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By learning about the misfortunes of others, it is STI's hope to educate the public by creating a greater awareness of the hazards with storage and use of petroleum and chemicals. Please refer to the many industry standards and to the fire and building codes for further guidance on the safe operating practices with hazardous liquids. Thanks and credit for content are given to Dangerous Goods-Hazmat Group Network.

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DangerousGoods/

USA, CA, SANTA PAULA NOVEMBER 30 2009.

LARGE OIL TANK EXPLODES IN VENTURA COUNTY

A 20,000-gallon tank of crude oil exploded and caught fire in Ventura County, but there were no injuries.

County fire officials say the large tank exploded Saturday near Santa Paula and forced the closure of a nearby road.

Authorities say the cause of the explosion remains unknown, but the fire was limited to the tank and its platform and no evacuations were necessary. Some oil was released, but it was not immediately clear how much. The flow was stopped within 45 minutes.

The incident report lists the tank's owner as Hunter Oil. A phone message left late Saturday night with Hunter Resources, an oil company that operates in the area, was not immediately returned.

http://www.mercurynews.com/news/ci 13887969?nclick check=1

NIGERIA, DELTA STATE, WARRI DECEMBER 2 2009.

EXPLOSION IN WARRI REFINERY AS TANK FARM BURNS

Sola Adebayo

An explosion on Tuesday rocked the ailing Warri Refining and Petrochemical Company, Ekpan, Delta State.

Our correspondent gathered that the deafening blast from one of the storage tanks in the pioneer crude oil refining plant, identified as Tel Tank, was followed by a fire.

WRPC was shut down in May due to lack of crude oil for its operation.

The plant was yet to resume operation on Tuesday as the repair of the System 2C pipeline otherwise known as Chanomi Creeks Pipeline, which supplies crude oil to it from the fields and production platforms of the American oil giant, Chevron Nigeria Limited, in Escravos, Warri South West Local Government Area of Delta State, was yet to be completed.

The explosion, which caused panic in WRPC, Nigerian Gas Company and Warri Area Office of the Pipelines and Products Marketing Company and their neighbourhood, including some communities located in the area, occurred at 1.05pm.

A reliable source in WRPC blamed the incident on a leakage in the storage tank.

It was gathered that the alarm raised by the workers at the jetty and the crew of Jackson Ville, a vessel loading condensate at the facility, at the time of the incident, attracted the youths of the neighbouring Ijala community.

The youths fought the fire before the arrival of the fire fighters from WRPC, NGC and Shell Petroleum Development Company.

The youths dived into the water and helped in relocating oil vessels within the vicinity to a safe distance.

However, it took the intervention of the State Security Service and other security agencies to calm the youths, who later became unruly when the Executive Director, Operations, WRPC, Mr. A. Obelle, arrived.

The youths accused the management of WRPC of insensitivity, adding that the incident could have been prevented if the leaking storage tank was promptly repaired.

A source in WRPC stated, "The Tel Tank in WRPC jetty which had been leaking since January caught fire at 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560

about 1.05pm today (Tuesday). One of the pipes of the Tel Tanks eventually exploded and it resulted in a fire."

"But fortunately, it was only the Tel Tank and its vicinity that was affected. There is no casualty and the fire was eventually put out," added the source in WRPC, who pleaded anonymity.

The Group General Manager, Group Public Affairs Division, NNPC, Dr. Levi Ajuonuma, described the incident as "inconsequential."

"It was a minor incident. There was a little fire from one of the facilities that had been abandoned for a long time in the plant (WRPC). The MD of WRPC said the tank was leaking and there was a small fire which was put out in less than 30 minutes," Ajuonuma added in a telephone interview with our correspondent. http://www.punchng.com/Articl.aspx?theartic=Art200912024171576

USA, AK, ANCHORAGE DECEMBER 2 2009.

BP STARTS ALASKAN OIL SPILL CLEANUP, MAY TAKE WEEKS

Joshua Schneyer and Yereth Rosen

BP Plc on Tuesday began cleaning up an oil spill from a leaky Alaskan pipeline, but said it has not determined what caused the leak or how much material spilled onto the snow-covered tundra.

The leak is the latest setback for the British oil giant. A major Alaskan spill in early 2006 revealed pipeline corrosion issues at BP-controlled Prudhoe Bay, the largest U.S. oilfield complex, which the company has sought to fix.

"We are implementing the spill cleanup plan," said BP spokesman Daren Beaudo in Anchorage.

BP started removing oil mist from a road adjacent to the 18-inch (45-cm) diameter leaky pipeline, but response crews have not been able to reach the main spill area yet, Beaudo said.

The line, which was idle when a leak was discovered by workers on Sunday, serves the 31,000 barrel per day Lisburne field at Prudhoe Bay, whose total production tops 400,000 bpd. Impact on production was "minimal," BP said.

It may take days or weeks to remove the oil and determine whether BP's leak caused environmental damage, an Alaskan official said.

"It's going to take a while, but they will clean it down to the tundra when they're done. That'll be a few days to a couple of weeks," said Dale Gardner, an Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation official.

"They won't know until they clear everything away how far it penetrated and whether the tundra is affected or not."

BP has not determined what caused the pipeline leak or how much material leaked, Beaudo said. A situation report said the affected area covered 8,400 square feet (780 square meters).

An ice plug was recently found in the pipeline, which prompted BP to shut the line a few weeks ago, Gardner told Reuters. It wasn't clear whether the ice plug contributed to the spill, Gardner added.

BP still faces legal problems due to Alaskan pipeline spills in 2006 and subsequent partial shutdown of Prudhoe Bay production. The company remains under a three-year probationary period under terms of a federal criminal settlement reached in late 2007.

The current leak affected a so-called three-phase flow line, which carries oil, natural gas, and water produced along with hydrocarbons. Water-bearing lines can be susceptible to corrosion or freezing, one pipeline expert said.

The spilled material is about 70 percent water, and has probably melted through the snow layer to the tundra, Gardner said. The ground is frozen, "so penetration is not likely," he said.

Seepage into waterways or the Beaufort Sea nearby is unlikely since a road acts as a barrier between the spill site and waterways, Gardner said.

Cleanup is difficult because of extreme cold, sparse daylight and pipeline safety precautions. Since the line remains partially pressurized, a 10-foot (3-meter) safety barrier has been placed near the pipeline, preventing cleanup workers from getting too close, Gardner said.

