



Dangerous Goods - Hazardous Materials Group & Network Release 2011 – 796 Newsy Stuff

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January 10 2012



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UPDATE: BURMA, RANGOON, DECEMBER 31 2011. GUNPOWDER WAREHOUSE BLAST KILLS 17 IN MYANMAR: POLICE

 **Photo's [13]**

- [Deadly Explosion In Myanmar, December 29, 2011](#)
- [Gunpowder warehouse blast kills 17 in Myanmar: police](#)

 **Watch the Video**

- [warehouse blast kills 17 in Myanmar](#)
- [Gunpowder warehouse blast kills 17 in Myanmar](#)



At least 17 people died and 80 were injured after an early morning explosion at a warehouse storing gunpowder, likely for use at mine blast sites, in Myanmar's biggest city of Yangon, police and fire officials said on Thursday. The explosion caused a massive blaze and spewed smoke that was only brought under control by late morning, officials said. A police officer, who declined to be named, said 12 men and five women had been confirmed dead and further deaths were expected. "A fire first broke out at a warehouse where gunpowder was stored," a Yangon fire department official, who asked not to be named said. "It then caused the explosion and then the fire spread. I don't think it's anything to do with sabotage." The blast occurred at around 2 a.m. (1930 GMT on Wednesday) in Mingalar Taung Nyunt Township in the east of Yangon, Myanmar's former capital and its main commercial

centre. Ko Tin Than, 33, a taxi driver who happened to be driving near the warehouse at the time of the blast, said the whole area was covered with ash afterwards. "It was just like a volcanic eruption like you see in the movies," he said. "Two or three people more than 100 feet away from the warehouse were killed by flying debris." Some witnesses said the fire had triggered several smaller blasts. Police said three firemen were among the dead. "As far as I know, these warehouses belong to the government and some of them were hired to the Myanmar Economic Holding Limited under the Ministry of Defense," said a retired civil servant, declining to be named. "I think the gunpowder stored there was meant for mining purposes, not for manufacturing weapons." Fire engines from all parts of Yangon were at the scene, witnesses said. Television pictures showed rescue teams carrying casualties on stretchers in the darkness around what appeared to be badly damaged buildings. Witnesses said houses and factories were damaged but an early report that fire had spread to a nearby shipyard was not confirmed. The shock from the explosion was felt by many people in eastern and central Yangon. Than Soe, a resident in Yuzana Mingalar Housing Areas about a mile away from the site, said buildings shook, windows were shattered and pictures fell from walls. "It was such a loud noise that at first we thought it was something like an asteroid falling to earth," he said.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/12/29/us-myanmar-blast-idUSTRE7BR1FC20111229>

USA, MO, KINGDOM CITY, DECEMBER 31 2011. FIRE DESTROYS FUEL TANKER AT KC TRUCK STOP



Firemen from North Callaway and Central fire protection districts battled a gasoline tanker truck fire at the Petro Truck Stop in Kingdom City for about one hour Wednesday afternoon. The fire started in the cab and spread to the empty tanker when a rubber tire below the front of the gasoline transport tank caught fire, burning a hole into the tanker.

About 15 firemen from North Callaway and Central fire protection districts battled a gasoline tanker truck fire for about one hour Wednesday afternoon at the Petro Truck Stop in Kingdom City. "We were lucky the gasoline tanker was empty instead of being full. But it still created a lot of fire and smoke that could be seen several miles away," said Ronnie Huff of the Central Fire Protection District. Sterling

Mitchell of the North Callaway Fire Protection District said a rubber tire under the tanker caught fire and burned a hole in the empty gasoline transport tank. The fire was reported at 12:36 p.m. Wednesday. Huff said when firemen arrived they assumed the tanker truck parked about 75 yards from the Iron Skillet restaurant at the Petro truck stop was full of gasoline.

<http://www.fultonsun.com/news/2011/dec/30/fire-destroys-fuel-tanker-kc-truck-stop/>



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USA, LA, ERATH, DECEMBER 31 2011. BITTER TWIST IN LOUISIANA FAMILY'S LONG DRILLING FIGHT

campbell robertson



Texaco has operated a gas plant on the Broussard family's farmland for generations. Years after suing over contamination, the family is facing a lawsuit aimed at condemning and seizing the land.

The tenant was Texaco; the landlord the Broussard family, heirs of a Cajun rancher, who claimed that Texaco's operation of a gas plant on its property had left the land contaminated. The lawsuit, of a kind not all that rare in these industry-heavy parts, had dragged on so long that 13 of the heirs had died. But it took a sudden and bitter turn in recent months, when another company — a company that, like Texaco, is a subsidiary of Chevron — [sued to condemn](#) most of the disputed land and

expropriate it, arguing that it was acting in the national interest. The boundaries of the national interest are hard to draw in any place, but particularly so here in south Louisiana, where pipelines run under the bayous and refinery flares light the sky. As old leases get examined and environmental concerns become more publicized, neighborly disputes between residents and those drilling on their land are bound to get more heated. And few are more complicated than the fight between Chevron and the Broussards. The Chevron subsidiary that sued to take the land, Sabine Pipe Line, had quietly operated a pipeline hub across the road for nearly 60 years. In June, Sabine sent a letter to the family, saying the 14-year legal fight with Texaco was threatening the continued operation of one of the most important [natural gas](#) pipeline hubs in the country. The family could agree to sell the land, the letter said, or be forced to do so. The Broussards say the timing of the letter and the scope of the demand are more than a little curious. They contend that Sabine's actions are not to protect any pipeline, but are simply a pretext to shield Chevron from millions in environmental damages. "It was all collusion, no doubt in my mind," said Warren A. Perrin, who is leading the Broussard family in its legal fight. "My cousin just said, 'You don't seem to be behaving like good neighbors if you're taking away our property.'" The Broussards, like most Cajun families, are no foes of the [oil](#) and gas industry. Some of them worked at the Texaco plant. Mr. Perrin himself was born in a little house a few hundred yards from the plant, and his first law office was in the back of a Texaco station. But pugnacity comes naturally to Mr. Perrin, a compact man who will talk about his Cajun ancestors and the injustices visited upon them as long as a person will let him. In the 1990s, he went to battle with the queen of England, pressing her to apologize for the expulsion of the Acadians, the forebears of today's Cajuns, from Canada in 1755. The queen issued a royal proclamation in 2003 acknowledging the "dark chapter" and calling for a day of commemoration. That proclamation hangs on the wall of Mr. Perrin's office like a trophy. Mr. Perrin is one of the 75 or so heirs of Aristide Broussard, who bought 3,000 acres here in Vermilion Parish at the end of the 19th century. The land was perfect for growing sugar cane, raising cattle and trapping alligators. That it was also perfect for drilling the Broussards found out four decades later, when the Texas Company discovered a big deposit underneath. The company bought the mineral rights, but it had bigger plans, and in 1942 asked to lease an 80-acre plot in one of Mr. Broussard's cow pastures. It was an easy decision after the lean days of the Depression: Mr. Broussard leased the land to the company for 75 years, at a rent of \$1,600 annually (an amount later renegotiated to \$110,000 a year). The company gave him a Cadillac and a lifetime supply of free gas, and it promised jobs for his grandsons. And it built an enormous gas recycling plant in his backyard. Even though some members of the family worked on the property — some still do — they have never entirely been aware of what went on there. They knew that there were some places in the pasture where grass did not grow, and that pipelines crossed their land so thickly that Texaco simply paid them not to graze cattle in certain areas. But it was not until a legal argument broke out between Texaco and another company working at the site that the family learned that one of the wells had blown out in 1997. As the fight intensified, the heirs of Aristide Broussard hired environmental experts, who found leaky saltwater pits on the property, countless aluminum pellets and radioactive material. In a lawsuit, the Broussards argued that the contamination was so bad that Texaco had breached the lease and that they would try to kick the company off the property unless it was cleaned to their standards. Less than a month later, the family received a surprise: Sabine, a company that seemed completely unrelated to the contamination suit, [offered the Broussards a little under \\$1 million](#) to buy most of the land in question. If the offer was not accepted, the letter said, Sabine would expropriate the land and pay the family the fair market value. That Sabine had been operating a pipeline across the street since 1964 the family knew. They knew that in 1990 Sabine began managing the so-called Henry Hub, an interchange of gas lines so crucial that it is where the prices are set for natural gas futures based on the traffic there. What the family did not know is that part of this hub had migrated onto their property. And they are still unsure of just how much of it is on their property. The Broussard family discussed the offer with Sabine, but they could not



