



Dangerous Goods - Hazardous Materials Group & Network

Release 2013 – 965 Newsy Stuff

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

May 29 2013



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USA, CO, ARCHULETA COUNTY, MAY 21 2013. TANKER ACCIDENT SPILLS GASOLINE, SHUTS DOWN HIGHWAY

cori coffin

A hazardous materials spill about 13 miles west of Pagosa Springs closed down an entire highway for several hours Saturday. The Colorado State Patrol says a semi-truck headed eastbound on US-160 near mile marker 126 ran off the side of the road and rolled around 8:20 a.m. The trucker was hauling 75,000 gallons of gasoline. The tank ruptured, spilling fuel. As of Saturday night, authorities didn't have an estimate of how much fuel had escaped. The did confirm, however, the accident is not near any water sources. The driver of the semi was not injured. A 10-year-old passenger who was not wearing a seat belt sustained minor injuries. The driver was cited for careless driving causing injury. Alcohol and speed are not suspected as factors in the crash. The area was reopened around 8:40 p.m. Saturday night.

<http://www.krextv.com/news/around-the-region/Tanker-Rolls-Spilling-Gasoline--Shutting-Down-Highway-206133001.html>

USA, WASHINGTON DC, MAY 21 2013. OIL SPILL VS. OIL LEAK: ARE SHIPWRECKS BIGGER THREATS THAN THE BP OIL SPILL?



Sunken war ships contain barrels of oil that could pose a threat to marine life should they deteriorate and leak.

During World War II, [thousands of ships](#) were torpedoed or bombed and subsequently sank to the bottom of the ocean. Today, the U.S. seabed is littered with the remnants of these perished warships, in addition to the thousands of other collapsed vessels peppered just off our coasts -- some of which contain barrels of oil that could threaten to leak into our waters. A [new government study](#) of 87 shipwrecks, most of which were sunk during World War II, says that the ships have the potential to pollute U.S. waters. Thirty-six of the 87 vessels strewn across the U.S. seafloor are considered high-risk vessels; most of these are located off the coasts of North Carolina and Florida. And while the estimates of how much oil could potentially leak from these ships are

much less than the over 200 million barrels spilled during the 2010 BP oil spill, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or [NOAA](#), says that six leaks are considered especially problematic. Five of these are off the Florida coast; one of them, just 15 miles from shore, [AP](#) reports. In a report submitted to the U.S. Coast Guard on Monday, May 20, NOAA said it had a database of about 20,000 shipwrecks off U.S. coasts. They include a barge that sank in 1936 after it succumbed to rough waters; a tanker that exploded in 1984, and two motor-powered ships that went under in separate collisions in 1947 and 1952. Of the 20,000 vessels in U.S. waters, the NOAA narrowed their search down to just 107 that pose any substantial pollution threat. Of those, 36 are high priority. "Knowing where these vessels are helps oil response planning efforts and may help in the investigation of reported mystery spills--sightings of oil where a source is not immediately known or suspected," the NOAA reported in a [statement](#) released Monday. The study comes after Congress, in 2010, gave \$1 million for NOAA to identify the underwater shipwrecks that posed the greatest threat to U.S. waters. The BP oil spill of 2010, which blanketed the waters and coastline in [4.9 million barrels](#), or 206 million gallons, of oil, devastated the communities along the Gulf of Mexico. It was the largest oil spill in U.S. history, and affected 16,000 miles of U.S. shoreline, from Texas to Florida. Almost 8,000 animals, including sea turtles, birds, dolphins and whales, were reported dead just six months after the spill, [dosomething.org reports](#). The disaster devastated local fishing and tourism industries along the gulf -- not to mention the \$40 billion in fines, cleanup costs and settlements that BP had to fork out for the spill. Every year in the U.S., around 20,000 oil spills are reported and 10 to 25 million gallons of oil are inadvertently dumped into the environment, according to the [Environmental Protection Agency](#). Oil spills affect the entire marine food chain, and are especially dangerous for seabirds and sea mammals, which are most likely to come into contact with oil floating on top of the water. Oil can also remain in sediment for [more than 30 years](#). Fortunately, NOAA says that the threat of oil leaks from sunken ships is not as grave as initially thought. AP reports that the government agency will continue to study whether or not the oil can safely be removed from the sunken vessels before they leak into the ocean.

Related Stories

- [Shipwrecks Watched for Leaks](#)
- [Sunken Ships Still Pose Threat](#)

<http://www.isciencetimes.com/articles/5215/20130520/oil-spill-vs-leak-shipwrecks-bigger-threats.htm>



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ENGLAND, CORNWALL, FALMOUTH, MAY 21 2013. FALMOUTH EXPLOSION FEAR FROM AMMONIUM NITRATE

 **Watch the Video** [Ammonium Nitrate Concerns for Falmouth Residents](#)



Falmouth Docks holds up to 4,500 tonnes of ammonium nitrate.

Residents fear thousands of tonnes of fertiliser stored in a Cornish town could cause a mass explosion. Falmouth Docks holds up to 4,500 tonnes of ammonium nitrate - a fertiliser - which, if heated or ignited, can explode. People in the town said they were concerned it was a "potential risk". Dock operator A&P Falmouth and Cornwall Council, which issued a storage licence, acknowledged there were risks, but said they were managed.

'Wrong Place'

The chemical - which is not combustible itself but is an oxidising agent which can assist other materials to burn - is currently kept in an open-sided storage area and has been stored at the docks since the 1980s.

Both the docks and the chemical have been involved in separate incidents in recent years. More than 150 people were evacuated from their homes after a fire involving acetylene cylinders broke out at the docks in 2011. Last month, in Texas in the United States, 15 people died after a fire at a fertiliser plant destabilised a tank of ammonium nitrate, which exploded. Engineer Phillip Vann, who lives in Port Pendennis, close to the docks, said he did not think "risks should be taken with the public in general". He said: "This product is located in the wrong place. There are risks in doing things, and it may be negligible, but it is still a risk." He added he had concerns if an incident occurred when a visiting cruise ship carrying hundreds of passengers was alongside. Rosalind Hamilton, who also lives in Port Pendennis, said: "If an explosion did occur it would be many hundreds of people who could be affected. "Surely any risk involving human life is not worth taking." David Edmondson, the council's strategic development team manager, said the Falmouth situation was different from Texas because Cornwall was dealing with smaller quantities and the chemical was not manufactured in the town. He added: "We acknowledge there is a risk, and we do what we can to manage that risk." A&P's port operations director, Mike Reynolds, said: "People should be safely and calmly sleeping in their beds at night because we manage the product to the point where any such incident won't occur." He added the amount stored was being reduced, and improvements were being made to staff training and security.

Ammonium Nitrate

- Main use is as a fertiliser
- Is classed as an explosive, but is not combustible - it is an oxidising agent which can assist other materials to burn
- It will not explode due to the friction or impact found in normal handling, but can be detonated under heat and confinement, or severe shock
- Is recommended it is stored in a single-storey, dedicated, well-ventilated building constructed from materials that will not burn
- In densely-populated areas, it may be better to store it outside in a secure area

Source: Health and Safety Executive

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cornwall-22603438>

USA, ILL, WEDRON, MAY 21 2013. TINY WEDRON BATTLES BIG WATER WOES



GZA GeoEnvironmental Inc. technical specialist/hydrogeologist David Bauer, P.G. (left) looks over a soil sample pulled from the ground on 3468th Road, Wedron. The sample was pulled by Boart Longyear Environmental and Infrastructure drillers Todd Schmalfeldt (center) and Jason Drabek (right, background). The environmental consultants were hired by Fairmount Minerals/Wedron Silica to investigate groundwater contamination in Wedron, overseen by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Take a deep breath the next time you're filling up your gas tank. That's what the water smells like in Wedron. This town of 47 homes along the Fox River north of Ottawa is under siege from benzene, ethyl benzene, toluene and xylene, which has infiltrated the groundwater residents rely on for household water. Benzene is the



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compound of greatest concern because it is a suspected carcinogen. In December 2011, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provided bottled water to residents. This year EPA provided affected homes with special water filters. Wedron residents draw water directly from wells. In 2011 they alerted officials their drinking water smelled like gasoline. EPA classifies Wedron as "time-critical" because of the health threat posed by benzene. Wedron's plight attracted the attention of Erin Brokovich, environmental watchdog from California. U.S. EPA estimates it will spend about \$500,000 of taxpayer funds to protect Wedron residents and investigate threats.