USA, MA, ATTLEBORO DECEMBER 2 2009. OIL STRUCK IN WRENTHAM

WORKERS PUNCTURE OLD TANK, SPILLING HUNDREDS OF GALLONS

Construction workers demolishing a home on Lake Street accidentally struck an old underground oil storage tank Monday, causing 300 to 500 gallons of oil to leak out of the tank, a state environmental official said. Workers prevented the oil leaking from the 1,000-gallon tank at 61 Lake St. into nearby Lake Archer, but some oil did enter a retention area, said Edmund Coletta, a spokesman for the state Department of Environmental Protection. The tank was 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560

ruptured when it was struck by the blade of an excavator, Coletta said. Fire Chief Mark Pare said construction workers built a berm to stop the oil from getting into the lake. In addition, there were sand bags between the construction zone and the lake, the fire chief said. Coletta and Pare said the workers apparently did not know about the tank. A hazardous waste clean- up crew was hired to clean the area contaminated by the oil, the officials said. A DEP worker was also the Coletta incident occurred p.m. responding to site, said. around 12:44 http://www.thesunchronicle.com/articles/2009/12/01/news/6534569.txt

USA, AKA, ANCHORAGE DECEMBER 4 2009.

VENTING GAS TANK CAUSES EXPLOSION, FIRE

James Halpin

An explosion that set a Hillside home's garage ablaze early Thursday morning appears to have started when fumes from a full vehicle gas tank connected with the flame from a nearby water boiler, according to the Anchorage Fire Department.

The gas tank of a vehicle had apparently been topped off shortly before the vehicle was parked inside, according to firefighters.

"What happens when you do that and then you close it right away, especially if it's cold outside, is as soon as that gas tank is in a warmer environment, it expands and it starts venting," fire department spokeswoman Jen Collins said. "In this case it was venting right near a boiler and it ignited."

Firefighters were called to the home at 11240 Stroganof Drive at about 3:25 a.m., shortly after the two occupants reported being awakened by the sound of an explosion in the garage, Collins said. The people found flames coming from the garage, she said. Both residents escaped unharmed.

Twelve fire vehicles were dispatched to the scene, including three tenders that brought water to the home, which is in an area without fire hydrants. Firefighters extinguished the blaze in about half an hour.

The fire was mostly contained to the garage, although it spread into a nearby bathroom and bedroom area on the first floor and caused some damage there, Collins said.

Firefighters estimated damage at about \$100,000.

http://www.adn.com/news/alaska/anchorage/story/1039790.html

AUSTRALIA, QUEENSLAND, BLI BLI DECEMBER 4 2009.

THREE HURT IN COW CANDY FUEL TANK EXPLOSION

Anne-Louise Brown

Three people have been injured in an explosion at the Cow Candy factory at Bli Bli this morning. A man suffered third degree burns to 30% of his body when a fuel tank exploded.

The 54-year-old man, an employee of the company, was airlifted to Brisbaneto receive treatment for the burns and a facial injury, believed to have been caused by an airborne brick.

Two of the man's colleagues suffered minor burns and were treated at the scene.

Districtduty officer Senior Sergeant Ray Hoelscher, who visited the scene, saidthe incident would be investigated by workplace health and safetyofficers.

"The explosion was a workplace accident and occurredwhen a large burner used to produce cow feed was being refuelled," MrHoelscher said.

"As it was being filled there was a flashback caused by the heat which injured three men working nearby."

"One of the men was injured seriously but luckily his co-workers were trained in first aid and treated him immediately.

"The explosion appears to have been a very unfortunate accident. Fortunately there was no fire danger."

Mr Hoelscher said the workers at the factory, which produces sugar cane cattle fodder, were shaken by the explosion.

No one from Cow Candy was available for comment when contacted by the Daily yesterday...

The manufacturing process uses a new superheated steam drying "no waste" technology invented in Queensland to dry and bale the entire cane crop into a "bundle of energy" for dairy and beef cattle.

Cow Candy emerged as a saviour for the Sunshine Coast's 100 year old sugar industry following the closure of the Moreton Sugar mill in Nambour.

Bales of the product are being exported to Korea and Japan for use as part of a total mixed ration for dairy and 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560

beef cattle.

BioCane Ltd won a Federal government grant to build an expanded processing plant.

It has since won grants from all three levels of government to provide an income for cane farmers who still have thousands of hectares under production.

Last year a Chinese company with sugar mills stepped in with a \$3 million capital injection to save the project. http://www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au/story/2009/11/28/three-hurt-cow-candy-explosion/

USA, MI, PORT HURON DECEMBER 5 2009.

FIRE'S LONE VICTIM SAYS INCIDENT WAS LIFE-CHANGING, AIMS TO RETURN TO WORK

Liz Shepard

Gary Hall has worked with acetylene tanks for nearly a decade. For the 48-year-old Lakeport man, Nov. 2 was no different than any other Monday as he started work at South Park Welding Supplies, 50 Gratiot Blvd., Marysville. No different, he said, until the tank he was working on caught fire.

"I'm an acetylene plant manager, responsible to refill acetylene gas tanks. ... That particular day I was recertifying tanks, and the very first tank of the day, I cracked the valve, no gas came out ... got maybe four turns, the valve broke and fire started," Hall said.

Officials have said the fire, which led to subsequent explosions, started at the tank Hall was working on, but they have not been able to determine what sparked the blaze.

Hall also doesn't have a definitive answer, saying it could have been something as simple as static electricity or a spark from his wrench. Hall said investigators found the valve malfunctioned, preventing gas from escaping the tank. The fire caused explosions that shook the area and destroyed the building that housed South Park's offices and a repair shop. Despite debris that flew hundreds of feet, Hall, the only person injured, suffered only second-degree burns to his face, second- and third-degree burns to the back of his head and third-degree burns on his hands.

He speaks matter-of-factly about the incident but declined to have his picture taken. Hall said he doesn't expect to have many scars. Hall said the skin on his hands was in ribbons and he was worried his face was in the same condition. As he waited at the business next door for an ambulance to arrive, Hall said he caught a glimpse of his reflection in a picture hanging on the wall. "I seen that my skin looked normal, so I was relieved then," he said.