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agree on a price. Assuring Sabine that they had no intention of disrupting its operation of the pipelines, the family members declined to sell. The day before Thanksgiving, Sabine sued to take over the property. "Sabine has tried, for the past several months, to secure the rights necessary to the operation of its facilities through good-faith negotiations," said a spokesman for Chevron in a statement, adding that the company had offered a price "significantly" above fair market value. "Having been unable to reach a negotiated resolution of this matter," the statement continued, "and in view of the Broussards' ongoing efforts to terminate these leasehold rights, Sabine has exercised its rights under the Natural Gas Act to acquire the property it needs to continue its operations." Disputes between pipeline operators and property owners over condemnation suits are not rare, and in most cases the pipeline owners are successful. But several eminent domain lawyers said they had never encountered a situation quite like this. "This," said Gideon Kanner, a professor emeritus at Loyola Law School in Los Angeles, "is what the lawyers call a sui generis case."

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/30/us/in-louisiana-twist-in-legal-fight-over-texaco-drilling-lease.html?_r=1

KENYA, NAIROBI, DECEMBER 31 2011. TWO ARRESTED FOR SCOOPING PETROL

 **Watch the Youtube Video** [2 arrested for scooping petrol](http://www.nty.co.ke)

<http://www.nty.co.ke>

Two people have been arrested for allegedly scooping petrol from an overturned petrol tanker. The tanker was transporting the fuel to South Sudan, when it overturned along the Eldoret-Webuye highway. Another person was rushed to Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital, after inhaling petrol fumes.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-VJBHUYPBM>

USA, CO, DENVER, DECEMBER 31 2011. BENZENE IS FOULING DRINKING WATER AT SUNCOR REFINERY AND CHEMICALS ARE SEEPING DIRECTLY INTO SAND CREEK

bruce finley



Crews try to clean up a black substance that the EPA says contains cancer-causing benzene.

Toxic petroleum dissolved in groundwater beneath Suncor Energy north of downtown Denver is seeping directly into the bottom of Sand Creek near the creek's confluence with the [South Platte River](#) and piped drinking water at the refinery may be contaminated with benzene. State health officials today ordered additional measures to minimize environmental harm and prevent people from ingesting contaminated water. Those measures include posting of "Drinking Water Warning" signs at the refinery. Benzene levels in Sand Creek are fluctuating but reached 670 parts per billion on Dec. 22 — 134 times higher than the 5 ppb national drinking water standard. An anonymous tip from a Suncor employee Thursday alerted state health officials to contamination in tap water on the refinery

property. Suncor officials couldn't be reached today for comment. Denver Water authorities, notified around noon today by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, immediately began testing the city's water system for benzene that can cause anemia, blood problems and cancer. Denver Water reviewed data from recent tests for benzene and found no elevated levels, utility spokeswoman Stacy Chesney said. Denver Water delivers treated water to the refinery at three locations. Pipes then are under Suncor's control. "We're always concerned when there's an indication of a water-quality issue with one of our customers," Chesney said. "It appears this situation is isolated to Suncor's private system. Benzene has not been detected in our system. But we are doing additional testing as a precautionary measure." Denver Water managers will provide maps and documentation to help Suncor and state health officials find out whether water pipes near and under refinery property are affected. The eight-page state order issued today builds on state orders issued Dec. 1, after a fisherman found foul-smelling black goo seeping into Sand Creek and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency launched an emergency response. For decades, state health regulators have known about underground plumes of contamination at the refinery, and documents show new contamination was detected earlier this year. The area has been site of refining operations since 1938 and has a long history of environmental problems. Suncor bought the refinery from Conoco. EPA emergency responders in early December handed back responsibility for a cleanup and remediation to state regulators — after contract workers dug a



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trench to trap toxic material seeping from the banks of Sand Creek. Over the past couple weeks, however, monitoring along the creek found that petroleum is entering the creek directly without surfacing, according to state health spokesman Warren Smith. "The dissolved material is coming in through the bottom of the channel, not through a seep on the bank," Smith said. The state order requires installation of "an air sparging system" in Sand Creek — similar to a fish tank aerator — by Jan. 6. This is meant to help benzene and other contaminants in the creek evaporate into the air, instead of flowing into the South Platte. The order also requires Suncor to install a soil vapor extraction system and dig a second "interceptor trench" by Jan. 31 to try to trap hydrocarbons floating in groundwater before they enter Sand Creek. Suncor has tried to make the first trench work better and is providing bottled water to workers, Smith said. Company contractors also have tested 50 of 57 buildings at the adjacent Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant for toxic vapors, finding problems in two. Toxic vapor removal systems have been installed along with a filter and a ventilator on other buildings, he said. State wildlife officials report no dead fish. Suncor could be held responsible for damage extending from the refinery down the river.

 **Document** [Read the state health department's Dec. 30 order to Suncor Energy \(PDF\)](#).

Related Links

- Dec 3: [Trench being dug to halt toxic ooze into Sand Creek north of Denver](#)
- Dec 2: [Cleanup orders at Colorado's Suncor refinery spill into Sand Creek officially issued](#)
- Dec 1: [Benzene in Sand Creek measured at 400 times amount tolerated by national drinking water standards, EPA tests show](#)
- [Suncor Energy refinery north of downtown Denver called source of black goo](#)
- Nov 30: [Health department: Pipe may have broken a half mile from Sand Creek spill site](#)
- Nov 29: [Three trucks sucking up oily muck in Sand Creek trying to keep more from flowing into South Platte River](#)

http://www.denverpost.com/breakingnews/ci_19648011

SOUTH AFRICA, MOSSEL BAY, DIAZ BEACH, DECEMBER 31 2011. PETROSA NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR MOSSEL BAY POLLUTION



PetroSA, South Africa's National Oil Company, says it is not responsible for the oil pollution that has recently been detected at Mossel Bay's Diaz Beach. An investigation by PetroSA personnel, the Mossel Bay Municipality, marine services company Smit Amandla, has identified the puffy-like lumps as typical of contamination that results from heavy oil that has been exposed to the elements - such as the sun and sea, the company said in a statement on Friday. This form of contamination is mainly the case after vessels clean their bunker tanks, while at sea, it added. The investigation also revealed that the oil contamination was blown in from the sea. All the parties to the investigation also agreed that PetroSA was not responsible for the contamination. A sample of the oil contamination had also been analysed by specialists at PetroSA's laboratory and the results confirmed that the product found at Diaz Beach was not produced by the national oil company. "It

is also important to note that PetroSA does not ship heavy oil. The heaviest hydrocarbon product that PetroSA transports by sea is diesel. It is highly unlikely for diesel to form solid lumps of the nature found at Diaz Beach. PetroSA is therefore confident that the contamination did not result from any of its activities," it concluded.

http://www.businesslive.co.za/southafrica/sa_companies/2011/12/30/petrosa-not-responsible-for-mossel-bay-pollution