Goes Back 30 Years

Wedron began battling water problems at least 30 years ago. In 1982 Illinois EPA found chemicals associated with gasoline in groundwater. A deeper well alleviated the problem but the EPA never found a source. In October 2011 Illinois Department of Public Health found benzene above the health standard in two wells and LaSalle County Health Department told residents to stop using their water. Illinois EPA contacted the U.S. EPA, which collected samples and found several troubling compounds and metals. Eight private wells serving nine residences and 27 people are contaminated with benzene. Seven homes do not meet drinking water standards and two homes are close to this level, said Steven Faryan, on-scene emergency response coordinator for U.S. EPA. These homes were fitted with special filters and signed up for bottled water deliveries. Not much happened between 1982 and the current incident, at least according to records. "I didn't see anything in the record after (1982)," Faryan said.

Living on the Plume

Cindy and Rich Eirhart are on bottled water. In 2011, the Eirharts and their neighbors suspected problems. "We could smell it in our water," Cindy Eirhart said. "We knew something was wrong with it and we had it tested it ourselves." EPA tests confirmed it. For the Eirharts and the other 25 affected residents, EPA contracted deliveries from Culligan every other Monday. The Eirharts started with 10 five-gallon jugs and use four to five every two weeks, they said. "We use that for drinking and cooking," Cindy Eirhart said. In the bathroom they count on the carbon filter to prevent a benzene shower. "It's a scary situation," Cindy Eirhart said. "Health-wise, you don't know what it's causing. You just have to go day by day. You worry all the time. I really don't know if there are any health problems from it or not."

Don't Drink the Church Water

The water also is unsafe to drink in Wedron United Methodist Church and its parsonage. "We haven't drank that water in a long time," Pastor Seymour Halford said. "As far as we understand the plume of the benzene is directly underneath our property. The water we receive from our well is not drinkable at all. In fact it smells like gasoline." Halford lives in Dixon and has been pastor in Wedron for six years. The church parsonage is no longer habitable because of deterioration and the water supply, he said. A woman who once lived in the home developed a tumor on her one remaining kidney, he said. "I think some of the problems of the family that was living there are derived from that (water pollution)," Halford said. The church received a carbon filter and bottled water service. Brokovich's team is trying to find responsible targets for a class action lawsuit, Halford said. "I think EPA is doing a pretty responsible job for us," he said.

Safe for Now

Most of Wedron's residents have well water that has tested safe. Pat Chandler at the east end of N3462 Road has safe water this go-around. Back in 1982 she and her husband were among those with unsafe water. When she moved to Wedron in 1982 she detected a strange taste and odor in the water. Out-of-towners commented on the taste, Chandler said. Her husband Roy noticed it less, she said. "He had grown up with it and never noticed it," she said. Then-state Rep. Peg Breslin helped the Chandlers and their neighbors get funding for a new well, she said. John Hougas has lived in Wedron for 35 years and so far has avoided tainted water because his well is deeper. He's heard stories over the decades. "There used to be a restaurant down here, Hap & Beth, and they claimed that when you went in there the water smelled like gas and they wouldn't drink it," Hougas said. The EPA this spring found that Hougas' water meets drinking standards, Hougas said. Hougas lives on the edge of the estimated plume. So does Ralph Brown. For eight years Brown has lived across from the offices of Wedron Silica. His water has tested safe, he said. "As far as I know 25 people got letters (from the EPA)," Brown said. "It's a recent thing." Brown believes the source lies along the railroad tracks and terminals a few hundred yards to the east, between the Fox River and the riverfront road, where two underground storage tanks recently were located and dug up.

Possible Sources

The groundwater appears to flow through the plume from east to west, from the direction Brown described, and appears to be hastened by a Wedron Silica mining pit to the west. As the company draws water down the pit pulls groundwater from the east, Faryan said. Based on EPA, possible sources include current and former owners and operators of gas stations, fueling



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operations, farm supply businesses, laboratories, sand mining operations and railroad transport. Companies named as possible sources include the present-day Fairmount Minerals Ltd. (including Wedron Silica Mining Co. and TechniSand) and Illinois Railway (owned by OmniTrax). Also named are the former Hoxsey gas station and the former Wedron-Dayton Grain Co. There are smaller sites such as former gas stations. One was located in what is now a residential area over the center of plume, Faryan said. Additionally, there were several train derailments to the east in the 1960s and 1970s, Faryan said. Pinning benzene on one source is unlikely, Faryan said. "We feel it's multiple sources that have caused this," he said. The largest and most prominent industry in town is Wedron Silica, a subsidiary of Fairmount Minerals, a sand mining, processing and manufacturing company. Fairmount's TechniSand plant coats sand with a phenolic resin. This coated sand is valuable for hydraulic fracturing (fracking) of natural gas and oil. Benzene, toluene, ethyl-benzene and xylene are commonly found together in coal tar, crude petroleum and other petroleum products and are known by an abbreviation, BTEX. BTEX is used in making resin-coated sand. EPA tested Fairmount's operation and found no presence of these chemicals, Faryan said. Benzene is most likely coming from gasoline, Faryan said. "We have several suspected sources that we're investigating," Faryan said. "There are a lot of gas stations that have leaked over the years." In August investigators found pipes from tanks at the Hoxsey site. In July investigators removed an underground tank and affected soil along Illinois Railway tracks. EPA is coaxing potential responsible parties to pay for and help with cleanup. This has gone well for the most part, Faryan said. Fairmount hired GZA GeoEnvironmental Inc. based in Norwood, Mass. to sample soil, drill test wells and assist EPA, said Mike Melton, Fairmount's corporate environmental manager.

Options

The EPA's options include installing permanent treatment units in affected homes or designing a deeper well to serve residents. One other option, running a water main from Ottawa's municipal supply north to Wedron, is probably too expensive to be viable, Faryan said. A strong possibility is to connect affected homes to a deep well in Wilbur Thompson Park, owned by Fairmount Minerals and leased to Dayton Township. Fairmount Minerals/Wedron Silica signed an access agreement to allow U.S. EPA to install drinking water wells on its property. Geology plays a role, Faryan said. There are three layers of bedrock. On top is St. Peter sandstone. Below that is a layer of shale and below that is New Richmond sandstone. The shallow St. Peter sandstone, also called Ottawa sandstone, is mined by Fairmount and other companies. This is where the contaminated plume and shallow wells converge, Faryan said. The deeper New Richmond layer could serve as a clean source of well water, Faryan said. Most likely, EPA will soon award a contract to design a deep well and connect homes to it. "Our goal is to get this done this year," Faryan said.

Hoping for a Solution

A new well would please nobody more than Cindy Eirhart. "I would think they would drill a new (well)," she said. "We can't go on like this forever. I'm really thankful that the EPA is helping us as much as they have." Eirhart has lived in Wedron since she was born in 1957. Moving away is not something she wants. "We really hope it doesn't come to that," Eirhart said. "Our neighbors, none of us want to move. There's not a whole lot out here but it's home." Halford believes Wedron is a microcosm in a nationwide pool of industrial pollution and vulnerable communities. "I have a sense that this kind of situation is going to be cropping up all over the continent," he said. "People who have wells, people responsible for providing water for cities need to be very leery about this. They need to be very careful."