About the time EMS workers started tending to his wounds, Hall said the explosions started. "It sounded like missiles going off," he said. "When the first explosions happened, I was in the ambulance. ... They started blowing up so much, I was like, 'Forget the IV, let's go.'"

Sharon Hall, Hall's wife of 26 years, said another South Park employee called to tell her about the explosion. "I was a basket case," she said. After dropping off her 2-year-old granddaughter, whom she was babysitting, at a family friend's house, she made it to St. Joseph Mercy Port Huron hospital and found her husband. His hands already were bandaged. His hair was burned off. His mustache was melted to his lip. But, he was cracking jokes. Sharon Hall said she was expecting the worst. "It wasn't as bad as I was expecting ... but it was bad enough for me," she said.

Because his burns were so severe, Hall was taken to Detroit Receiving Hospital, where he stayed for more than two weeks. He's hoping to return to work in February. Hall said the pain has dissipated, and he has started physical therapy for his hands. He has been doing simple chores around the house -- such as laundry and sweeping -- to toughen the skin grafts on both hands.

While thinking about the fire doesn't provoke strong emotions, the reaction he's gotten from the community does. The outpouring of support from coworkers, friends, family and the community has been heart-warming, he said. "It's brought more tears to me than the pain and everything, just overwhelming generosity," he said. "They've been wonderful," his wife said. "I think that's what hit me, and him, the most, the generosity of people saying, 'Anything we can do for you?' It's just been unbelievable, it's been very touching."

Hall said the experience has been life changing. "It changed how I look at life all together," he said. "I don't take the little things for granted anymore."

http://www.thetimesherald.com/article/20091204/NEWS01/912040306/1002

USA, WYO, SINCLAIR
DECEMBER 5 2009.
MISHAPS PLAGUE SINCLAIR REFINERY
SAFETY CONCERNS MOUNT AMONG AREA RESIDENTS, OFFICIALS

Dustin Bleizeffer

A fire in March forced the Sinclair oil refinery in the tiny town of Sinclair to operate at about half-capacity for much of April.

Then on May 3, a floating roof on a storage tank at the refinery sank and ripped a hole in the metal shell. Nearly 3 million gallons of a highly flammable gasoline-grade fuel spilled onto the ground and breached the front-line containment structure.

Somehow, there was no ignition. No explosion. No fire. No injuries -- or worse -- among the dozens of workers at the refinery or the citizens of Sinclair.

"One spark in the right place, and then who knows?" said Carbon County Commission Chairman Terry Weikum. "That was the one incident that really upset me, because I don't feel they made enough notification to protect the citizens or themselves. We found out about it later."

Problems continued at the refinery, which is owned by Sinclair Oil Corp. Nearby residents complained of a strong odor, mostly because of an ongoing soil remediation effort.

And there were more spills.

All told, 13 liquid and gaseous spills have been reported this year to either the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality or the federal National Response Center.

Two of the spills occurred in the span of just a few hours on Monday. The refinery released 309 pounds of hydrogen sulfide and then spilled 2,300 gallons of isobutene, according DEQ.

Yet the refinery continues to operate unreserved. DEQ officials say they've asked management at the refinery to self-report information related to the events, which are being investigated as individual incidents.

"I can understand odors from a refinery. But the release of toxic chemicals and things that can blow sky-high just scares the daylights out of me. When is enough enough?" said Rawlins resident Barbara Parsons, a longtime board member of the Wyoming Outdoor Council.

Calls from the Star-Tribune to Sinclair's headquarters in Utah this week were not returned.

DEQ Administrator John Corra said that although each mishap at the refinery is investigated separately, his agency is asking Sinclair to provide assurances the series of mishaps will not continue. He said refinery personnel are scheduled to meet with DEQ regulators soon.

"We know that there are malfunctions. Stuff will happen from time to time. But there has been one heck of a lot going on at that refinery this year," Corra said. "So we're bringing them in to see if we can get some comfort level that there is an end to this series of events."

The refinery could face monetary penalties once the investigations are completed.

After the 3 million-gallon fuel spill in May, state and local officials complained that the refinery wasn't issuing proper or timely notification. Since, both state and Carbon County officials say the refinery has been more responsive.

"I really appreciate them improving the communication," Weikum said.

Parsons also agreed the refinery has been more responsive to local officials and residents. However, the track record this year is still cause for alarm. Not only is the refinery embedded in the town of Sinclair, but it's also in close proximity to Interstate 80 and the North Platte River.

"I really think DEQ has been working on this. I really think they're making an effort on this. But maybe it's time for some penalties," Parsons said.

A "delayed coker" was installed at the refinery in 2008, according to Sinclair. The unit is specifically designed to handle heavy, or sour, crude. Separately, refining capacity was increased from 71,500 barrels per day to 83,000 barrels per day.

http://www.trib.com/news/state-and-regional/article_a63d514d-7532-5fd6-9180-41ec5afab65d.html

USA, ILL, BELVIDERE, DECEMBER 8 2009. 1 KILLED AT OASIS AFTER BLAST AT NDK PLANT

Chris Green

A truck driver standing in the parking lot of the Belvidere Oasis was hit by flying debris and killed today after an explosion rocked the NDK plant at Crystal Parkway, south of U.S. 20.

The victim, 63-year-old Ronald Greenfield of Chesterton, Ind., was in the parking lot of the Interstate 90 oasis, said Sandra Rogers, Boone County's emergency management coordinator.

Greenfield, a truck driver, was out of his vehicle when he was struck by a large piece of debris.

The westbound entrance ramp to the oasis was closed for nearly two hours after the explosion was reported at 2:34 p.m. Belvidere fire Chief David Worrell said Greenfield was pronounced dead at the scene. However, a helicopter was already en route and transported the man to OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center in Rockford where lifesaving efforts were unsuccessful.

Woman injured

In addition to the death of Greenfield, a woman at nearby Grupo Antolin Illinois Inc., 642 Crystal Parkway, a manufacturer of automobile interior parts and components, also was injured.

"She was thrown some distance, but she was treated at the scene and released," Worrell said.

The tall, 55,000-square-foot building, visible from Interstate 90, opened in 2003 at a cost of \$12.5 million. It houses NDK Crystal and NDK America Inc., and serves as the North American headquarters for their Japan-based parent company, Nihon Dempa Kogyo Co. Ltd.