ENGLAND, LITTLE RISSINGTON, DECEMBER 31 2011. FORMER RAF BASE AT LITTLE RISSINGTON NAMED BY MOD AS CONTAMINATED

The former Red Arrows site at Little Rissington has been revealed by the MoD as one of 15 places in the UK to be contaminated by radioactivity from the Second World War. A dozen such sites, which have not been made public by the ministry before, were revealed after a parliamentary question was asked of MP Andrew Robathan earlier this month. The married-quarters of the former RAF base, now known as Upper Rissington, is set to double in size after developer Gladedale Estates won planning permission last year to build 368 homes there. Gladedale Estate was granted permission for the development, which will double the size of Upper Rissington, by the Secretary of State after Cotswold District Council failed to



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make a decision on the controversial plan. Under the plan most of the existing business park buildings and some of the ex-MoD buildings will be demolished. Others, including the former officers' mess, watchtower, guardhouse and station headquarters will be converted. Building work has already started on a raft of other amenities including a primary school, health centre and shops, and leisure facilities are planned for the site. Lionel Teague, chairman of the Little Rissington Parish Council, said the council was unaware of the contamination. He said: "My council didn't know anything about it and I certainly didn't know anything about it. "If we had known it might have made a difference to the planning. I have nothing against the building there but the problem is there isn't any work in the area. "There's going to be a lot of extra traffic. With another 300 houses it's going to double at least as they will have to travel." The contamination comes from radium used to coat the dials of aircraft and other equipment to illuminate them in the dark. The radium comes from scrap that was burned and dumped in the 1940s and 50s. A MoD spokesman said: "For all the 15 sites listed, the risk to site users and the public is negligible. "We continually monitor sites and work with the authorities to ensure the risks are managed. Of those not owned by the MoD, the landowners were informed of the presence of radium contamination as part of the sale and measures agreed to manage the risks. "In some cases the MOD agreed to undertake remediation as part of the contract of sale." A Gladedale spokesperson said: "We have recently undertaken a site-wide contamination survey of the former RAF base at Little Rissington as part of the redevelopment proposals. "A full remediation strategy is currently being agreed with the Environment Agency and the Council's Environmental Health Officer which will be implemented as the development is progressed. "An isolated area of radiological contamination was identified at the southern end of the Business Park which is thought to be associated with luminescence from an aircraft dial."

http://www.cotswoldjournal.co.uk/news/local/9441673.Ex_RAF_base_radiation_alert/

USA, IN, LAYFAYETTE, DECEMBER 31 2011. U.S. 52, SCHUYLER INTERSECTION REOPENS FOLLOWING TANKER CRASH

 **Watch the Video** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k2xgCk818iE>



A paramedic and firefighter look on after a semitrailer was overturned today near the intersection of Schuyler Avenue and U.S. 52 in Lafayette.

Lafayette police are reopening the intersection of U.S. 52 and Schuyler Avenue this evening following an incident involving an overturned chemical tanker, dispatchers said. Authorities were working to reopen the intersection around 7:30 p.m. The tanker overturned around 2:45 p.m., witnesses said. The tanker briefly leaked aqua ammonia into the roadway immediately following the crash, but authorities were able to quickly contain the spill, Lafayette Police Sgt. Rich Dexter previously said. The driver of the tanker, whose name was not immediately available, was not believed to be injured. Responders in hazmat suits were on standby at the scene of the crash should another spill occur, but Dexter said the site did not pose a danger to the public. Editor's note: The following story appeared earlier at

www.jconline.com. The intersection of U.S. 52 and Schuyler Avenue remains closed this evening as authorities work to clean up the scene of an overturned chemical tanker. The tanker, which witnesses said crashed around 2:45 p.m., briefly leaked aqua ammonia into the roadway, according to a public alert police sent. At 4:30 p.m., though, Lafayette Police Sgt. Rich Dexter said the spill had been contained and the scene is not dangerous to the public. Authorities estimated it could be as late as midnight until the intersection reopens. The tanker's driver, whose name was not immediately available, was not believed to be injured. Kevin Dolick, shift leader at the nearby Village Pantry Marathon, was working inside the store when he noticed the tanker overturn as it attempted to turn left onto U.S. 52 from Indiana 25 South. Dolick, whose father previously was a Wea Township volunteer firefighter, said his instincts soon kicked in. Worried about the driver's safety, Dolick ran outside and toward the overturned truck. "I kind of kicked in the windshield to get it out of the way, and I moved the windshield wipers so I could get to him," Dolick said. "I was just worried about getting him out of there in case it blew up." Luckily, Dolick said, it turned out the vehicle wasn't in danger of exploding. The driver was uninjured except for a small scratch on his head, Dolick said.

<http://www.jconline.com/article/20111230/NEWS/111230023/Tanker-leak-contained-U-S-52-Schuyler-still-closed-update-?odyssey=nav%7Chead>



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FRANCE, PARIS, DECEMBER 31 2011. UPDATE 4-PETROPLUS SHUTS 3 OIL REFINERIES AS CASH RUNS OUT

marie maitre & caroline copley

- "Temporary economic shutdowns" of French, Swiss, Belgian plants
- Source says "provisional financing" agreed to keep talks going
- French, Belgian refineries to close Sunday/Monday
- Negotiations with 13 banks continue
- Company's troubles throws spotlight on ex-chief O'Malley

Petroplus is to close three of its five oil refineries because it has run out of money for crude supplies since bankers froze its credit lines abruptly this week. Talks with the bankers have been "open and constructive" and will continue in the coming days, the financially troubled company said in a statement about the closures, two of which will begin over the coming weekend. "In the meantime, the company will start temporary economic shutdowns of the Petit Couronne (France), Antwerp (Belgium) and Cressier (Switzerland) refineries in January 2012 given limited credit availability and the economic climate in Europe." A victim of oversupply in European refining and of an investment strategy under former boss Thomas O'Malley that fell foul of an industry downturn, Petroplus and European government officials have been locked in talks with the 13 banks that froze a \$1 billion facility it needed to buy crude oil. Friday's announcement follows days of talks among bankers, government officials and the company aimed at keeping fuel flowing from Europe's biggest independent refiner. A source close to the situation said a "provisional financing agreement" had been found to keep the talks going after intensive talks involving banks, the company and local governments. And a Swiss local government official said he was urging the banking consortium to reconsider, although he did not confirm any breakthrough. "I called yesterday to both Swiss banks, UBS and Credit Suisse, to insist on the local and strategic importance of the Cressier plant," said Thierry Grosjean, Economy Minister at the Swiss canton of Neuchatel, home to Petroplus's Cressier refinery. Traders and analysts expect a large customer, supplier or banker could step in to keep plants running at some point. But despite efforts so far, workers at the company's French and Belgian refineries were already preparing shutdowns on Sunday and Monday, according to officials and trade unions. "There is no more crude coming in so the plant cannot work any more so we need to start shutting down all the plant's units on Monday, but this is a technical shutdown," said a spokeswoman for Petroplus in France. "The shutdown will take about a week." The Cressier plant has enough crude to last between 15 and 20 days, according to the head of economic services in the canton of Neuchatel, Patrick Cossetini. Traders said that of Petroplus's five plants, the UK plant in Coryton might be the last to stop given its superior tank holding capacity.

Why Freeze Now?

It remained unclear why the banks cut funding so abruptly just two months after allowing the troubled company to breach debt covenants without penalty. Analysts and traders believe a worsening outlook for the industry and pressure from governments on banks to boost bank capital might be among the reasons for the unusual move, but one loan industry player thought otherwise. "For me, this is a clear signal that something must have happened - banks don't do that. Banks would only act in such a manner if something has occurred. This is very untypical - some information is clearly missing," said a head of loan syndicate who is not involved in Petroplus financing but still did not want to be named.