Benzene

Benzene is a clear, colorless and highly flammable fluid. It is found in crude oil and gasoline. The greatest use of benzene is in making plastics, rubber, resins and synthetic fabrics like nylon and polyester. It is used as a solvent in printing, paints and dry cleaning. The major sources of benzene in drinking water are discharges from factories and leaching from gas storage tanks and landfills. People who drink water containing benzene in excess of standards for many years could experience anemia or a decrease in blood platelets and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

Other EPA Cleanup Sites

- DePue/New Jersey Zinc/Mobil Chemical Corp. in DePue
- Matthiessen & Hegeler Zinc Site in La Salle
- Ottawa Radiation Areas in Ottawa
- Ottawa Township Flat Glass in Naplate

<http://newstrib.com/FormLayout.asp?formcall=30&dest=%2Fmain%2Easp%3FSectionID%3D2%26SubSectionID%3D27%26ArticleID%3D29021>



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NEW ZEALAND, WANGANUI, MAY 21 2013. TANNING FIRM TO BE PROSECUTED OVER CHEMICAL SPILL

anne-marie emerson



Emergency services respond to the chemical spill which injured 21 workers at Tasman Tanning's Castlecliff plant in November last year.

Tasman Tanning is to face prosecution over a chemical spill in Wanganui last November which injured 21 of its workers, two of them seriously. Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment spokesman Britton Broun yesterday confirmed that the ministry had finished its six-month investigation into the incident and the Wanganui tannery would be in court in June. Mr Broun could not say what charges the company would face. "We cannot provide any further information until the matter is called before the Wanganui District Court on June 6," he said. Tasman Tanning managing director Hunter Tait could not be contacted for comment. The incident happened just before 5pm on November 2, 2012, at Tasman Tanning's plant. Two workers were flown to Wellington Hospital

in a critical but stable condition after a mix-up with chemicals created a cloud of hydrogen sulphide. Another 19 people exposed to the gas were assessed at Wanganui Hospital. The two seriously injured men were released from hospital about a week later. Mr Tait later said the incident would have to be put down to operator error. "Sulphuric acid was added to the wrong processor at the plant and the combination with the chemicals in that processor caused the hydrogen sulphide cloud," he said. Mr Tait said the two injured workers were "very good, long-standing employees with excellent work records". "We all make mistakes, but all these procedures we have are being investigated by the appropriate government people." Mr Tait said all staff were kept up to date about handling chemicals and it was something the company regularly revisited.

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10885037

USA, MN, ST. CLOUD, MAY 21 2013. PROBLEMS FOUND AT MINN. AMMONIA PLANTS

Minnesota doesn't have ammonium nitrate fertilizer plants like the one that exploded in Texas last month, but the state does have anhydrous ammonia storage facilities that can be potentially dangerous. Inspection records from eight plants in its three-county area of central Minnesota showed almost all the eight had some problems in their last inspections, some of which happened as long as five years ago, according to a story published Monday, the St. Cloud Times. In some cases, inspectors ordered owners to stop using storage tanks until the problems could be corrected. In three cases, violations resulted in fines. While ammonium nitrate is not commonly used on Minnesota farms, anhydrous ammonia is. It's a colorless gas that's stored under pressure in liquid form. It's pumped into the soil as a source of nitrogen. The state has 287 anhydrous ammonia storage facilities, and they're regulated and inspected by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Anhydrous ammonia is not explosive like ammonium nitrate, but exposure can result in severe burns to skin, eyes and lungs, and prolonged exposure can cause suffocation. Handlers need to wear protective equipment, said Joe Spitzmueller, manager with the pesticide and fertilizer division of the state agriculture department. "It creates an immediately dangerous environment," Spitzmueller said. "If a release occurs, you don't want to be anywhere near it." But regulators and facility owners agree that Minnesota's tight regulations and numerous safeguards protect public safety. "It's a heavily regulated part of our industry," said Jeff Wheeler, compliance manager of Centra Sota Cooperative, which owns storage facilities in Clear Lake, Santiago and St. Martin. "Yes, it's a hazardous material, but we do take every precaution to protect both ourselves and the public and everything around us so it's a product that can continue to be used." Anhydrous ammonia is popular because it's typically more economical than other nitrogen fertilizers. "It's a dangerous product, no doubt about it, but if it's handled properly, there's basically nothing that will make crops better and a cheaper method than anhydrous ammonia, especially corn," said Jim Anderson, co-owner of Anderson Farms of Belgrade. Department inspectors look at whether the site is secure and fenced, whether the valves are closed and locked, whether the tanks are protected from traffic and whether they're rusty. Inspectors look at everything from the mechanical parts of the tank to hoses to whether identifying signs are cracked or faded. Owners are directed to fix any immediate hazards. If the problem requires time to correct, the owner is given a deadline. The agriculture department's goal is to visit each site every three years. A few years ago, the site inspections were occurring less frequently, Spitzmueller said. "What we found is if we got to sites less frequently, we saw less compliance," he said. The 2011 Legislature provided a one-time appropriation to increase the frequency of inspections. The department hired two additional inspectors and hopes that by June, every site in the state will have been inspected within the last three years, Spitzmueller said. The department is also



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looking into creating a third-party inspection program, an idea welcomed by many in the industry. Owners would hire independent auditors to inspect their facilities and tell them how they're operating.

<http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2013/05/20/news/anhydrous-ammonia-plants>

USA, OK, CUSHING, MAY 21 2013. LATEST PIPELINE SPILL IS MOSTLY CONTAINED

alison sider

Crews worked to clean up some 2,500 barrels of crude that spilled over the weekend at an oil-storage terminal in Cushing, Okla., the third-biggest crude spill seen in the U.S. this year. The leak, at an [Enbridge Energy Partners](#) LP pipeline connected to one of the more than 85 tanks at Enbridge's Cushing storage facility, comes as many pipeline companies seek to expand their networks to accommodate growing energy production in North America. At least one major project, the Keystone XL pipeline proposal to connect Alberta's oil sands with Texas refineries, is facing significant backlash from environmentalists concerned about leaks. The Enbridge spill took place at a crude-gathering site where crews are ready to handle emergencies. It follows the rupture in March of [Exxon Mobil](#) Corp.'s Pegasus pipeline, which spilled an estimated 5,000 barrels of heavy Canadian crude into a Mayflower, Ark., neighborhood. Earlier that month, more than 5,000 barrels of oil leaked from a Lion Oil Trading & Transportation Inc. storage tank in Magnolia, Ark., with some flowing into a bayou. Also in March, a [Chevron](#) Corp. pipeline leaked an estimated 600 barrels of diesel near a freshwater lake in Utah's Willard Bay State Park. And an inactive [Marathon Petroleum](#) Corp. pipeline leaked about 500 barrels of diesel in Indianapolis earlier this month. The recent spills could chip away at the local and regulatory support needed by pipeline companies to get projects approved, said Amy Myers Jaffe, executive director of energy and sustainability at University California, Davis, Graduate School of Management. "The more accidents there are, the more resistance you're going to see," she said. Enbridge said it is stepping up its inspection and monitoring systems to meet higher expectations of governments, regulators, landowners and the public. "All the expansion activity we're undertaking is happening against a backdrop of heightened public awareness," a company spokesman said in an email. Enbridge said the Cushing spill, reported Saturday, was isolated and that oil didn't make it past containment systems. By Monday, 2,400 barrels of oil and water had been recovered, the company said, adding that the cause was being investigated. Brigham McCown, a former deputy administrator of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, said the spill proves safety measures at facilities are working. Earlier this year, PHMSA proposed a \$78,700 fine against Enbridge for problems with tank-inspection procedures and corrosion control on some tanks in Cushing. Enbridge spokesman Terry Larson said those issues were unrelated to Saturday's spill.

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323463704578495431880326740.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

SYRIA, MAY 22 2013. SYRIA'S MAKESHIFT OIL REFINERIES: 'IT IS LIKE HELL'

 **Watch the Video** [Syria's Makeshift Oil Refineries: 'It is like Hell'](#)

As a result of the rush to make quick money, open-air refineries have been set up in al-Raqqa province. Crude is stored in ditches and heated in metal tanks by wood fires, shrouding the region with plumes of black smoke, and exposing the local population to the dangers of the thick smog and the frequent explosions at the improvised plants

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/video/2013/may/20/syria-oil-refineries>

USA, CO, DENVER, MAY 21 2013. SUNCOR SPILL STILL TAINTS SOUTH PLATTE, PROVES BENZENE A TOUGH MOP-UP

bruce finley



Sand Creek leads into the South Platte River near the bridge to the right. The orange absorption materials and the aeration systems that create bubbles in the water are designed to help release and then absorb benzene trapped in the water in this February 29, 2012 file photo.