Inside the building are several 50-foot-tall, 75-ton vessels in which synthetic quartz crystal is grown. That crystal is used to make frequency-control devices, which NDK then sells to mobile telephone makers and others for use in electronic devices.

Worrell said one of those pressurized vessels at the west end of the building exploded. Worrell did not know what substance was kept under pressure. The blast blew off a portion of the west end of the building's exterior shell exposing much of the interior of the six- to seven-story tall building to the elements.

"We really have no idea what caused the explosion," Worrell said.

Sheet metal, chunks of concrete, glass and other debris were found several hundred feet away from the plant.

Worrell said firefighters were assessing how safe the building is. There were no flames and no smoke, just an explosion, Worrell stressed.

"The building was designed so that panels will fly away in an explosion, and it worked perfectly," he said.

A Belvidere man visiting family in the nearby Four Seasons mobile home park said the blast knocked every picture off the wall and toppled over a four-legged chair. He thought a truck had fallen off a nearby I-90 overpass.

Sarah Pyszka, 28, of Belvidere, was with her boyfriend in the 900 block of Garfield Avenue, several blocks away when the explosion occurred. "He just looked at me, and he said, 'Did you feel that?' It was very loud. My cousin was at the (AMCORE) bank, and she thought she got rear-ended."

Access to the plant was restricted for much of the evening. A school bus was brought to the scene to keep the NDK plant employees warm and allow investigators to interview them.

Traveling almost as fast as the reverberations from the blast was news of the explosion and fatality. News helicopters from as far as Chicago hovered over the blast site for much of the afternoon recording video footage.

Federal, state, county and city agencies including the Occupational Safety Hazard Administration, the state fire marshal's office as well as the Boone County sheriff's and the Belvidere police and fire departments are investigating. http://www.rrstar.com/belvidere/x1964353088/Injuries-apparent-explosion-at-NDK-plant

USA, NE, NORFOLK DECEMBER 11 2009. FIREFIGHTER AVERTED A DISASTER

Robynn Tysver

Firefighter Scott Bonsall didn't think twice.

He crouched under a 30,000-gallon propane tank, even though huge flames were shooting at it from a broken pipe.

Bonsall methodically turned off three valves, extinguishing the propane-fueled fire, as a team of 15 others shot water at the tank.

"I trust the guys that were around me," said Bonsall, a firefighter for about two decades. "It's part of our job. We just do what we have to do."

His actions helped avert disaster.

552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560

The shutting of the valves ended a nearly five-hour drama in which an estimated 8,000 people — about one-third of the city's population — were evacuated from their homes and businesses in south Norfolk. No injuries were reported.

"We dodged a bullet," said Fire Chief Shane Weidner.

The fire started near a propane tank at the former Protient plant, a dry milk processing facility that has been closed for about a year. The plant has a new operator and was preparing to reopen.

A small explosion occurred shortly before 7 a.m. near a platform that held pipes and equipment that deliver propane into the plant. Ten to 12 workers reportedly were inside, but they got out safely.

When Norfolk firefighters arrived, they saw large flames billowing in the direction of the tank. Black, rolling smoke could be seen for miles. Firefighters began shooting water at the tank.

Authorities then made the decision to evacuate people. Weidner said the fear was that the tank would explode, leveling homes and businesses. The tank had been filled Wednesday with 25,000 to 30,000 gallons of propane.

The Fire Department initially sent in a team of three, including Bonsall, to learn as much about the tank as they could, getting within 150 yards. They were assisted by a State Patrol helicopter that shot video from above.

Weidner said he concluded that the best way to halt the fire was to close the valves. "That was the toughest call I ever made as chief," he said.

Bonsall, 39, said he had been briefed on where the valves were and in what sequence they needed to be closed. He said it made sense for him to turn off the valves.

"It came down to everybody had certain jobs, and I knew what the tank looked like and I knew where the valves were," Bonsall said.

As firefighters sprayed the tank to keep it cool, Bonsall crouched down and turned off a single valve.

Then he and the other firefighters backed off to see if there was any change in the situation. The procedure was repeated until all three valves were shut off.

"It was very choreographed," said Bonsall.

The entire operation took about 30 minutes, Weidner said.

Bonsall said he tried to use fear to his advantage.

"If you're not scared, you shouldn't be doing the job," he said. "You work with the fear to keep your senses alert."

People were notified about noon that it was safe to return to their homes. Shortly afterward, Mayor Sue Fuchtman stood in a fire station, sporting a big smile.

"I stand before you right now breathing a huge sigh of relief," said Fuchtman.

About 10,000 people live in the area of south Norfolk that was evacuated, according to Census figures.

Norfolk's latest population estimate is nearly 23,000. The city is about 100 miles northwest of Omaha.

The evacuated area was bordered by Norfolk Avenue on the north, Andy's Lake on the south, Victory Road on the east and 20th Street on the west.

"That constitutes, landmass-wise, about a third of the city," said Al Roder, the Norfolk city administrator.

After the evacuation order was given, police pounded on doors and drove through neighborhoods, urging people within one mile of the propane tank to leave as quickly as possible.

The evacuation area included five elementary schools, a home for Alzheimer's patients and a food distribution business that employs about 700.

People gathered at three centers quickly set up around the city. They drank coffee and ate cheeseburgers and french fries supplied by local businesses and served by Red Cross volunteers.

Most appeared in good humor.

"I'm enjoying myself, mingling and getting out there and talking to people," said Herman Klabunde, a father of two young girls.

Weidner and others said that the former Protient site was considered safe by the afternoon but that it would continue to be monitored. The cause of the fire had not been determined.

The next question for Norfolk is whether the Illinois company that intended to reopen the plant would go forward with its plans.

Dave Simonsen, executive director of the Elkhorn Valley Economic Development Council, said he had every reason to believe the project would continue on course.

http://www.omaha.com/article/20091211/NEWS01/912109995

USA, LA, SHREVEPORT
DECEMBER 11 2009.
ANOTHER INCIDENT OCCURS AT CALUMET-SHREVEPORT REFINERY
ASPHALT IN TANK IGNITES AS WORKERS TRANSFER PRODUCT

About 158,000 gallons of asphalt ignited at Calumet Specialty Product Partners' Shreveport refinery as the liquid product was being transferred from a damaged storage tank Thursday afternoon, Shreveport Fire Chief Brian Crawford said.