Apart from Friday's statement, Swiss-based Petroplus has not responded to phone calls and emails from Reuters and has declined to elaborate on a Dec. 27 announcement on the frozen credit lines.

O'Malley Connection

The ailing company's latest financing problems throw a spotlight on Thomas O'Malley, the veteran oil refining entrepreneur who took over at the head of the company in 2006, but who in 2011 stepped down as chairman and reduced his personal stake in the business below 3 percent. He remains CEO and chairman at PBF Energy, a joint venture of private equity firms Blackstone and First Reserve. In November, PBF announced plans to raise funds through an initial public offering. Petroplus' refineries are at Cressier in Switzerland, Petit Couronne in France, Coryton in the United Kingdom, Antwerp in Belgium, and Ingolstadt in Germany. Together, they account for about 4.4 percent of European Union capacity. But given the amount of slack in the industry, the closures are not expected to create a major supply issue, but governments, particularly in France where elections are coming up next year, are anxious to avoid closure. The European refining sector has been struggling for years due to poor margins and weak demand for fuel products. French major Total shut its Dunkirk refinery at the start of 2010 and Petroplus itself closed down its Reichstett plant in eastern France in May 2011. Petroplus's 13 lenders, which include BNP Paribas, Societe Generale, Natixis Credit Suisse, Morgan Stanley and Deutsche Bank, continued to negotiate on Friday. The



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company's stock price has halved since Tuesday's announcement of the freeze, but had gained 8.5 percent to 1.78 euros 1400 GMT on Friday amid hopes the provisional financing agreement might mean a positive solution may be found.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/commoditiesNews/idAFL6E7NU0P020111230>

UAE, DUBAI, DECEMBER 31 2011. 3 DIE ON TANKER AS SPARK SETS OFF EXPLOSIONS

carol huang

Investigations have begun into a series of explosions on an oil tanker at Fujairah port that left three people dead, one injured and two missing. Some 105 local repair workers and crew were on board when welding work created a spark that triggered three blasts on the MT Prem Divya on Thursday. The tanker, which is owned by the Indian firm Mercator Limited, was not carrying oil. Fujairah port authorities said the vessel had been certified as having been cleared of any of the flammable gases often present on oil tankers, particularly empty ones, where the gas has more space to expand. Technical experts representing both the shipowner and insurer had arrived to try to determine the cause of the accident, Capt Mousa Morad, the general manager of Fujairah port, said yesterday. "They have to come together to find out," he said. "There's money, there's insurance, there's some people missing - so many things." Meanwhile civil defence authorities began searching yesterday for the missing men. It was unclear if they had stayed on board or, like many of their peers, jumped into the water. The three crewmen who died had remained on board, and their bodies were being removed yesterday. One of the injured was sent to Fujairah Hospital with burns on his body and fractures in the bones around an eye. "His case is still not stable," said Mohammed Abdullah Said, head of the Fujairah health district. Half of the 24-man crew were now staying in hotels, and the other half would remain with the ship. The repair workers had left, said Ishtiaq Ahmed Malik, the duty official of the Blue Sea Shipping Agency, which was managing the vessel. The Prem Divya will remain in the UAE until accident-related issues are sorted, including the investigation into the cause, an assessment of damage to the ship, compensation to the repair companies and repatriation of the deceased. "It's a long procedure," Mr Malik said. The tanker had arrived in Fujairah on December 27 for 10 days of "operational care". Workers from local firms had come to check the pipes and do welding in the engine room and other repairs and maintenance. Ships must receive gas-free approvals before commencing any "hot work", or activities that could start a fire, such as welding, Capt Morad said. "We already got that, so what went wrong, we don't know. Any tanker that has gas in it should be made free of gas before any welding or hot work takes place." Soon after the explosion late on Thursday afternoon many of the men on board leapt into the water. Neighbouring ships and the coastguard arrived to help them to safety, and the port authorities sent a crew to put out the fire. "There were three blasts - boom, boom, boom - so the people were in panic," Mr Malik said. Empty oil tankers are susceptible to having residual flammable gas on board - even more so than on full tankers, where the gas has less area in which to expand. Strict degassing regulations are key to preventing accidents, said a locally based maritime consultant and former US coastguard official who declined to be named. "When you pop off all the oil products, then you have all that space which, unless it's ventilated, is one giant flammable gas environment," he said, stressing that he did not know the specifics of the incident in Fujairah. "If you do any kind of hot work, which is welding work, you want to make certain that the space that you're in and the space that's adjacent to that has been appropriately degassed for any explosive gas and ventilated," he said. Fujairah police directed queries to the port authorities, and the coastguard there said they were not authorised to comment. authorised to comment.

<http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/three-die-on-tanker-as-spark-sets-off-explosions>

USA, N.Y, ST JAMES, DECEMBER 31 2011. 2 MEN HURT IN ST. JAMES CESSPOOL EXPLOSION

bill mason



Tools are strewn on the front lawn of a home on the 300 block of Cambon Avenue in [St. James](#) following a cesspool explosion. A resident of the home and a worker with a cesspool company were transported to [Stony Brook University](#) Medical Center with facial burns as a result of the explosion.

A cesspool exploded in the front yard of a St. James home Friday evening, seriously injuring two men with burns to their faces, a fire department chief said. The homeowner on the 300 block of Cambon Avenue was in his front yard with a private cesspool company worker about 6:20 p.m., he said, trying to pry open a cement cesspool cover with a metal bar when it happened. One neighbor across the street, about 80 feet away, said explosion "shook my whole house." Minutes after the



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explosion, about 40 firefighters, ambulances and police arrived, according to the fire chief. St. James Assistant Fire Chief Liam Carroll said, "There must have been some type of chemical in the cesspool that was flammable," possibly from treatment chemicals added to the cesspool, as well as methane gas. The explosion caused a crater type effect in the ground several feet high and wide, Carroll said. But there was no fire after the explosion, he said. The two injured men were taken to [Stony Brook University](http://www.stonybrook.edu) Medical Center by ambulances from St. James and Nesconset fire departments. A second cesspool worker was not hurt. Carroll said both men sustained serious burns to their faces, but were in stable condition Friday night, undergoing treatment in the hospital's emergency room.

<http://www.newsday.com/long-island/suffolk/2-men-hurt-in-st-james-cesspool-explosion-1.3419807>

AUSTRALIA, NORTHERN TERRITORY, DARWIN, DECEMBER 31 2011. DERAILED FREIGHT CARRYING URANIUM TRACES EXEMPTED FROM SAFETY LAWS



The freight train derailment caused by flooding from Cyclone Grant carried a load of copper concentrate that spilled traces of uranium into a territory river.