After 18 months of cleanup around Suncor's oil refinery, contamination of the South Platte River is diminishing, but concentrations of cancer-causing benzene in the water remain six times higher than the national safety standard. Dealing with the Suncor spill north of Denver, detected in November 2011, still ranks among the toughest environmental challenges in the region. Another oil and gas industry spill this year tainted Parachute Creek in western Colorado with benzene. Spills from



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industry pipelines and storage facilities at 12 other locations have contaminated groundwater with benzene, prompting state health department orders for corrective action. About 20 percent of the 300-400 oil and gas spills reported annually to state commissioners reach groundwater. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment is pressing companies responsible for the big spills to quickly remove all benzene from soil, water and air. But a review of Suncor case documents and interviews show that, even though benzene technically is easier than other toxic chemicals to remove, full cleanup can be complicated and slow. As oil and gas operations expand in Colorado, so does the number of spills and leaks. "The question is whether or not the industry is doing all it can to prevent the spills and leaks, to monitor for leaks, and to clean up spills and leaks promptly and completely," University of Colorado environmental engineer Joseph Ryan said. "Industry might be able to reduce the frequency of spills and leaks and we still might see more because of the increased production." CDPHE officials have identified a broken "dead-leg" pipe beneath a storage tank as the source of the Suncor spill. It was capped in February 2011, yet liquids that flowed from that pipe into an underground toxic plume continue to foul surface water in Sand Creek, which flows into the South Platte. Benzene-laced groundwater also has spread in other directions: along the concrete-lined Burlington irrigation ditch, beneath the adjacent Metro Wastewater Plant and under the bed of Sand Creek. The plume does not reach the river directly. The overall size is said to be stable or shrinking. But the levels of benzene — a widely-used chemical contained in petroleum, known to cause blood cancer — this month remained around 33 parts per billion in the South Platte, state data show. The federal safe drinking water standard is 5 ppb. The river concentrations are down from 45 ppb in April and about 240 ppb a year ago. One mile downriver, the benzene dissipates to around 4 ppb, and 3 miles downriver the level is negligible. In Sand Creek, however, benzene remains significantly elevated, according to the data that comes from tests done by Suncor contractors. "Ultimately we want to see it down to the drinking water standard," said engineer Robert Beierle of CDPHE's Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division. The cleanup "is taking longer than I had hoped. I am hopeful that, by the end of the year, we will be pretty close," Beierle said. Since 2011, he and other CDPHE officials have issued Suncor at least 10 formal orders to complete about 200 actions, including repairs near another storage tank. Today, underground walls of clay have been built around nearly half the known perimeter of the plume. Suncor crews have removed more than 1.2 million gallons of liquid hydrocarbons from trenches that crews dug after the spill was revealed. "The footprint of the contamination continues to shrink. The extensive remediation systems Suncor has designed and installed ... are working effectively to reduce the contamination," company vice president John Gallagher said in an e-mailed response to queries. "It is unlikely that there are other underground sources of contamination of a size that would reverse the positive trend we are seeing." The company also has started looking for other broken pipes that could feed the toxic plume. "When a dead leg line is identified, Suncor inspects and monitors the dead leg, removes the dead leg or schedules the dead leg to be removed at a future date," Gallagher wrote. CDPHE officials in recent months have ordered the installation of more walls, monitoring wells to track toxic plumes, and aeration systems that suck benzene vapors from soil. More than 100 aeration wells have been placed between the refinery and Metro Wastewater, where required construction projects are in progress. Extracting benzene from soil is tricky because this transfers toxic material into the air. State air officials recently ordered Suncor to install emission controls, including charcoal filters, to minimize air pollution. They've directed Suncor to apply for an air pollution permit. The CDPHE team also is demanding documentation of when and how broken pipes near storage tanks were repaired, including work orders. And CDPHE has ordered Suncor to hire an independent auditor to review its system for maintaining and inspecting storage tanks. Suncor "continues to work with CDPHE concerning additional requests, and we anticipate a mutually satisfactory conclusion to ongoing discussions," vice president Gallagher said. The overall approach to the Suncor spill now is being applied near Parachute, where a spill made public on March 16 has oozed benzene along and into Parachute Creek. None has been detected in the Colorado River. The Williams energy company runs a natural gas-processing plant along the creek. A broken pipe spilled more than 10,000 gallons of natural gas liquids that contaminated groundwater with super-concentrated benzene. Crews dug trenches along the creek. Monitoring wells and aeration systems are being installed. The Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission initially oversaw the response. CDPHE took over this month. Benzene levels in the creek, at a point 1,293 feet down from the spill reached 5.3 ppb on May 1. No data were provided for points closer to the spill. This week, benzene levels dropped to 2.1 ppb. The 12 other sites around Colorado where spills have contaminated groundwater with benzene resulted from problems along oil and gas pipelines and at storage facilities. The groundwater is located near communities of Fruita in the west, La Junta in the south, Walden and Windsor in the north, and five in north metro Denver. State-ordered corrective action is aimed at removing the benzene. No penalties have been imposed on Suncor or Williams. When benzene exceeds the 5 ppb federal limit, it may not mean a violation in Colorado. State water commissioners have set a limit for benzene of 5,300 ppb on Sand Creek, Parachute Creek, and the polluted portion of the South Platte



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because these waterways are not formally classified as sources of drinking water. Notices of violation for pollution without a permit have been issued. CDPHE officials said they are evaluating whether these will lead to fines. That will depend on company responses, protocols put in place to prevent future spills, and the duration of cleanups.

http://www.denverpost.com/breakingnews/ci_23251725/suncor-spill-still-taints-south-platte-proves-benzene

USA, PA, WILKES-BARRE, MAY 21 2013. OIL FIRM WANTS SUIT TOSSED

Attorneys representing Exxon Mobil Corp. in a 12-year-old gasoline spill lawsuit have asked a judge to dismiss the suit that now involves a few remaining plaintiffs. The original suit, filed in 2001, included more than 1,000 Hazleton-area residents who said they were sickened or their properties were damaged by a spill that leaked hundreds of gallons of gasoline into the soil surrounding the Tranguch Tire and Service Center along Church Street. The remaining plaintiffs who have not settled or had their case go to trial, the Melnick family, have an outstanding lawsuit. Attorneys for Exxon Mobil said in a 25-page filing Monday that the suit filed by the family should be thrown out for a number of reasons, including that Exxon was not responsible for the gasoline or the tanks that leaked, and that there is no evidence Exxon acted intentionally. The Melnicks, who represent themselves in the suit, have not yet filed a response to the request. A judge also has not yet scheduled a hearing date for any argument on the request.

