoning is here," said [Rock Owens](#), Harris County Attorney Vince [Ryan](#)'s lead lawyer on the case. "These penalties are there to punish, to send a message. ... We're asking these companies to atone for what they've done." Spokesmen for International Paper and Waste Management said Tuesday that they have not received the lawsuit and would not comment. At issue is an abandoned, partially submerged waste facility near the Interstate 10 crossing that has been an [Environmental Protection Agency Superfund](#) site since 2008 and constitutes one of Texas' biggest pollution headaches. The waste pits have leached dioxin into the river, leading state health officials to warn pregnant women and young children against eating fish or crabs caught nearby. They also have warned against picnicking or camping near the former McGinnes facility. A byproduct of bleaching paper, dioxin is a human carcinogen so potent that it is measured in trillionths of a gram. Tests of river mud near the site have found dioxin concentrations in excess of 41,000 parts per trillion. Of the fish and crab samples collected near the dump, 95 percent found to be were dangerously contaminated. McGinnes Industrial Maintenance Corp. for nine months deposited waste from a Pasadena paper factory at the dump, which was swamped by the river as land subsided. The factory is no longer open.

No Exposure Level Safe

The long-lived toxin, which also causes reproduction and immune system problems, is stored in body fat and increases in concentration as it moves up the food chain. The [EPA](#) says no amount of exposure is safe. Acting under an EPA mandate, International Paper and Waste Management this fall capped and sealed two pits with polyethylene liner and 70,000 tons of rock. Deliberations are under way to determine what other remedial efforts are necessary. Owens said any award granted would be split between the county and the [Texas Commission on Environmental Quality](#). Owens said the county would use its share on site remediation beyond what the EPA requires. Additionally, he said, it would be used to launch education campaigns to drive home the dangers of eating fish caught at the site. Currently, he said, signs with health warnings posted at the site have not been entirely effective. According to the county's lawsuit, International Paper Co. is named as a defendant because it is a successor to Champion Papers Inc., which operated the Pasadena factory. McGinnes Industrial Maintenance Corp., the suit says, is owned by Waste Management of Texas; and it, in turn, is owned by Waste Management Inc. Waste Management spokesman [Ken Haldin](#), however, attempted to distance his company from the problematic operation. "Waste Management was not affiliated with (McGinnes). It never operated ... never owned the waste site property and never was involved in disposal there. Most importantly, the site was operated under the proper government authorization in place at the time."

Kudos from Sierra Club

Evelyn Merz, Houston [Sierra Club](#) conservation chairwoman, lauded the county lawsuit, saying that Ryan's office - faced with little action taken by the state - had adopted an appropriately aggressive strategy.

She expressed concern, however, that the county might devote an inordinately large amount of its potential award to efforts to educate the public about dangers at the site. Rather, Merz suggested, such money should go toward financing attempts to stabilize and end erosion. "It certainly hasn't taken millions of dollars to put up signs," she said. "It doesn't take millions for a public ad campaign."

<http://www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/article/County-sues-over-toxic-storage-on-river-2427715.php>

INDIA, THRISSUR, DECEMBER 29 2011. FIRES AT CRACKER UNITS KILL 10 IN KERALA, TN

Ten persons were killed in two separate fires at cracker factories at Athani in Thrissur district of Kerala and Madurai district of Tamil Nadu. Six persons, including a migrant worker from Bihar, were killed in a huge blast and the accompanying fire at a pyrotechnics work unit at Anapperuvazhi near Athani in Kerala's Thrissur district at noon Wednesday. Six others were admitted to hospital with serious burn injuries and the condition of two of them was stated to be critical. P Vijayan, Commissioner of Police, Thrissur said the cause of the blast was yet to be ascertained. The police and local residents said the intensity of the blast and fire was very high because the fireworks unit owner could have stocked a huge quantity of explosives in the context of the upcoming temple festival season in the district. Four of those killed in the blast and fire were identified as



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unit owner Jophy Devassy, contractor Vasu Pillai of Kunnamkulam, Thrissur and workers Sajeesh of Vennur and Bihar native Babloo. The bodies of the other two persons killed were so mutilated that the police could only guess their identity as workers Anil and Radhakrishnan. Among those who had been admitted to the Medical College Hospital, Thrissur was Devassy, father of unit owner Jophy. Devassy and Josphy were said to be two of the best pyrotechnic experts in the area and had been regular contractors for the firework shows of the Paramekkavu temple for the famous Thrissur Pooram festival. The blast at the fireworks unit situated atop a hill near Athani had occurred at about 12.30 pm Wednesday and the accompanying fire raged for about an hour. The inaccessibility of the unit in the absence of motorable roads to it had made rescue works and the efforts to douse the fire difficult. The authorities have launched an inquiry into the incident. Police officials in Thrissur said they would launch raids on all pyrotechnic units in the district as the season of annual temple festivals, of which fireworks shows were an unavoidable part, was about to start. Meanwhile, in Madurai, four persons were killed and two others injured when fire broke out at a fire cracker unit at V Sockalingam Patti in the district, according to PTI. Police said electrical short circuit could have caused the incident.

<http://dailypioneer.com/nation/31218-fires-at-cracker-units-kill-10-in-kerala-tn.html>

USA, PA, LYCOMING COUNTY, DECEMBER 29 2011. CRASH SPILLS DRILLING MUD, THREATENS CREEK

jim hamill



Environmental officials are trying to figure out if a truck crash contaminated a creek with gas drilling mud in Lycoming County. It happened Monday and closed down Route 287 until early Tuesday morning. The wreck happened north of Jersey Shore at the intersection of a road that sees lots of truck traffic with the natural gas industry. No one was seriously hurt in the crash which spilled 2,000 gallons of drilling mud, however locals said the heavy trucks traveling on the mountain has long been a concern. A truck hauling gas drilling mud was going too fast and slammed into another truck at the base of Dam Run Road north of Jersey Shore, according to state police. A day later, you can see all the work done to contain the spill. Crews with the state department of environmental protection came to see how much if any of the greasy fluid reached Larry's Creek. "I guess I hate to say it was bound to happen eventually, but I hope it doesn't happen again," said Robert Notz,

a member of Larry's Creek Fish and Game Club. The hunting club is in an area where a lot of the gas drilling is taking place. So many trucks come through the area every day, staging at the top and bottom of the one lane road. There has been a lot of concern over safety on Dam Run Road, according to Notz. "These are big big trucks, and they come up with different type fluids, so the weight of them, thank God many are professional drivers," he added. "Couple hundred gallons here, couple hundred gallons there, they aren't big streams until we get heavy rains, normally just trickles," added Robert Hlavaty of Salladasburg. A DEP spokesman said the trucking company, Rogers Energy Services, will hire a contractor to clean up the mess and look into how much drilling mud reached Larry's Creek following the crash Monday. Investigators said the truck that caused the crash was going too fast and the vehicle needs to be inspected before any charges are filed.

<http://www.wnep.com/wnep-crash-spills-drilling-mud-threatens-creek-20111227.0.4416331.story>

USA, WA, SEATTLE, DECEMBER 29 2011. DIESEL TANKER OVERTURNS ON I-5 IN SEATTLE

An overturned tanker truck filled with diesel backed up traffic for several hours on northbound Interstate 5 in Seattle. State troopers and state Transportation Department workers as well as fire units responded after the tanker overturned at about 9:30 p.m. Tuesday. The backup stretched for about a mile at times. The Transportation Department reported that all lanes were open once again just before midnight Tuesday. No injuries and no spills were reported.

http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/localnews/2017105652_apwai5dieseltanker1stldwritethru.html



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