The fire is the latest of nine incidents to which the Shreveport Fire Department has responded at the refinery this year. And The Times highlighted a Louisiana Bucket Brigade report Thursday that notes 53 accidents — more than half of which were preventable — at the refinery in 2005-08.

"Soot and a very low concentration of sulfur dioxide" — a colorless suffocating gas that smells like rotten eggs — were released in the resulting smoke, Calumet-Shreveport spokeswoman Liz Swaine says in a statement released Thursday about the fire in the partially full tank. "All regulatory agencies have been contacted and reports will be filed with the (Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality)."

The tank — referred to in the Calumet-Shreveport news release as being out of service — "has obvious structural damage to the west side. ... Some was fire damage, but the majority was previous damage," Crawford said.

The refinery's fire brigade was notified of the fire about 1:50 p.m. About 30 minutes later, the Shreveport Fire Department was called and the fire was extinguished about 4 p.m., according to the Fire Department.

Special foam that shuts off a fire's oxygen supply did the trick. Firefighters paired the foam capabilities of a Shreveport Regional Airport fire engine with the height of a Fire Department ladder truck to let them see the fire and direct the foam where needed, Crawford said.

This solved firefighters' issues with the tank's floating roof, which adjusts to the level of liquid inside and blocked the foam from getting to the fire.

No injuries were reported, and there was no risk of an explosion related to the blaze, Crawford said.

The damaged tank was filled with eight feet — or about 421,000 gallons — of asphalt when the transfer began. Workers heated the product to about 300 degrees to make it liquid and were using the refinery's internal piping system to move the asphalt to an undamaged tank. The process was almost complete when the three remaining feet of asphalt ignited.

The cause of the fire is still under investigation, according to the Fire Department.

Calumet-Shreveport is one of the few places for which the Fire Department has a specific, written attack plan, Crawford said.

"We've been out to fires here before. We know (the refinery's fire brigade members) by name."

The Fire Department's previous eight calls for service at the refinery this year include four emergency medical service/rescues, three hazardous conditions and one rupture/overpressure, according to data provided by the department.

The medical service calls were mostly on-site vehicle crashes. The hazardous condition calls included a leak of natural or liquified petroleum gas and an electrical short in equipment. The rupture/overpressure involved an explosion, the data show.

The Fire Department also has made four non-emergency "good intent" calls this year, of which three were canceled before firefighters arrived at the refinery.

The Fire Department's standard response to an emergency at Calumet-Shreveport calls for dispatching 12 emergency vehicles — five fire engines, two ladder trucks, two rescue trucks, two battalion chief vehicles and a medical unit — to the refinery.

http://www.shreveporttimes.com/article/20091211/NEWS01/912110317/Another-incident-at-Shreveport-refinery

USA, PA, BRADFORD CO DECEMBER 15 2009.

IN BRADFORD COUNTY MORE THAN 800 GALLONS OF A HYDROCHLORIC ACID SPILLED IN 2009

Nastassja Noel

Last February, as winter's cold froze the soil, a natural gas production company called Schlumberger leaked 285 gallons of hydrochloric acid at a gas well site in Asylum Township, Pennsylvania. The acid that was spilled was 36% hydrochloric acid, strong enough to dissolve steel, sandstone, or human flesh. Last week, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection fined Chesapeake Appalachia and Schlumberger Technology Corp \$15,557 each.

Examiner.com has uncovered that this chemical spill was the first of 3 reported hydrochloric acid spills at natural gas drilling sites in Bradford County this year. One month after the first spill, on March 20, Chesapeake Appalachia spilled another 420 gallons of hydrochloric acid at a gas well site in Granville Township; on June 30, 200 gallons of hydrochloric acid was spilled at a Fortuna Energy gas well site in Troy Township. It is currently unknown whether Schlumberger was again the subcontractor responsible for these spills.

Dan Spadoni, press secretary for the North Central Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), said that to his knowledge no workers or residents were evacuated from any of the spill sites.

The Emergency Management Agency of Bradford County was not informed about any of the 3 chemical spills until 2-3 days later, making the agency effectively impotent and unable to protect citizens downwind from the corrosive vapor fumes.

In other towns where hydrochloric acid spills have occurred, residents within a quarter mile have been evacuated. Two years ago, when 500 gallons of hydrochloric acid was leaked into an industrial containment area at a metal plating factory in Michigan, 3,000 people were temporarily relocated to other areas. Residents filed a class action lawsuit against the company.

Chesapeake and Schlumberger's stated in a DEP news release that in the future they will use a containment area underneath the acid tanks to remedy the problem of hydrochloric acid leaks. As evidenced in Melvindale, Michigan, simply using a containment pit does not reduce the immediate threat of concentrated hydrochloric acid fumes travelling through the air for up to a quarter mile.

Concentrated amounts of hydrochloric acid are highly corrosive to human flesh as a liquid or a vapor. In diluted doses the fumes irritate the eyes and respiratory tract, causing coughing, hoarseness, inflammation, and ulceration of the respiratory tract, chest pain, and pulmonary edema. Workers who are repeatedly exposed to low levels of hydrochloric acid have been reported to suffer from gastritis, chronic bronchitis, dermatitis, and sensitivity to light. The chemical is federally listed as a hazardous air pollutant.

Hydrochloric acid is used to dissolve rock, creating fissures for the tiny pockets of natural gas to migrate out of the ground.

In Wyoming and Colorado, other natural gas production pollutants such as benzene have migrated from the well site, creating plumes of toxic chemicals in the groundwater and aquifers. Windsor Energy Group, LLC, a natural gas producing company in Wyoming created a hazardous underground plume and then declared bankruptcy.

"Everything Industry told us would not happen, has," said Deb Thomas, a local resident and organizer for the Clark Resource Council in a joint press release issued by the Powder River Basin Resource Council and Earthworks in October. "Before the first operators of this project bankrupted, we were told that drilling was safe and no toxic chemicals were used. Since Windsor bought the development, we've had years of leaking waste pits, illegal dumping of drilling fluids, inadequate engineering, and finally, the blow out, which left us with contaminated drinking water aquifers. Windsor said the contamination plume wouldn't move into private water wells or jump the Creek, and it did both. Now we fear that Windsor will join their predecessors by bankrupting and simply walk away from their mess."