<http://www.timesleader.com/news/briefs/525870/In-brief>

USA, MI, DETROIT, MAY 22 2013. VW TO MODIFY LATE-MODEL DIESELS TO PREVENT IMPROPER FUELING



VW will pay for authorized dealers to add a misfueling guard and fuel filler neck cap to affected 2009-12 vehicles, including the Jetta

Volkswagen plans to refit more than a quarter million 2009-12 diesel cars to prevent North American customers from mistakenly pumping gasoline into the fuel tanks. The service action covers 209,500 cars in the United States and 51,600 in Canada. Affected models are the TDI versions of the 2009-12 Jetta, 2010-12 Golf and 2009-12 Jetta SportWagen, called the Golf Wagon in Canada. In a notice sent to VW dealers last week and obtained by Automotive News today, VW said it will begin notifying customers of the service campaign on May 28. "As diesel engine passenger vehicles become more popular, auto manufacturers

have seen an increase in the number of misfueling cases where diesel engine vehicles are mistakenly fueled with gasoline," according to the notice. "The resulting fuel system contamination can lead to costly repairs that are not covered under warranty." The company said it will pay for authorized dealers to add a misfueling guard and fuel filler neck cap to affected 2009-12 vehicles. Beginning with 2013 vehicles, VW redesigned its fuel fillers to accept only diesel nozzles. Gasoline nozzles are smaller than diesel nozzles. But with one of the new TDI fuel fillers, if a driver tries to insert a gasoline nozzle instead of a diesel nozzle, the fuel tank gate will remain closed. VW has been a strong proponent of diesel-fueled vehicles in the United States. But improper fueling has become an occasional source of tension between VW and its vehicle owners, online message boards show, because fueling a TDI model with gasoline voids its warranty. VW spokesman Tony Cervone said the problem stems from American consumers' unfamiliarity with diesel fuel. "It hasn't been as frequent in their lifetime to remember to fill up with diesel," Cervone said in an interview. Just 0.8 percent of 2012 light vehicles sold in the United States were diesels, up from 0.1 in 2008, according to EPA data. In some parts of Europe, about half of light vehicles sold run on diesel. VW has blamed misfueling for a spate of failed high-pressure fuel pumps that has led to an investigation by auto safety regulators. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration started an investigation into several diesel-fueled VW models in February 2011 after receiving dozens of complaints about cars that stalled, often at highway speeds. These complaints were typically linked to a failed fuel pump. VW told NHTSA investigators that 90 percent of the fuel samples from vehicles involved in the complaints had substantial amounts of gasoline in their tanks. To date, NHTSA has received 160 complaints and field reports, many of them submitted by VW, according to the agency's official log of the investigation. The investigation has been upgraded to an engineering analysis, which can lead to a recall, but no such step has been taken.

<http://www.autonews.com/article/20130521/RETAIL05/130529968/vw-to-modify-late-model-diesels-to-prevent-improper-fueling#axzz2TzHLS7RN>



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ENGLAND, LONDON, MAY 22 2013. TRAFFIC CHAOS AROUND SOUTH WOODFORD AFTER TANKER FUEL SPILL ON A406

lizzie dearden

Traffic is still heavy on the A406 after a tanker spilled gallons of fuel onto the road earlier this morning near South Woodford. Firefighters who went to the scene near Waterworks Corner at 5.30am said they had to make a dam with ladders to stem the flow. The petrol was six inches deep at some points and had to be contained to prevent it pouring into drains and becoming an environmental hazard. Lanes are still closed westbound on the A406 at the Waterworks Corner as the clean-up operation continues. Closures are expected to remain until the late afternoon as the spill has damaged the road surface. Delays are currently reported in the South Woodford and Gants Hill areas as well as on the M11 and surrounding roads.

http://www.ilfordrecorder.co.uk/news/news/traffic_chaos_around_south_woodford_after_tanker_fuel_spill_on_a406_1_2203547

AUSTRALIA, MAY 22 2013. COMPUTER SAFETY SIMULATION IS MORE THAN A GAME



The White Card Game offers an engaging and entertaining way to deliver training in CPCCOHS1001A - Work safely in the construction industry. Through a first person perspective the goal of the game is to identify, control and report workplace hazards on a construction site without getting injured or causing the death of workmates. By creating a virtual experience of being on a building site, the game offers real life challenges, problems and risks yet provides a safe place in which to learn and explore. The project is a

collaboration between [Victoria University](http://www.vu.edu.au), and [Oztron Media](http://www.oztronmedia.com.au), and is funded by the [National VET E-Learning Strategy](http://www.nvets.gov.au).

http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/safetyculture/~3/jhzT7PZXDHE/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email

USA, N.C, JOHNSTON CO, MAY 22 2013. THREE INJURED IN JOHNSTON COUNTY TRACTOR-TRAILER WRECK

Three people were seriously injured Saturday morning when a tractor trailer collided with an SUV on U.S. 701 South near Marler Road in Johnston County, according to the North Carolina State Highway Patrol. Troopers said the tractor-trailer was lawfully passing the SUV in the left lane shortly before 8 a.m. when the SUV simultaneously turned left into a private driveway. The two vehicles collided, and two SUV passengers – Tahirra Hargrove, 19, of Newton Grove, and Latrice Johnson, 23, of Smithfield – were ejected and taken to WakeMed. Hargrove is listed in fair condition, while Johnson was treated and released. The driver of the SUV, James Newkirk, 65, of Smithfield, was pinned in the vehicle for about 25 minutes. Once he was extricated, he was airlifted to WakeMed. He was listed in serious condition. The tractor-trailer driver was not injured. The collision is still under investigation, but troopers said speed and alcohol are not believed to be factors. All southbound lanes of U.S. 701 were closed for about two hours while emergency crews were at the scene.

<http://www.wral.com/four-injured-in-johnston-county-wreck/12461047/>

USA, MO, KIRKSVILLE, MAY 22 2013. PROPANE TANK BUSINESS PUT ON HOLD >> RETAIL PROPANE BUSINESS WILL NOT BE ISSUED CONSTRUCTION PERMIT UNTIL CITY EXAMINES ISSUE AFTER DOZEN NEIGHBORING RESIDENTS PROTEST ITS LOCATION NEAR BUSINESSES, RESIDENCES.

taylor muller

A proposed retail propane business in Kirksville was put on hold by the city with more than a dozen neighboring residents protesting its location at Monday's City Council meeting. The city is declining to issue a construction permit for a prospective propane business through United Propane Gas of Paducah, Ky., located at 204 W. Northtown Road, is on hold with the city waiting to issue a construction permit for the retail propane business and its planned 30,000-gallon on propane tank after residents testified at Monday's Council meeting that they were concerned about the explosive and incendiary nature of the gas tank. "Do you want one of them in your backyard?" neighboring resident Glen Miller asked the Council during the public participation portion of the meeting. "Because it's in my backyard." More than a dozen neighboring residents along with owners of nearby Shockey's Trailer Court Paul and Dr. Phyllis Mullenix showed up in opposition to ask the Council to take action and prevent the business' construction. City Manager Mari Macomber told the group the city would not issue a construction permit for the business until she and city attorney Howard Hickman had examined materials provided by the Mullenix' legal counsel Tucker Ramsay. "This poses a genuine health and public safety risk," Ramsay told the Council. Those in opposition cited



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concerns like the business' location near the Adair County Ambulance District headquarters as well as other businesses in northern Kirksville like Aldi grocery store and Wal-Mart. No representatives from those businesses were present in opposition at the meeting. A MFA grain bin neighbors the property, as well. The tank would join other similarly-sized tanks in northern Kirksville, including the 30,000-gallon tank operated by MFA Propane, an 18,000-gallon tank operated by Ferrell Gas near North Park and large tanks operated by HeetCo. The property where the prospective business is planned is zoned M-1, light industrial. M-2 industrial is required for wholesale propane sales, but the zoning allows for retail sales in M-1 zones. In other business the Council approved contracts with the low-bidders for the Franklin Streetscape Phase 2 project, its bulk gasoline and diesel fuel purchases and made several appointments to various city commissions and boards.

<http://www.kirksvilledailyexpress.com/article/20130521/NEWS/130529781>

USA, S.D, SIOUX FALLS, MAY 22 2013. DRIVER CITED AFTER ON ELLIS ROAD >> TRUCK WAS CARRYING 10,000 GALLONS OF FUEL; NO ONE INJURED

 **Watch the Video** [Tanker Carrying 10,000 Gallons of Fuel Overtakes](#)

 **Watch the Video** [Driver Cited after Tanker Overtakes on Ellis Road](#)



Cleanup in progress at Sioux Falls tanker spill: A fuel tanker carrying natural gas rolled over near 12th St. and Ellis Road. Firefighters respond to a tanker that rolled over, blocking Tea-Ellis Road west of Sioux Falls on Monday afternoon. The truck driver was cited for careless driving. No one was hurt in the accident.