A mining company responsible for a load containing uranium traces that spilled in an NT train derailment was allowed to transport it without complying with safety laws. The load of copper concentrate spilled in a train derailment at a flooded river in the Northern Territory after tropical storm Grant devastated the region earlier this week. The mining company involved, OZ Minerals, has been allowed by NT and SA governments to transport the copper concentrate without complying with Australian Dangerous Goods laws, the [Northern Territory News](http://www.ntnews.com.au) reports. The train was carrying

1500 tonnes of copper concentrate from OZ Minerals' Prominent Hill copper mine in South Australia when it derailed in bad weather caused by ex-tropical cyclone Grant on December 27. Up to 1200 tonnes of the substance spilled into the nearby Edith River, Oz Minerals said in a statement to the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) on December 28. The copper concentrate from Oz Minerals' mine contains less than 0.008 per cent of uranium, according to the company's documentation, the Adelaide Advertiser reported on Saturday. That equates to 96 kilograms in 1200 tonnes of copper concentrate, the newspaper said. OZ Minerals says radiation levels are below regulatory limits and are monitored to ensure no risk to the workers or public during production or transport. But it would not provide its monitoring results. NT WorkSafe and SafeWork SA exempted the company from recent regulations requiring copper concentrate be transported in rigid containers with lids. OZ Minerals has been allowed to transport the substance - classified federally as environmentally hazardous - in containers known as kibbles, which are covered only by tarpaulins. The company said in its ASX statement that any of the concentrate that entered the water would become highly diluted. Copper concentrate is itself a toxic substance and Oz Minerals had been given a one-year exemption to transport the material in tarpaulin-covered wagons, the Adelaide Advertiser reported, after government rules for the transport of the substance had been temporarily relaxed.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/derailed-freight-carrying-uranium-traces-exempted-from-safety-laws/story-fn59niix-1226233863411>

USA, N.C, BANNER ELK, DECEMBER 31 2011. DEMOLITION WORKER INJURED DURING FUEL TANK EXPLOSION

george jackson

 **Watch the Video**

<http://www2.tricities.com/news/2011/dec/31/demolition-worker-injured-during-fuel-tank-explosi-ar-1578234/>

Demolition work at a construction site in Banner Elk, N.C. turned into an emergency situation on Friday afternoon. The call came in at 4 p.m. Fire Marshall David Charles Vance said two workers were salvaging a 10,000-gallon tank for scrap metal. It was empty of fuel, but did contain residual vapors. Vance said the men were using a blow torch to cut through the steel tank, and the flames ignited vapors within it. "The end of the tank blew out, completely blew away from the tank, and traveled approximately a quarter-mile," he said. One worker, 28-year-old Mark Trivett, was injured. He was transported to the old Cannon Memorial Hospital, picked up by Wings Air Rescue, and transported to the Johnson City Medical Center. Banner Elk Police said Trivett was in intensive care with a head wound.

<http://www2.tricities.com/news/2011/dec/31/demolition-worker-injured-during-fuel-tank-explosi-ar-1578234/>



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USA, WA, KENT, JANUARY 1 2012. 1 MAN INJURED IN KENT COMMERCIAL STRUCTURE FIRE >> SPARK IGNITED GASOLINE FUMES



A man suffered burns on several parts of his body when a Kent tarp manufacturing business caught fire Friday evening. Firefighters were called to the business, located inside a concrete tilt-up structure in the 8600 block of S. 228 Street, at 5:15 p.m. Capt. Kyle Ohashi of the Kent Fire Department said a man was taken to a local hospital to be treated for burns and a woman was checked out on scene but declined further assistance. Several other businesses inside the building were unoccupied. Fire crews were able to keep the fire from spreading, but Ohashi said at least one neighboring business suffered minor smoke damage. S. 228 Street near the building was closed to traffic for several hours, but reopened Friday night. According to the Kent fire investigator, the cause of the fire was a spark that ignited gasoline fumes while a vehicle's fuel tank was being pumped out inside of the business

<http://www.komonews.com/news/local/One-man-injured-in-Kent--136466618.html>

USA, GA, DORAVILLE, JANUARY 1 2012. TANKER TRUCK ROLLS OVER ON I-285, NEAR BUFORD HIGHWAY

 **Photo's** <http://doraville.11alive.com/photo-gallery/96322-gallery-overturned-tanker-truck-i-285>

 **Watch the Video** [Overturned tanker truck](#)



A tanker truck overturned in the westbound lanes of I-285, near Buford Highway just before 1 p.m. Friday, causing traffic problems on a right exit ramp, the Georgia Department of Transportation reported. In the moments after the wreck, only one lane of traffic was open as emergency responders worked to clear the wreck. Based on views from 11Alive's SkyCam, it did not appear that any other vehicles were involved in the wreck. No injuries were initially reported.

<http://www.11alive.com/news/article/219577/3/DORAVILLE--Tanker-truck-rolls-over-on-I-285-near-Buford-Highway>

NIGERIA, LAGOS, JANUARY 1 2012. BAYELSA COMMUNITIES RAISE ALARM OVER SPILLAGE FROM SHELL'S BONGA FIELD

samuel oyadongha, emma arubi & akpokona omafuiare

Indigenes and fishermen of Bayelsa State communities on the Atlantic fringe, yesterday, raised alarm over the gradual spread of crude oil supposedly from Shell Petroleum Development Company, Bonga oil field into their rivers, waterways and other parts of the state. Similarly, fears that Shell's Bonga field oil spill might affect some coastal communities in Delta State, have been confirmed with crude oil suspected to have floated from Bonga spreading across the Beniboye, Odimodi, Ogulagha and Forcados rivers in Burutu Local Government Area of Delta State. In Bayelsa, the people of Bisangbene, one of the host communities to the multi-billion naira Shell oil field in Ekeremor Local Government Area in Bayelsa West and Odioma community in Brass Local Government Area, in the Bayelsa East, have expressed concern over the massive crude oil leakage into their waterways and rivers. People of these predominantly fishing communities said thick crude slick had been sighted on the Bisangbene River, the Fish camp 2 at the Vanish Island and the St. Nicholas cove along the Atlantic shoreline close to Odioma on the Atlantic fringe of Ekeremor and Brass councils. Chairman of Community Development Committee, CDC, of Bisangbene community, Mr. Goodnews Gereghewei, yesterday, in a telephone interview with Vanguard from the coastal enclave, said the development had forced their people (fishermen) to withdraw from the river because of the massive spill and fear of possible fire outbreak from their use of local lamp in the course of fishing at night. He said: "As you know, our occupation is predominantly fishing and our fishermen have withdrawn from the sea because of the massive oil spill due to



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fear of being roasted alive since they fish mostly at night with local lamps.” In Delta State, the fear has also spread to the oil-rich Ugborodo communities on the Atlantic ocean as the spill is flowing fast on the high sea, when Vanguard undertook a joint visit with Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency, NIMASA, officials to the sea to assess the extent of pollution. As a result, Shell has been called upon to act fast to halt the spread of the spill to other areas. The call was made by a team from NIMASA, who arrived Warri from Lagos, yesterday, and went straight to the mouth of the Atlantic ocean at Bonoboye in Delta State to ascertain the impact of the Bonga oil spill. Captain Warredi Enisuoh, Deputy Director of NIMASA, who led the team, while speaking to newsmen after a visit to one of the affected communities in Burutu council, urged Shell to move to the area to contain and clean up the spill. He said: “At this particular point in time, we definitely know that there is a spill in the area, but Shell did nothing to contain it. We do have more spills offshore around the Beniboye community of Burutu council and we have taken samples of that oil, but we cannot at this point, confirm whether it was from the Bonga oil spill or not, only a scientific analysis will determine this. “From what our team saw, it is appalling, and not very good to see and as you can see, we are here and the Director General of NIMASA, Mr Patrick Akpobolokemi, was very concerned hence he sent this particular team to go out there and see things for ourselves.”