***REPORTER'S NOTE: Currently it is not certain whether the spill in February involved 295 gallons of 100% hydrochloric acid, or 295 gallons of 36% hydrochloric acid. According to the requirements of the Federal Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA), companies must report the amount of the chemical in the solution, not the total amount of solution spilled. If Chesapeake and Schlumberger spilled 295 gallons of 100% Hydrochloric acid, that amounts to 819.4 gallons of 36% hydrochloric acid. That also means that every hour about 22 gallons of the hydrochloric acid solution was leaking onto the frozen ground unnoticed, quite alot of liquid to be puddling up on frozen soil and running downhill for over 38 hours. Such a slow and continuous chemical spill endangers the health of workers and residents downstream and downwind, additionally burning off the paws of any cottontail rabbit who happens to hop through the chemical run.

http://www.examiner.com/x-28020-Natural-Gas-Policy-Examiner~y2009m12d14-In-Bradford-County-more-than-800-gallons-of-a-hydrochloric-acid-spilled-in-2009

USA, CT, OXFORD DECEMBER 17 2009.

QUAKER FARMS SCHOOL OIL LEAK STILL COSTS OXFORD FOR CLEAN-UP

Leda Quirke

More than three years after an oil tank at Quaker Farms School leaked oil into the ground, the town is continuing to incur costs to clean up the mess with no hope of relief any time soon.

The 6,000-gallon, fiberglass, underground tank leaked 2,950 gallons of oil into the ground in November, 2006. When the tank was dug up later the same month, a crack eight to ten inches long was discovered on the bottom.

The tank has since been replaced with a 4,000-gallon, double-wall, metal, above-ground tank.

At a meeting with the town attorney on Tuesday of last week, the Board of Selectmen voted to forward to the Board of Finance a request for an appropriation of \$28,347.97 for costs associated with the project.

In a letter dated November 23, the Quaker Farms Oil Spill Containment, Remediation and Building Committee, which is overseeing the work, asked for a total of \$122,944.

The sum included \$8,362.97 for outstanding bills, \$24,480 for legal services and \$40,000 for services by LFR, an environmental management company from Sandy Hook for the period of November 1, 2009, to June 30, 2010.

The committee also requested \$50,000 for anticipated legal fees.

To date, the town has expended a total of \$588,705.59, according to James Hliva, the town's finance director and a member of the remediation committee.

In a November 30 letter to First Selectman Mary Ann Drayton-Rogers and Committee Chairman David Haversat, LFR principal Russell Dirienzo said he realized that spending more than \$40,000 a year on the project was a burden on the town's budget, but he said the expense was unavoidable.

"There is no cheap way to recover oil that is trapped in the tiny fractures in the bedrock," he said.

Mr. Dirienzo said LFR evaluated other options other than the "pump and treat" system it has been employing, including installing additional recovery wells, blasting bedrock to create an underground trench to trap the oil and injecting steam to loosen the oil for quicker recovery.

But he said all the options would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars and also would be disruptive to the school.

Mr. Dirienzo said the recovery system LFR is employing is effective in controlling the migration of oil in the bedrock.

He said only a few hundred gallons remain in the ground, but as long as oil continues to be recovered, the state Department of Environmental Protection will not allow for any shut down no matter how small the quantity is.

Mr. Dirienzo said the DEP is concerned because contaminated groundwater could migrate under the school and cause air quality issues.

He said fortunately the groundwater plume, though located within ten feet of a school wing, is migrating parallel to the school and not toward the building.

However, organic compounds such as benzene found in fuel oil can easily volatize from the groundwater and enter the air in the school building, so it has to be monitored closely, he said.

At the same time, he said, once all the oil is recovered, the project could be reduced to monthly visits and semi-annual groundwater resampling, measures that would reduce costs to \$18,000 a year.

The first selectman said last week that she had talked to Mr. Dirienzo and was able to negotiate a new cost of \$19,885, down from the originally projected \$40,000.

The sum includes \$2,850 for operating and maintaining of the pump system; \$1,375 for treating contaminated groundwater; \$2,910 for collecting and analyzing effluent samples; \$6,600 for groundwater monitoring; \$6,150 for preparing a semiannual report for the DEP.

Mrs. Drayton-Rogers also recommended granting the remediation committee's request for \$8,462.97 for expenses already incurred.

But, rather than act on the committee's request for \$50,000 in legal fees, she said she wanted to see a breakdown of costs.

Also, she said she was hopeful of recovering some of the legal fees as a result of the litigation the town has initiated in connection with the oil spill and its aftermath.

Mr. Haversat said it could take up to 24 months to settle the suit.

Mr. Haversat noted that the remediation committee recently voted to close out the construction aspect of its 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560

mission in an effort to prompt the State Board of Education to perform an audit of expenses eligible for grant reimbursement for the project.

He said the state already paid the town \$217,000 in grant funds, but depending on the audit, which will determine which services are actually eligible for reimbursement, the town may have to return some of the money. http://www.zwire.com/site/news.cfm?newsid=20395801&BRD=1380&PAG=461&dept_id=157533&rfi=6

USA, WYO, CASPER DECEMBER 17 2009.

NATRONA CREWS RESPOND TO OIL TANK FIRE

Emergency crews from four Natrona County agencies responded Monday to an oil tank fire near Gas Hills Road, roughly 50 miles west of Casper. Crews found three 400-pound barrel tanks of oil with fire burning around their bases. A fourth tank had ruptured, with the explosion sending that tank airborne, landing —away from the other three tanks,|| according to a Natrona County Fire Prevention Bureau press release. Fire crews used water and foam to extinguish the flames and cool the remaining three tanks. A valve failure on an automatic flaring device that burns off dangerous gases caused the fire. No injuries were reported.

http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming/article ba6f373e-e9ff-11de-8ef9-001cc4c002e0.html

USA, NORTH CAROLINA, VASS DECEMBER 17 2009.

GASOLINE TANK EXPLOSION IN VASS INJURES 2 WORKERS

Two workers for a Charlotte-based company suffered minor injuries Tuesday night when an underground gasoline tank they were inspecting exploded.

The explosion happened shortly before 7 p.m. at the Exxon Short Shop at 4936 U.S. 1 in the Lakeview community, according to fire officials.

Circle V Fire Chief Mike Cameron said the men were using a power grinder while inspecting an underground tank when gasoline vapors apparently ignited.