A truck driver will be cited for careless driving after his tanker rolled Monday afternoon on North Ellis Road causing a fuel spill, according to authorities. The truck was turning right out of a CHS Inc. facility in Ellis, but it is not owned by the company. The driver cut the corner short, went into the ditch and rolled over, according to Highway Patrol Sgt. Robert Schmidt. The driver was not hurt and no other vehicles were involved in the accident, Schmidt said. The rollover caused law enforcement to close Ellis from 12th Street north to Maple Street. The tanker

was carrying about 10,000 gallons of unleaded fuel. Schmidt said the spill was contained by fire crews who were able to deploy hazardous material spill kits. "It was coming out of the top valves quite frequently," Schmidt said. Recovery crews from Ace Towing were forced to drill into the tanker and drain the remaining fuel into another truck before the tanker could be moved. Schmidt said the tow truck drivers on the scene were concerned that trying to move the tanker when it was full would rupture the tank and cause more fuel to spill. Lawrence Kindvall, who lives at the intersection where the truck rolled over, said he was working in his barn and heard the accident. "I heard a bang when it tipped over, it wasn't much of a noise but you could tell something happened," Kindvall said. The amount of fuel spilled from the tanker was unknown Monday, authorities said, but it rolled only a few hundred yards from Skunk Creek. The proximity of the spill to the creek and the water table was Kindvall's concern. He has a hobby farm near the intersection where the truck rolled and said the water table is fairly close to the surface. He was concerned about pollution making its way into the aquifer.

<http://www.argusleader.com/article/20130521/NEWS/305210021/Driver-cited-after-tanker-overtakes-Ellis-Road>

PHILIPPINES, MANILA, MAY 22 2013. PETRON TARGETS 5,000 NEW SERVICE STATIONS IN 4 YEARS

aya lowe



Aggressive Expansion. Petron Ang is launching another 4 ear expansion plan to boost its service station numbers to 5,000.

Petron Corp., Philippines' biggest oil refiner, is looking to bring its total network of petrol stations to 5,000, according to the company's chairman and CEO Ramon Ang. Speaking at Petron's annual stockholder meeting on Tuesday, May 21, Ang said Petron is looking to have 5,000 stations in the next 3 to 4 years. "Our network expansion program ensures that Petron's premium products and services are more accessible to our countrymen, anytime, anywhere," Ang said in the disclosure. "While we see our service station expansion program as a means to further reach out to our customers, we also view this as a manifestation of our commitment to nation-building, one service station at a time," he continued. The company



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recently finished building its 1000th service station completing its previous four year network expansion program where it constructed 250 stations each year. This brings the total number of Petron stations in the country to nearly 2,100. "Petron is in a period of unprecedented growth and expansion. Our network expansion program ensures that Petron's premium products and services are more accessible to our countrymen, anytime, anywhere," Ang said.

<http://www.rappler.com/business/29678-petron-targets-5,000-new-service-stations-in-4-years>

USA, S.C, NEWBERRY, MAY 22 2013. AMMONIUM NITRATE SPILL, FIRE PROMPTS EVACUATION IN NEWBERRY COUNTY



 **Watch the Video** [Ammonium Nitrate Spill, Fire Prompts Evacuation](#)
 **Watch the Video** [Road Open after Truck Fire in Newberry Co](#)

A South Carolina community is sighing with relief after a truck carrying a dangerous explosive caught fire and prompted evacuations. A mechanical problem on a tanker truck sparked an ammonium nitrate spill in Newberry County Monday night, according to the Newberry County Sheriff's Department. A fire in the cab of the truck caused the spill near the intersection of Highway 39 and Rose Bud Lane in the Chappells area of Newberry County. The evacuation order for those within a one mile radius of the spill has been lifted. Sheriff Lee Foster said the area was clear and roads were open before 11:30 a.m. Tuesday. Ammonium nitrate is the same substance that caused a massive blast at a Texas fertilizer plant last month that killed 15 people and used in the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995 that killed nearly 170 people. According to the Environmental Protection Agency ammonium nitrate is often used in fertilizer.

<http://www.midlandsconnect.com/news/story.aspx?id=900109#.UZxdT7UweM4>

CANADA, SASK, JANSEN, MAY 22 2013. MORE THAN 91,000 LITRES OF OIL SPILLED FROM DERAILED SASK. TRAIN

 **Watch the Video** [More than 91,000 Litres of Oil Spilled from Derailed Sask. Train](#)



A freight train jumped the tracks in southeastern Saskatchewan and spilled more than 91,000 litres of oil Tuesday, May 21, 2013.

A freight train jumped the tracks in southeastern Saskatchewan Tuesday and spilled more than 91,000 litres of oil. The accident happened as the Canadian Pacific Rail eastbound train was rolling through an area near the village of Jansen, about 150 kilometres southeast of Saskatoon. The company said five cars derailed, but only one leaked its contents. A total of 575 barrels hit the ground, said spokesman Ed Greenberg. "There is one car that was leaking product," Greenberg said. "It has been contained into the area around the car."

The leaking car was well back in the 64-unit train and remained upright. The other four cars were on their sides. Excavation equipment was being sent to the site to build a wall of dirt to further contain the spill. Reeve Bruce Elke with the rural municipality of Jansen was content with the way the situation was being handled, although he noted he was seeding his farmland and had not been to the scene. "My understanding was that it wasn't that big a spill and everything is going well," Elke said. Oilspills of any sort have been increasingly under the microscope as debate rages over how best to get Canadian oil to foreign markets. CP Rail has been increasing crude shipments as production ramps up from the oilsands and pipeline companies struggle to increase capacity quickly. Canadian National Railway (TSX:CNR) moved more than 30,000 carloads of crude to various North American markets last year and believes it can double that business in 2013. However, in New York earlier this month, Prime Minister Stephen Harper suggested rail was a riskier way to go while stumping for U.S. approval of the Keystone XL pipeline from Alberta to the Gulf Coast. Tuesday's spill marked at least the third involving a CP train in the last few months. In April, about 20 freight cars, including two that were carrying light sweet crude oil, went off the tracks near White River, Ont., about halfway between Thunder Bay and Sault Ste. Marie. While it



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was initially thought that only 630 litres of oil leaked, the total was revised to about 63,000 litres. In March, a Canadian Pacific train derailed in Minnesota. At the time, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency said 76,000 litres leaked onto the still-frozen ground. In January a Canadian National train collided with a road grader near the community of Paynton in Saskatchewan. Police said at the time that about 1,000 litres of oil leaked from two tankers in that crash. Greenberg said the train that detailed Tuesday was carrying other products besides oil, but there was no indication they were hazardous. "It was a mixed freight train, so there were other rail cars with other commodities on it." Firefighters from Jansen were called in as a precaution. The Transportation Safety Board of Canada was sending an investigator to the site.

<http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/more-than-91-000-litres-of-oil-spilled-from-derailed-sask-train-1.1291174>

USA. LA, BATON ROUGE, MAY 22 2013. 'UPSETS': CHEMICAL RELEASES DISRUPT LIVES BUT RARELY RESULT IN PUNISHMENT

kristen lombardi & andrea fuller

 **Document:** Read the Center for Public Integrity full report: ['Upset' Emissions: Flares in the Air, Worry on the Ground](#)



The 2,400-acre ExxonMobil petrochemical complex in Baton Rouge, La.