<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2011/12/bayelsa-communities-raise-alarm-over-spillage-from-shell%E2%80%99s-bonga-field/>

USA, MO, KANSAS CITY, JANUARY 1 2012. KANSAS CITY AREA'S 'BOUTIQUE' GASOLINE IS NO LONGER SO SPECIAL WHY MUST LOCAL DRIVERS PUMP A FORMULATION THAT COSTS MORE AND NO LONGER HELPS THE AIR SO MUCH?

steve everly

Ten years ago the Kansas City area switched to a special blend of gasoline in the summer to battle smog. The “boutique gas,” experts said, would slash harmful vapors wafting into the air. And it wouldn't cost much more. Wrong on both counts. The boutique blend didn't come close to cleaning our air as much as promised. We're again teetering on the brink of violating air-quality laws. And it has cost area drivers, The Star has determined, at least \$150 million more than the average cost of conventional gasoline we were using. Based on price figures from the last six years, the period made available to The Star by the Oil Price Information Service, that's an average of 10 cents a gallon more. Experts had forecast that the boutique blend would cost just 1 to 2 cents a gallon more. “Looking back, this has been a screw-up,” said Cal Hodge, an industry veteran with a stint at the former Amoco refinery in Sugar Creek. He is also a former chairman of the Oxygenated Fuels Association. “People in Kansas City should be angry, because nothing is being done about it.” They're called “boutique fuels” because they're specially designed to be used in particular regions. Kansas City turned to its boutique gasoline, sold from June 1 to Sept. 15 in Johnson, Wyandotte, Jackson, Clay and Platte counties, because of pressure from federal air-quality regulators. Smog can make you wheeze and cough, and even damage your lungs. The boutique blend selected was designed to cut vapors by not evaporating as quickly as conventional gasoline. It was chosen over what area and state officials agreed was really a better solution, even though it was then more expensive — so-called reformulated gasoline. It also cuts pollution by evaporating less, and it burns cleaner, too. But that option had been blocked by a victorious oil industry lawsuit in the mid-1990s that argued that the Kansas City area's air wasn't dirty enough yet under federal law to warrant its use. That wasn't the case in the St. Louis area, which had dirtier air, so officials there went with a reformulated blend. It's used all year but tweaked in the summer to make it more effective in fighting smog. And it's combined with the use of vapor-recovery equipment at gas stations, another option Kansas City rejected. Although 10 years ago reformulated gasoline was more expensive than boutique fuel, that's no longer necessarily true. In the last few years the average summer wholesale price for gasoline in St. Louis was often a couple of cents a gallon cheaper than gasoline in Kansas City. Reformulated fuel can now be cheaper in winter, too, even after Kansas City switches back to conventional gasoline. In mid-December, for example, the national wholesale average price for reformulated fuel was a couple of cents cheaper than conventional gasoline now being used instead of the summer blend. The hoped-for bargain offered by our summer boutique blend turned out to be a mirage for two reasons.

- The United States turned in a big way toward ethanol, but when the corn-based biofuel is put into gasoline, it makes gasoline evaporate faster again. That has drastically reduced the pollution-cutting effect of our boutique blend.
- Kansas City's boutique gasoline is so rare you have to travel at least 740 miles to cities in Michigan or Alabama to find the closest place that requires the same fuel. Our boutique fuel comes from a handful of refineries in Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. That leaves area drivers vulnerable to production problems, shortages and price swings. “KC,



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even more so than some other cities, can be likened to an isolated island with regard to gasoline specifications in the summertime," said Mike Thornbrugh, a spokesman for QuikTrip, the biggest seller of gasoline in the area.

Our boutique blend was chosen by area officials on a committee coordinated by the Mid-America Regional Council. The agency still thinks the best decision was made. "Anything you can do to reduce emissions has to be helpful," said Amanda Groer, air-quality program manager for the regional council.

Advantage to Refiners?

To make the Kansas City area's boutique blend, refiners remove the lighter components of gasoline, such as butane, to cut evaporation. That makes the fuel more expensive. Cindy Kemper, director of the Johnson County Environmental Department, who was among those involved in the decision 10 years ago to use the fuel, recalls hearing assurances that costs could rise just 1 to 2 cents a gallon. And, she said, officials thought that protecting consumer pocketbooks and gas station operators was a key reason to select the blend. From the beginning, some who helped choose the blend dismissed concerns about its connection to higher prices. "There are those in the petroleum industry who try to say that they're connected," Bob Randolph in the air pollution office of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources told The Star a decade ago. "But from our agency's standpoint, we don't agree at all." The state agency recently declined to make Randolph available for further comment, but a spokeswoman said it was hard to sort out the forces that move gasoline prices. But at least one oil company did make the connection between the rarity of the blend and its price. The company that owned a refinery in Coffeyville, Kan., once boasted to investors that its strategy to boost profits included selling a boutique blend in Kansas City. In 2005 when Coffeyville Resources now called CVR Energy was considering a stock offering, it released a document sketching out its business strategy. The document, filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, said refineries benefited when more blends had to be produced. The blends, it said, "exert pressure on product availability." "We have been able to supply value-added fuels such as boutique blends for Kansas City and Denver markets that trade at a premium price to regular unleaded gasoline," the company said. Contacted recently, Gina Bowman, vice president for government relations for CVR Energy, insisted that the area's boutique fuel had been a good low-cost solution to reducing pollution.

Battling over Blends

In all, the United States uses 15 types of gasoline — several conventional gasoline and reformulated blends and seven boutique fuels. Reformulated and boutique fuels can be a little different because they are used in different climates or need to reduce different amounts of pollution. Conventional gasoline still meets roughly 60 percent of demand nationwide. Reformulated blends fill about 30 percent. Boutiques fill the rest. Like the CVR executives, many industry observers recognize that the overall complexity can help refiners make money. With smaller markets, they can manage supplies and avoid surpluses. But it's more likely that refiners can't make enough of a particular blend, driving prices up. Alan Gelden, based in the United Kingdom as an analyst for energy consulting and research firm Wood Mackenzie, said special fuels in Europe also once created smaller but more profitable markets. "The refineries see no reason to simplify it," he said in an interview at a conference in Las Vegas last fall sponsored by the Oil Price Information Service. As for the oil industry, it has long said that boutique fuels in particular can cause price spikes. And it has called publicly for making things less complex overall. In 2006, the American Petroleum Institute told Congress that supply problems would ease if the number of fuels were cut by more than half. Congress didn't go along, but it did cap the number. The petroleum institute still states on its website that boutique fuels can cause higher prices, but an official says the industry isn't as concerned now because of the cap. "At the end of the day, the current slate of those fuels offer states cost-effective options," said Patrick Kelly, a senior policy adviser. The oil industry has also taken another tack at times, blaming environmental regulations for so many gasoline blends in the first place. J.S. Carter, a regional director for ExxonMobil, told Congress after drivers began using Kansas City's boutique blend that the "the proliferation of fuel specifications in the U.S." was causing price swings. Republican Sen. Roy Blunt of Missouri has said "radical environmentalists" are behind boutique fuels. Henry Henderson, director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Midwest program, used a barnyard epithet to dismiss the accusations. Environmentalists, he said, "didn't ask for it to be like this." Henderson does acknowledge that the complexity contributes to price volatility. But he says the area's push for reformulated gas was stopped by the oil industry lawsuit. Going to reformulated gasoline, he pointed out, would have simplified the regional market.