The explosion created a 25-foot fireball, Cameron said. It caused slabs of concrete to buckle and cave in near the gas pumps, authorities said.

The injured men, employees of Law Petroleum of Charlotte, were inside a hole standing on top of the tank when the explosion happened, Cameron said.

He declined to release the men's names. The men were taken to FirstHeath Moore Regional Hospital in Pinehurst and have been released, he said.

One worker was thrown at least 20 feet over a truck before landing in the parking lot, Cameron said. A second worker was thrown across the parking lot.

The explosion also damaged a canopy over the gas tanks and the car of a state Highway Patrol trooper, Cameron said.

Two other Law Petroleum employees were not injured.

The station remained closed Wednesday while the Moore County fire marshal and the state Department of Labor investigate, Cameron said.

http://www.fayobserver.com/Articles/2009/12/17/961180

USA, ID, MUD LAKE DECEMBER 18 2998.

GAS TANKS EXPLODE, CREATE HUGE FLAMES AT MUD LAKE GAS STATION

Friday folks in Mud Lake are still talking about the explosions that shook the entire town Thursday night, when 'lke's Tesoro', a well known gas station, caught fire.

We're told around 5:30 p.m. a tanker truck overfilled one of eight gas and diesel storage tanks behind the station while it was pumping gas.

First the truck engine exploded causing a chain reaction, and then the rest of the tanker exploded while it was hooked to the storage tanks. Three more tanks exploded before fire fighters were able to control the fire.

Volunteer firemen from all over the area responded quickly to the explosions, and had the fire under control by 8 p.m. There were no fire fighter or citizen injuries.

Friday the story is cleanup, not only does the owner of the gas station have a lot of work in the coming days there were also 150 people East of Mud Lake who didn't have phone service Thursday and Friday.

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Ike Tomlinson, owner of the service station, says his business is not lost, in fact he hopes to reopen in a few days.

Tomlinson's business consists of the service station and a bulk plant. Tomlinson sells fuel to many local farmers, which is why there are so many storage tanks behind the Tesoro station.

Tomlinson says even that part of his business will not be affected; it will continue to operate from another location for a period of time.

Mud Lake Telephone was also out Friday fixing telephone wires that melted in the blaze. The Jefferson County Sheriff's Office was out taking pictures and gathering more evidence.

Thursday night many worried just how much damage the fire would cause and what it would mean for the community.

Emergency EMT, Chris Davenport said, "There were several explosions so we had to keep everyone back as far as we could, but make sure they were close enough so we could get them if we needed them."

19-year-old John Shively whose father is a volunteer firefighter said, "People are pretty nervous about what's going to happen, they're worried about the business being lost. It's a lot of money going up." http://www.localnews8.com/Global/story.asp?S=11696848

SOMALIA, MOGADISHU DECEMBER 20 2009.

HUGE FIRE DEVASTATES FUEL TANKS IN MOGADISHU

Hassan Osman Abdi

Huge fire has devastated more fuel tanks and properties in the Somali capital Mogadishu after a business centers at KM5 was set to a fire in the south of the capital, witnesses and officials told Shabelle radio on Saturday.

Reports say that the inferno started at a garage around KM5 as it was set to a fire devastating all fuel tanks, barrels and more other properties around the area where it had started spreading to further buildings in the area.

The real reason of the fire is unclear so far.

More government and AMISOM troops with fire fighters had reached at the scene instantly and put it off.

The troops were reportedly opened fire to a crowd of people who gathered at the site to disperse the people who were including the business owners and more others who reportedly committing banditry actions, killing a civilian and wounding four others at the scene.

Wilo Hashi Nahar, one of the businesswomen whose property lost in the fire told Shabelle's Mohamed Bashir Hashi that the fire caused more casualties including loss of properties adding that it had started as something exploded.

Sources said that burning area was very close to Amira hotel around KM5 which is a house for government officials adding that parts of the hotel had been affected by the huge fire.

We contacted with the deputy governor of Banadir region Abdifatah Abdisalan to know more about the fire saying that they called for AMISOM's fire fighters and achieved to put it out disproving that looting happened at the area.

It is not the first time that fire startes in Mogadishu and cause loss of properties in the Somali capital Mogadishu.

http://allafrica.com/stories/200912190046.html

USA, AL, ATHENS DECEMBER 20 2009.

BP: LIGHTNING CAUSED LEAK; SITE CLEANUP CONTINUES

Jean Cole

Lightning has been identified as the cause of a pipeline break off Alabama 99 last December, which caused 2,000 gallons of xylene to spill into a ditch and pond, a BP official said.

BP, which owns the multi-state pipeline, had the damaged pipe microscopically tested to determine the cause so the company could try to prevent it from recurring, said Ronald Rybarczyk, BP government and public affairs spokesman. The results of that study were released Friday.

"The metallurgical analysis of the damaged section of pipe shows that the most likely cause of the damage was an electrical discharge, consistent with an event such as lightning striking the line at another location, and the charge exiting the line at this point in Limestone County," Rybarczyk said.

To safeguard against future strikes, BP has installed more anode protection along the pipeline, he said.

"BP's top priorities remain the safety of our nearby neighbors and the safe operation of the pipeline,"

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Rybarczyk said.

The xylene leak in the western Limestone County community triggered fear in many residents. One cattle owner who lives across the road from the spill site was worried about selling his livestock without a written assurance of safety from BP. Other residents, including students at West Limestone County High School, worried about inhaling xylene, which they said smelled like paint thinner. And many worried whether the chemical had contaminated the groundwater.

As for water safety, testing shows the xylene levels in the pond are well within state quality standards — even for drinking water, Rybarczyk said.

Alabama's limit for xylene in drinking water is 10 parts per million.

The latest sampling at the Alabama 99 site shows the level in the pond to be 0.4 parts per million or less that 1/20th of that level, Rybarczyk said.

Sampling shows there have never been traces of xylene in area drinking water wells, he said.

With the cause of the pipe rupture identified, BP is now moving from the initial cleanup phase to further remediation at the site.

"We are further characterizing the site to determine what cleanup measures will be most effective from this point forward," Rybarczyk said. "Trenches are still in place, but during this evaluation period we are not actively pumping water from the site. Thus, captured liquid and recovered xylene totals remain roughly where they were earlier this year — about 200,000 gallons of total liquid recovered, 99 percent of which is ground and surface water from rainfall."