Shirley Bowman noticed the smell after 8 a.m. on June 14, 2012, her 61st birthday. In Baton Rouge, where the petrochemical industry dominates the landscape, foul odors resembling burnt rubber or propane are perennial. But this odor, caustic and potent, seemed especially foul — "like some sort of chemical," she recalls. Bowman found her daughter crying over a migraine. Her neighbors experienced headaches, dizziness, nausea. One family reported a toddler son coughing up phlegm; another, an elderly father collapsing on the floor. She soon suspected the cause: A leak of "steam-cracked" naphtha, a liquid mixture of volatile petrochemicals, occurring at the ExxonMobil Baton Rouge

petrochemical complex a half mile away. Four hours earlier, Exxon operators detected an odor in the East area tank field and discovered a "bleeder" valve on Tank 801 dripping naphtha into a sewer. The leaky valve dumped 411 barrels into the underground system, company records filed with the state show. The liquid traveled a mile before pouring into a separator pit, vaporizing along the way, and releasing tens of thousands of pounds of benzene and other toxic chemicals into the air. What happened that day in Baton Rouge is one thread of a larger story about the often toxic, sometimes invisible releases emanating from oil refineries, chemical plants and other industrial facilities along the chemical corridor of Louisiana and Texas. Those unplanned emissions — known in regulatory parlance as "upsets" — are occurring more often than industry admits or government knows, according to more than 50 interviews with regulators, activists, plant representatives, workers and residents, and an analysis of tens of thousands of records by the Center for Public Integrity. For many communities, these upsets have evolved into an unseen menace: They disrupt lives, yet the companies are rarely punished. In Texas, where activists have clamored for relief, state officials say enforcement efforts helped reduce the number of incidents by 6 percent; Louisiana officials cite an even steeper decrease, 41 percent since 2008. Yet those numbers tell only part of the story. The mass of pollution emitted in Texas, the nation's refinery hub, hit a five-year peak in 2011, the Center found -- so even as the number of reported events dipped, the amount of pollution increased. And, experts say upset releases are consistently underreported. This hidden pollution can produce harm. Over the last five years, records show, upset events have yielded almost 4 million pounds of toxic air pollutants in Texas alone — the 189 chemicals deemed so harmful to health Congress sought to bring emissions under control two decades ago. That's 2 percent of all upset emissions. "These are a major public health threat," acknowledges Larry Soward, a former commissioner at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, who served on its board from 2003 to 2009. "Upsets" occur when equipment breaks down or production units are shut off, restarted and repaired; or, as regulations state, when there's an "unavoidable" accident. Under law, plant managers must notify officials when accidental releases exceed certain hazardous air thresholds, known in regulations as "reportable quantities." In Baton Rouge, Exxon did this. Yet the figures it reported kept escalating. At 5:10 a.m. that day, Exxon supervisors told the state the benzene leak would likely exceed the 10 pound reportable quantity. Within hours, they classified it "level 2," barricading areas and monitoring the air. According to a call log, company officials found benzene levels "so high" bordering a rail yard, they advised the railroad "not to let anyone go through that area." By 12:30 p.m., the company was testing 400 workers for exposure to the cancer-causing chemical. The following day, Exxon reported that benzene emissions totaled 1,364 pounds during the leak's first three hours. By June 20, it increased the number to 28,688 pounds. In its [final report](#) filed 60 days later,



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Exxon revealed the benzene total was actually 31,022 pounds. State regulators later deemed the leak “preventable,” issuing an enforcement order contending that Exxon “failed to provide notification of a change in the nature and rate of the discharge.” The company, saying it accurately reported the release, is appealing the state’s order. While plant supervisors acknowledge the “large” leak, they say it didn’t threaten residents. Tests along the fence line showed “no community impact,” their records state; air sampling by state regulators back up the company. “It was a large number. We regret that number,” says Derek Reese, Exxon Baton Rouge’s environmental manager. “But we believe we did an appropriate response to mitigate the impact.” That’s little consolation to residents, like Bowman. “Everything seems to stop at that magical gate,” she says, motioning to Exxon’s South Gate adjoining her neighborhood. “But if you live here, you know. Chemicals are let out on you.”

Upsets Plague Plants, Communities

The hazards extend far beyond Baton Rouge. In Texas and Louisiana, the vast number of plastics, power and gas plants provide an on-the-ground case study of a national problem. Data collected by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, TCEQ, offer a rare window into this pollution peril; the state agency requires companies to report events [online](#) within 24 hours, as well as annual totals. From 2007-11, just over 2,400 of the largest facilities across Texas spewed almost 180 million pounds of upset emissions, contamination on top of the 14.8 billion pounds of routine air emissions in that time. Nearly half the facilities experienced at least one event in that period, pumping out sulfur dioxide and other smog-inducing pollutants. The greatest concentration came in 2011: 58.1 million pounds. The 20 biggest offenders — oil refineries and natural-gas plants in Kermit, Beaumont, Corpus Christi and beyond — account for more than half of all such emissions in Texas. “It’s a lot of stuff,” says Neil Carman, a former state air pollution inspector who investigated upset events. Carman now heads the air program for the [Sierra Club’s Lone Star chapter](#), which has filed several citizen lawsuits targeting illegal emissions. Industry portrays the discharges as an inevitable — and overwhelmingly harmless — byproduct of manufacturing. Regulators have encouraged this casual attitude, some experts say. For decades, critics say, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and state regulatory agencies have effectively ignored the emissions. Officials don’t count upset events in facility permits and compliance records, notes [Kelly Haragan](#) of the environmental law clinic at the University of Texas-Austin, because they “aren’t supposed to happen.” In August 2004, Haragan penned a 215-page [report](#) showing how easily facilities could get away with releasing more pollution than allowed by the federal Clean Air Act. At times, she says, “It’s like having a whole other plant no one is even acknowledging.” These incidents skirt normal pollution controls, instead venting into the atmosphere through flares and leaks. Plants can have scores of events a year, giving off a constant cloud of invisible pollution. “A big dose of toxins are coming out of these facilities,” says Soward, the former TCEQ official, who now works for Air Alliance Houston, “and into fence line communities.” The health effects are harder to measure; little research exists on the threat to residents. But recently, Dr. Mark D’Andrea, an oncologist at the University of Texas Cancer Center, began tracking 4,000 residents exposed to the poster child of all upsets — the [“40-day Release”](#) at the BP refinery, in Texas City, which belched 514,795 pounds of benzene and 20 other pollutants throughout the spring of 2010. Earlier this year, D’Andrea unveiled preliminary data showing the residents have “significantly higher” white-blood cell and platelet counts than their Houston counterparts. The data suggests BP’s release may have increased their risk of developing such cancers as leukemia, the doctor says. In a statement, BP says it does “not believe any negative health impacts resulted from” its 40-day release. “To our knowledge, the University Cancer Centers’ pilot study does not support a claim for any plaintiff alleging injury from that flaring and has no relevance to those claims,” the company wrote, referring to pending litigation filed by 47,830 residents and workers against BP alleging health ailments caused by the release. D’Andrea has not been hired as an expert witness for either side in the case, but has testified in pre-trial discovery.

‘An Invisible Poison’

In Baytown, Texas, about 250 miles from Baton Rouge, ExxonMobil operates the nation’s largest petrochemical complex, replete with an oil refinery and two chemical plants. The mass of stacks, tanks and pipes spans 3,400 acres on Houston’s ship channel, looming over blue-collar neighborhoods nestled in its shadow. In Harris County, a manufacturer’s Mecca, Exxon’s refinery tops all 155 upset emitters, spitting out 3.8 million pounds’ worth from 2007 to 2011. Here, residents describe fiery flares that have rattled windows, belched black smoke and cast a sooty substance on the ground. At times, they’ve unleashed a thunderous boom, “like an Air Force fighter jet,” says Shae Cotter, who lived across a highway from the complex. He remembers the sound jolting him from sleep at 3 a.m. Occasionally, he [videotaped](#) flares aglow like celestial globes, flames ballooning toward his home. The Exxon complex ranks among the state’s biggest upset emitters involving carcinogens and noxious gases. Top chemicals include hydrochloric acid, 1,3-butadiene and benzene, toxins that can trigger skin irritations, respiratory problems, neurological disorders and gastro-intestinal diseases. In a statement, ExxonMobil Baytown says it has



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worked with regulators to “greatly” reduce emissions. “We are proud of the overall reductions we have made,” the company wrote. Since 2000, Exxon notes, it has decreased total emissions at the Baytown complex by more than 50 percent. The company declined to provide similar statistics for the facility’s upset emissions. “ExxonMobil is committed to continuously improving the environmental performance of our Baytown Complex,” the company said. Since December, the Baytown facility has set off a wave of upset emissions. One, triggered by a tripped compressor in the refinery’s Booster Station Four, pumped out 114,000 pounds of sulfur dioxide in 18 hours. It was the 20th upset recorded there by company reports. “Exxon is emitting all of these day after day,” says resident Marilyn Kingman. “Anybody who lives in the Baytown area is suffering.” Smells drive some homeowners inside. Stuart Halpryn, whose house sits a quarter mile from Exxon, says he tried to adapt to the odors, along with the runny noses and allergy-like symptoms that he believes the odors caused. That changed in February 2009, when he says a valve leak at the refinery sickened his family. His four children suffered from such severe indigestion, he says, they missed school for a week. Later, he learned from reading Exxon’s report the leak had unleashed 17,432 pounds of six different toxic chemicals. “Nobody really understands what’s being dumped on them,” says Halpryn, who moved his family to Kentucky in June. “It’s an invisible kind of poison that’s being rained down.”