The price Impact

Judging the effect of boutique gasoline on retail prices can be difficult because of various factors such as local competition. But look at wholesale prices, and it's easy to see differences. Ric Foster, the owner of a gas station off Interstate 35 in Gardner, recently thumbed through a sheaf of summer wholesale prices, his mood darkening with each page. A few miles



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down the same highway, gasoline retailers in Miami County, Kan., can buy conventional fuel and pay less. "I've had people who stopped and asked why their prices were cheaper," he said. "It used to bother me, but I'm getting used to it." In a recent report for Colorado's Regional Air Quality Council, a consulting firm examined different summer gasoline blends, including Kansas City's, that could be used in the Denver area. The firm studied prices from 2006 to 2009 and found that the Kansas City area's wholesale gas cost 6.9 to 20.7 cents a gallon more than conventional gasoline. That was several cents higher than in three other areas the firm studied: Detroit, Chicago and Denver itself. The firm warned Colorado officials about Kansas City's "relatively extreme range of gas prices" a result, it said, of tighter supplies. The Star, using wholesale prices from the Oil Price Information Service, found that Kansas City's prices this summer jumped a more modest 7 cents a gallon above conventional gasoline, although for several days they were 10 cents higher. Costs associated with making boutique fuels also ripple through the supply chain. Bruce Heine, a spokesman for Magellan Midstream Partners, which owns the largest wholesale terminal in the Kansas City area, says his company has had to invest in storage tanks and in its distribution system "to accommodate the unique specification for the Kansas City area." Tom Kloza, chief analyst for the Oil Price Information Service, also points to the annual "brown banana enema." That's the spring purging of retail fuel tanks and replenishing them with summer fuel. The boutique fuel's highest price spikes in the area this year took place in late spring when the purging took place. Experts also say that experience since 2001 shows that summer supply glitches can escalate into shortages. For instance, in 2007 a flood struck the Coffeyville refinery, and QuikTrip felt it. Thornbrugh, the spokesman for the chain, said QuikTrip found fuel on the Gulf Coast, but at a much higher cost. QuikTrip also sells boutique or reformulated gasoline in Phoenix, Atlanta, St. Louis, Tulsa and Dallas. "As long as the refineries that have committed to manufacture KC gasoline are operating normally," Thornbrugh said, "then all is fine, (but) an operational glitch will quickly send the supply/demand balance out of kilter."

The ethanol Equation

The boutique blend was supposed to pack quite an environmental punch. Experts estimated that each day it was used in the summer, six fewer tons of harmful vapors would escape, keeping the Kansas City area in compliance with clean air laws then in effect. But along came ethanol. Ethanol-laced gasoline again evaporates more. In the Kansas City area, that has wiped out about half of the boutique fuel's environmental benefit. "It basically defeats the purpose," said Guy Hoffman of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Ethanol was a bit player in 2001, and area officials say they had no inkling the biofuel would become so popular. Now they're second-guessing themselves. "We have been concerned about the effect of ethanol," said Ed Peterson, co-chairman of the Mid America Regional Council's Air Quality Forum. At one time the idea that ethanol causes more vapors threatened its wide use. But the ethanol industry years ago lobbied for a waiver. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency at first refused, but President George H.W. Bush overrode the agency in 1992. Administrations since then have also given the waiver. A few years ago the Mid-America Regional Council raised concerns about ethanol in Kansas City's boutique gasoline. But that triggered a backlash from the ethanol industry, which pushed for a mandate that requires E-10, a gasoline blend containing 10 percent ethanol, to be sold. Then-Gov. Matt Blunt was asked to leave the Kansas City area out of the mandate, but he refused. Missouri is now one of only six states with a mandate. Kansas doesn't have a mandate, but federal requirements to produce more of the biofuel across the country have made it widely sold anyway. The effects of ethanol can be countered. Regulators required that reformulated gasoline, like that used in St. Louis, be further refined to offset ethanol's evaporation. And Texas officials made sure their boutique blend was further refined, too. Kansas City area officials could have required a similar step but didn't. Contacted recently, state and local officials couldn't give a reason why it wasn't done. The Renewable Fuels Association contends that concerns about ethanol are overstated. It says that ethanol cuts smog-causing carbon monoxide emissions from tailpipes, thus offsetting the evaporation of gasoline's lighter components. But others reject that view, saying more smog is caused by gasoline vapors than carbon monoxide. The issue has resurfaced with regulatory approval to soon allow the use of E-15, gasoline with 15 percent ethanol, across the country.

What to do Now

Last summer, monitoring stations in the Kansas City area found that concentrations of ozone, a key component of smog, had exceeded federal standards for 14 days. And air-quality regulations could become much tougher. Federal regulations would make it hard to go back to conventional fuel. Vapor-recovery equipment is arguably a better choice than boutique fuel, but gas station operators rejected that option a decade ago and would likely still blanch at its cost. Some say it's time for Kansas City to try again for reformulated fuel. That, however, would take congressional action to overcome the oil industry's successful lawsuit that prevented the area from using reformulated fuel in the first place. If Congress did act, the Mid-America Regional Council and state officials could request approval to use the fuel in the area. The EPA would then have to sign off on it before



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it took effect. In fact, the time has come, say many experts, to consider one or two blends for the entire country. "You're talking common sense," said Thornbrugh, the QuikTrip spokesman. "It would help take out the peaks and valleys of prices." Michael Mansfield, chief executive of Mansfield Oil, which distributes fuel in all 50 states, said fewer blends would be an obvious fix. "I never understood why that doesn't happen," he said in an interview at the Las Vegas conference. Lewis Adam, president of Admo Energy which helps gas stations purchase fuel, said that though some just blame environmentalists for the number of fuels, oil companies like the complexity. "They love to be considered free-enterprise folks, but they love regulations" that allow the fuels, he said. Bill Adkins, president of Vitol Aviation Co., a worldwide company that provides crude oil to refineries, agrees with those who say that a smaller number of blends would help ease supply concerns. "It would be easier, but it wouldn't be as profitable."

<http://www.kansascity.com/2011/12/31/3346907/kc-areas-boutique-gasoline-is.html>

USA, CO, DENVER, JANUARY 1 2012. PROTESTERS WANT REFINERY TO TAKE ACTION AFTER SPILL

christina dickinson

 **Watch the Video** [Protesters want refinery to take spill action](#)

More than 100 protestors marched in LoDo on Saturday afternoon saying they want the refinery responsible for an oil leak to take action. More than 25,000 gallons of Benzene leaked into Sand Creek near the Suncor refinery in November. The march was organized by the American Indian Movement of Colorado, but several other environmental groups got involved, including some members of the Occupy Denver movement. The protestors started at Skyline Park and marched down the 16th Street Mall. The protestors say they are upset and want Suncor to take charge of the mess they made. "They need to be held responsible for all of the lives they're taking including the fish, any of the animals that are drinking out of there. And I think that we all need to start holding Suncor accountable for the cancer rates in the neighboring communities and everything else they wreaked damage on," DeAnna Meyer, one of the protestors, said. Tests show that Benzene - a known carcinogen - has now shown up in the plant's drinking water. The tests show 21-parts-per-billion, which is more than four-times the level considered safe. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment says they are monitoring the situation.

<http://www.9news.com/news/local/article/239178/346/Protesters-want-refinery-to-take-action-after-spill->

PHILIPPINES, MANILA, JANUARY 1 2012. NEW YEAR FIRECRACKERS INJURE NEARLY 500 FILIPINOS

jim gomez



A woman makes firecrackers in a backyard factory in Bocaue, north of Manila.

Despite a government scare campaign, firecrackers and gunfire injured nearly 500 people in the Philippines as revelers welcomed the new year in one of the world's most raucous and dangerous celebrations. About a dozen plane flights, including two from the United States, were diverted or canceled early Sunday after dark smog caused by a night of firecracker explosions obscured visibility at Manila's airport, officials said. Health Secretary Enrique Ona said the number of injuries — 454 from firecracker blasts and 18 from stray bullets — was slightly lower than last year but remained alarming. Injured revelers, including many children, filled hospital emergency rooms in the capital shortly after midnight. Adding to the chaos, two gangs clashed in front of Manila's main government hospital attending to the injured, leaving one man dead from a gunshot wound. Firecrackers ignited at

least three fires that destroyed several houses in the capital area. "Again, it seems our appeal to mothers to keep their children away from firecrackers wasn't effective," Ona told a news conference. All of the fingers on farmer Alvin Barroga's right hand were injured by a firecracker that exploded prematurely in northern Isabela province. He writhed in pain as a doctor treated his wounds in a hospital. "I'll think thrice before lighting one again," he said. Many Filipinos, largely influenced by Chinese tradition, believe that noisy New Year's celebrations drive away evil and misfortune. But they have carried that superstition to extremes, exploding huge firecrackers and firing guns to welcome the new year despite threats of arrest. Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo said at least 65 people were arrested for using illegally large firecrackers. Ona said he was willing to consider a proposal for a total ban on firecrackers but that it needed to be studied. Robredo said minors should be prohibited from exploding firecrackers and penalties for using illegal ones, usually a fine or up to a year in prison, should be increased. Dozens



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of hospitals nationwide went on full alert before midnight, their emergency rooms staffed with trauma doctors as if preparing for civil strife. Many people spent the night in hotels for added safety. Health officials attempted to discourage dangerous celebrations by showing gory pictures of injuries, including hands mangled by firecracker blasts, and the national police chief threatened his men with dismissal if they fired their guns in revelry, but the violent tradition has continued.

http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/45838795/ns/world_news/#.TwAx7zUzC8A

CHINA, DALIAN, JANUARY 1 2012. DALIAN AUTHORITIES ALLOW TOXIC CHEMICAL PLANT TO RESUME PRODUCTION

fang xiao



August 14, tens of thousands of Dalian people protest against Fujia two pairs of toluene (PX) project.