BP has installed two additional monitoring wells at the site, he said.

"This will help us better understand the impacted area and determine what further measures to take, including the placement of further wells and evaluation of cleanup methods," Rybarczyk said.

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management approved the company's work plan for the site. AECOM is doing the cleanup, with some sampling and pumping work done by RMT and subcontractor GSE, Rybarczyk said.

BP has spent more than \$1 million to clean up the spill and replace the damaged pipe.

Its pipeline, built in 1977, runs from the Whiting Refinery in northern Indiana, 20 miles southeast of downtown Chicago, to the Amoco BP in Decatur. BP uses xylene to produce terephthalic acid, which is used in making polyester fibers and plastic containers.

http://www.enewscourier.com/local/local story 353184604.html

USA, ME, THOMASTOWN DECEMBER 24 2009.

THOMASTON TANK EXPLOSION ROCKS CEMENT PLANT

People all over the midcoast felt a big blast Wednesday afternoon; it was the result of an explosion at the Dragon Cement plant.

The State Fire Marshal's Office says just after noon, four workers were dismantling an old building at the plant when it caught fire. A short time later, there was an explosion in the building that was felt for miles around. The Fire Marshal's Office says the workers were not using explosives to take down the building. The workers were using cutting torches to remove large pieces of steel and fiberglass tanks. Investigators are looking into whether one of those torches might have started the fire. It's unclear what material was inside the abandoned building that would have created that large of an explosion, though.

The blast sent debris flying about 500 feet, and blew out windows in one of the company's office buildings. People as far away as Damariscotta reported feeling the ground shake from the blast.

Luckily, no one was hurt. The Dragon Cement staff was having a Christmas party on the other side of its property at the time.

The cause is still under investigation.

http://www.wcsh6.com/news/local/story.aspx?storyid=112618&catid=2

USA, ID, TERRETON DECEMBER 24 2009.

STATION REOPENS AFTER BIG EXPLOSION

Ike's Tesoro service station has reopened in Terreton, but cleanup is still underway following the gas tanker explosion on Dec. 17.

According to owner Ike Tomlinsen, the area is still under investigation by several insurance companies, after which it will be subject to an investigation and cleanup operation by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality.

Steve Heaton, a DEQ representative, said that following the removal of the gas tanker wreckage by the insurance companies, the DEQ will begin to oversee cleanup of both the fuel spill and chemical foam used to fight the fire.

"We are providing in the field oversight of the cleanup activity," said Heaton. "Our primary concern is the fuel that was released."

The DEQ will be excavating several layers of soil to look for ground contamination.

In a phone interview, Tomlinson expressed some frustration that the cleanup was not already under way.

"Its still under investigation -- we can't do anything as far as cleanup until after," said Tomlinson.

At the moment, the station is offering all of its services except for the sale of fuel, although it has been delivering bulk fuel to customers via trucks from Idaho Falls.

Tomlinson said he is unsure when the investigations will be complete or when he will once again be able to sell fuel.

The monetary costs of the damages caused by the explosion have not yet been assessed.

Last Thursday, three above-ground fuel tanks and a gas tanker truck exploded during a scheduled refueling of the above-ground tanks. The cause of the explosion was due to an apparent overfilling of one of the tanks.

Observers at the gas station reported that the series of explosions could be seen in the night sky as far away as Rexburg, which is more than 30 miles away. Residents who lived a far as 5 miles away reported hearing and feeling the series of blasts.

Seven fire districts and close to 100 emergency personnel responded to the accident.

The explosion also temporarily knocked out phone service for Terreton residents. The service has since been restored.

http://www.rexburgstandardjournal.com/articles/2009/12/23/news/47.txt

USA, NJ, VERNON DECEMBER 25 2009.

ABOVE GROUND TANK LEAKS INTO LAKE

Cindy Weightman

A Highland Lakes family is dealing with a cleanup after an above ground oil tank leaked into the lake on Dec. 9. According to a report from the County Sheriff's office, oil went into footing drains and sump pump, which in turn discharges into a storm drain at the front of the property on Lakeside Drive West. The drain outflow travels under the road and into a ditch that discharges into the lake.

James McDonald from the Sussex county health department says containment containers were placed at a creek and on the lake to absorb the oil. McDonald is Chief Registered Environmental Health Specialist with the health department.

According to the incident report the initial call came in at about 4 p.m. Three rows of containers were placed at the lake's outflow and absorbent pads needed to be changed at least once because they were saturated.

A contractor arrived at 7:15 p.m. to vacuum from the sump pump in the home's crawl space. There was too much work to be completed that night and representatives from the state Department of Environmental Protection requested a state contractor to do some additional work.

McDonald says the homeowners Eric and Tamara Zanetti had just had an oil delivery four days prior to the spill and when "haz-mat" officials responded, the tank was pretty much empty. He says an estimated 250 gallons of oil went into the lake.

Just two inches of oil remained in the tank after the spill. The county covered costs for the initial response to clean up the spill, but the homeowners are obliged to pay for a private contractor to finish the job. The state health department is monitoring the cleanup to make sure that the homeowner complies.

http://www.strausnews.com/articles/2009/12/24/advertiser_news/news/7.txt

USA, MT, BILLINGS
DECEMBER 25 2009.
CAUSE UNKNOWN IN STORAGE TANK BLAZE AT CONOCOPHILLIPS
REFINERY OPERATING AT 'NORMAL' AFTER TANK FIRE

All units at the ConocoPhillips refinery are operating at their normal rates today while company fire crews monitor the storage tank that caught fire Thursday. Refinery spokesperson Tiffany Wilson said today that a ConocoPhillips fire truck and firefighters remained at the tank through the night as a precautionary measure. She said the fire at the tank was extinguished at 5:50 p.m. Billings Fire Department Battalion Chief Tim McLeod said the last city firefighters left the refinery grounds at 7:30 p.m. after assisting refinery fire crews as part of their mutual aid agreement. Wilson said refinery officials have begun an investigation of the fire, which was contained to the storage unit that contained asphalt. She had no details about what triggered the fire and it may take a couple weeks to determine its cause.

http://billingsgazette.com/news/local/article 58389e92-f0db-11de-853f-001cc4c002e0.html