<http://openchannel.nbcnews.com/news/2013/05/21/18401250-upsets-chemical-releases-disrupt-lives-but-rarely-result-in-punishment?lite>

ENGLAND, LONDON, MAY 22 2013. NEW STANDARD TO REDUCE CONTAMINATION RISK FROM GROUND GASES

BSI, the UK’s National Standards Body, has published a new standard that will help to reduce the potential risks to people, buildings and the general environment from contaminated land and “brownfield” sites where toxic ground gases exist. Emissions from these sites during redevelopment have to be monitored properly to ensure they meet UK regulations for safety. Inadequate investigation for ground gas is likely to result in refusal of planning permission or at least delays in obtaining permission. BS 8576 Guidance on investigations for ground gas will enable this investigation process. The standard provides guidance on ground gases, volatile organic compounds and permanent gases such as carbon dioxide, methane and oxygen. It is intended for use with BS 10175 Investigations of potentially contaminated sites - Code of practice. Some of the key features of the standard include:

- A framework for assessing development sites and the risks posed by gassing sites (areas where ground gases are present) to neighbouring land and developments
- Guidance to investigations of gases under part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Environmental Damage Regulations
- For clarity and time-saving, text is provided in a combined format especially in areas where two or more common issues and the approach to investigating them occurs together

BS 8576 has been created through the collaboration of experts within the field such as the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, Environment Agency and the Institution of Civil Engineers. It will be of particular interest to consultants and regulators such as the local authority Contaminated Land Officers, those enforcing Building Regulations and the National Housebuilding Council (NHBC). David Fatscher, Head of Market Development for Sustainability at BSI says: “Amongst other guidance, BS 8576 provides a clear framework on which gases can and cannot be assessed, ensuring that measurements meet UK requirements. Since carbon dioxide and methane are both powerful greenhouse gases, their uncontrolled release from landfills into the atmosphere contributes to climate change and by using BS 8576, release can be minimized.” Chris Swainston, Chairman of the Soil Quality Committee says, “Created with the assistance of many significant leaders in this field and following a wide ranging public consultation, the new standard provides much in the way of good advice, practice and practicality that current effective and efficient site investigation requires.”

http://www.hazardxonline.net/article/58466/New-standard-to-reduce-contamination-risk-from-ground-gases.aspx?utm_campaign=NL130522&utm_source=emailCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=201305-22-NL&utm_source=emailCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=#BSI

PUERTO RICO, SAN JUAN, MAY 22 2013. PUMA TO SELL GASOLINE-ETHANOL MIX IN PUERTO RICO

A Swiss oil company says it will start selling regular gasoline mixed with ethanol as part of a pilot program in Puerto Rico. Puma Energy Caribe LLC says 56 gas stations across the island will participate in the program starting Wednesday. Puma says that if the program is successful, it will extend it to all its gas stations in the U.S. territory. Ethanol is routinely mixed with gasoline on the U.S. mainland as part of a 2007 federal renewable fuels law. Puma last year bought all of Chevron’s gasoline



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stations and underground storage tank facilities in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The agreement included 185 Texaco-brand gas stations in Puerto Rico and seven stations in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

<http://www.kansascity.com/2013/05/21/4248194/puma-to-sell-gasoline-ethanol.html>

USA, IA, CHARLES CITY, MAY 22 2013. ETHANOL AND DIESEL LEAKS CONFIRMED AT CHARLES CITY TRAIN DERAILMENT

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 **Watch the Video** [Ethanol and Diesel Leaks Confirmed at Charles City Train Derailment](#)

Monday night was an eventful night for rescue crews in Charles City. They had a flood threat, but there were plenty of other issues caused by the river itself. Crews were called late last night to a train derailment on the east side of Floyd County. They had to think fast and act quickly to save two workers who were trapped in the train. It was something Charles City Fire and Rescue couldn't have trained for. "This was a very unusual situation," explains Fire Chief Eric Whipple. A Canadian Pacific train was heading east and derailed. And the Little Cedar River was to blame. "It had washed out some of the tracks where or at least the bed underneath the tracks and that's what we believe caused the derailment," says Chief Whipple. There were two workers in one of the locomotives and crews had to try to get to them as quickly as possible. "We had to use 4-wheel drive vehicles, gators and rangers to get personnel and equipment to the site of the accident," he explains. That's because the site was about a half a mile away from the nearest road. "Having the locomotive and the personnel who were in the locomotive in the water at some point and not being able to just get to them and get to the locomotive we had to figure out away to get through the water." Around 1:30 on Tuesday morning, their rescue efforts were successful "Other than being a little wet and cold it was a cold night especially if you were wet but they were not injured thankfully and we were glad about that," concludes Chief Whipple. A representative from Canadian Pacific said they have crews out there now working on the cleanup. The train was carrying ethanol. The DNR confirms that ethanol and diesel leaks were confirmed in the Little Cedar River. Canadian Pacific plans to remove the leaking car Tuesday evening. The DNR will continue to monitor the situation and clean up and consider any enforcement action. The DNR is checking for potential environmental concerns. Unlike petroleum products ethanol does not float and immediately mixes with the water making recovery impossible. Luckily no one was injured and the rescue was a success. But that wasn't the only rescue situation crews were called to yesterday. Crews were also called yesterday to look for two men who were on flotation devices on the Cedar River, and they were believed to be in danger. On Monday, crews searched the river for hours before they called off the search because of heavy rains and the darkness. Nashua Fire and Rescue assisted in the search efforts. Local kayaker Brad Lunning Jr. says in situations where the river level is as high as it was, Getting on the water is not a good idea. "Kayak or white water we can get into them eddies and take a break or rest when it really high the whole rivers moving all one direction so there's no safe place to exit the river, you're going where the river wants," he explains. Between the threat of the river flooding, the train derailment and this situation, crews here have been working almost all night. While the Cedar River levels are falling, it's still too high to go out on, at this point.

<http://www.kimt.com/2013/05/21/busy-night-for-charles-city-rescue-crews/>

PHILIPPINES, SAN FERNANDO, MAY 22 2013. SHELL CONTAINS OIL SPILL IN LA UNION

raymund f. antonio

Some 20 liters of oil that spilled in the waters off San Fernando, La Union have already been contained by personnel of Shell Oil Company and MT Pamela. According to the Philippine Coast Guard's Marine Environmental Protection Unit in Northwestern Luzon, the oil spill came from the starboard bow portion of MT Pamela while it was completing the discharge of its diesel oil cargo. The oil accidentally spilled off the motor tug at PPIC 2 in Poro Point. The vessel's chief engineer confirmed with the personnel of Coast Guard Station in San Fernando that the check valve at the forward portion of MT Pamela caused the oil spill. Personnel of MT Pamela and Shell laid down an oil spill boom around the entire pier to contain the oil leak. The PCG said they pumped oil residues from the affected area to the fast tank until the spill was fully contained and could no longer pose ecological threat to La Union Coast. Members of the Coast Guard's Special Operations Group conducted an underwater inspection to determine the cause of the oil leak from MT Pamela, but saw no holes at the keel of the vessel. The Coast Guard issued an Inspection Apprehension Report to MT Pamela and administrative fine of P10,000 for violation.

<http://www.mb.com.ph/article.php?aid=13275&sid=1&subid=7#.UZymxlwM4>



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