Dalian City authorities recently retracted their promise to relocate an unsafe chemical plant that has been the cause of a huge protest several months ago. Dalian residents are upset about the decision and plan to stage another protest. According to a Dec. 28 report in the Economic Observer, the Dalian City government revoked their previous decision of moving the Fujia Group's Dahua Petrochemical plant, and instead approved production of p-xylene to resume. The report quotes an insider who said Dalian officials have not found a new location for the plant and would have to pay enormous compensation for this private company to relocate. Several Dalian residents told The Epoch Times that so far there has not been any official statements regarding the decision, but if authorities indeed decided to retract their promise, Dalian citizens would take to

the streets again. A citizen who attended the protest last August told The Epoch Times: "The common trick used by the government to handle mass protests is to throw them some kind of promise during the heat of the moment to appease them. After that, it will drag things out for however long it takes to leave the problem unsettled, or retract its promise. This incident exposes the Chinese Communist regime's hoodlum nature. They simply have no sense of shame." On Aug. 8, 2011, over ten thousand people fled from Dalian, fearing a deadly toxic p-xylene leak in the wake of Typhoon Muifa breaching the plant's breakwater. More than ten thousand Dalian residents protested in the streets on Aug. 14, demanding that the seashore plant be moved out of the area. It was the largest protest in northern China since the June 4, 1989 student protests. Dalian authorities ordered Dahua Petrochemical to halt p-xylene production the same day and said the plant would be relocated.

Related Links: Read the original [Chinese article](http://www.theepochtimes.com/n2/china-news/dalian-authorities-allow-toxic-chemical-plant-to-resume-production-167812.html).

<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n2/china-news/dalian-authorities-allow-toxic-chemical-plant-to-resume-production-167812.html>

USA, N.Y, NEW YORK, JANUARY 1 2012. EXXON GETS 'DISAPPOINTING' \$750 MILLION AFTER VENEZUELA SEIZURE

nathan crooks & corina pons

Jan. 1 (Bloomberg) -- Petroleos de Venezuela SA must pay about \$750 million to Exxon Mobil Corp., a 10th of what the U.S. company is seeking, for assets nationalized by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez in 2007, according to two people with knowledge of the case. The International Chamber of Commerce in New York, an arbitration court, gave a "favorable" ruling to Venezuela's state oil company, a spokesman for PDVSA, as the Caracas-based company is known, said yesterday. The ICC awarded a total of \$907.6 million to Exxon Mobil, company spokesman Patrick McGinn said today. The judgment was reduced to around \$750 million after a counter claim in favor of PDVSA, the people, who declined to be identified because they're not authorized to speak about the case publicly, said, adding that the decision was handed down in late December. "Even at \$750 million, it's still relatively significant for PDVSA," Gianna Bern, president of Chicago-based risk management adviser Brookshire Advisory and Research, said yesterday in a telephone interview. "It's not an inconsequential amount of money." The \$750 million award is equivalent to 32 percent of PDSVA's 2010 net income, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. Exxon Mobil was the first international oil company to abandon Venezuela after Chavez's government expropriated the nation's oil industry. The World Bank's International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes, or ICSID, is also due to rule on the claim in a suit filed against the Venezuelan government.



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Other Arbitration Cases

Chavez, who has nationalized assets in the energy, metals, cement and telecommunications industries, faces about 20 arbitration cases at the ICSID, according to the Washington-based center's website. Venezuelan Oil Minister Rafael Ramirez said in September that the country was willing to pay Exxon \$1 billion after Carlos Escarra, the country's prosecutor general, told reporters that the two companies were negotiating a settlement of about \$6 billion. "The ICC decision confirms that PDVSA does have a contractual liability to Exxon Mobil," McGinn said yesterday in an e-mailed response to questions. "The dispute is not over Venezuela's power to expropriate assets, but rather the failure of PDVSA to comply with contractual provisions to compensate Exxon Mobil." The PDVSA spokesman, who declined to be identified because of company policy, said Ramirez wasn't immediately available to comment on the ruling.

Joint Ventures

Chavez forced foreign oil producers into joint ventures as minority partners in 2007 and is in international arbitration with the U.S.'s Exxon Mobil and ConocoPhillips, which rejected revised terms. The Cerro Negro venture held by Exxon refined tar-like crude into synthetic oil from wells in the Orinoco heavy-crude belt. Exxon lost 425 million barrels of proved reserves in 2007 when Chavez ordered PDVSA to seize control of four heavy-oil ventures operated by foreign companies, including Exxon's Cerro Negro project. The field had a 48 percent profit-to-sales ratio, quadruple the company's global average. Exxon based its arbitration claims on a 1997 agreement between Mobil Corp. and PDVSA to explore for extra-heavy crude in the Orinoco oil belt. Exxon, which later acquired Mobil, claimed PDVSA agreed to indemnify Mobil if it later expropriated Mobil's interests. ConocoPhillips said earlier this month that the ICSID held a hearing in the summer of 2010 and that the company is waiting for a decision on legal and factual issues.

U.K. Court

Exxon initially won an order in the U.K. blocking PDVSA from selling \$12 billion worth of assets anywhere in the world. The order was overturned by a U.K. court in March 2009.

PDVSA set aside about \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion in anticipation of the judgment, Credit Suisse said in June. Exxon, the world's largest oil company by market value, cut the amount it was seeking from PDVSA in October 2010 to \$7 billion from \$12 billion. "Certainly, this type of award falls far short of expectations, or at least what they were willing to publicly settle at, and these types of rulings could influence the decision of companies to escalate these kinds of arbitration proceedings," Brookshire Advisory's Bern said from Chicago. "It appears to be fairly disappointing for Exxon Mobil."

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2011-12-31/exxon-gets-disappointing-750-million-after-venezuela-seizure.html>

AUSTRALIA, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, WINGFIELD, JANUARY 2 2012. ANOTHER INDUSTRIAL FIRE AT WINGFIELD

Map [Wingfield 5013](#)

Watch the Video [Authorities battle chemical fire](#)



MFS truck at Alternative Fuels depot at Wingfield.

A second industrial fire in as many days at Wingfield in Adelaide's north has now been extinguished. The fire at the Alternative Fuels depot on Wilkins Road started about 12:15pm (ACDT). The Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) says the fire created large plumes of smoke but caused only minor damage to a large storage facility at the fuel dump. The site of the depot is about 200 metres away from yesterday's fire at the Wingfield dump. That fire sent a column of toxic smoke 50 metres into the air and took 80 firefighters more than two and a half hours to extinguish. It started in a shed containing 15 tonnes of magnesium.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-01-02/fuel-fire-wingfield-fuel-depot/3755206?section=sa>



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