



Australasian Institute of Dangerous Goods Consultants

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

August 2012

Welcome to
our new
Associate
Members

Robert
Rowland
N.S.W.

Teerse Stal
Victoria



Firefighting crews continued to pour water onto a unit a day after the fire at the Chevron refinery on on August 6 (Photo: Aric Crabb/Staff)

AIDGC 2012 Conference

Please come yourself and if you know anyone else that might be interested – invite them too!

PARKROYAL, Darling Harbour, Sydney
Friday, September 14

Conference Program:

http://www.aidgc.org.au/downloads/AIDGC_2012_Annual_Conference.pdf

Chevron Oil Refinery Fire – California

A massive Chevron oil refinery fire that sent hundreds of people rushing to hospitals and is pushing West Coast gas prices higher was just the latest pollution incident at the facility that records show has increasingly violated air quality rules over the past five years. The refinery is one of three such facilities near San Francisco that rank among the state's top 10 emitters of toxic chemicals, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Toxic Release Inventory.

Chevron's Richmond refinery — the scene of a fire that shrouded the area in black smoke — has been cited by San Francisco Bay area regulators for violating air regulations 93 times in the past five years. The number has increased from 15 violations in 2007 to 23 in both 2010 and 2011. The refinery is also the state's largest emitter of greenhouse gases, according to state regulators.

Video Link and Report on fire:

<http://www.nowpublic.com/world/chevron-refinery-fire-richmond-california-video-2966847.html>



Photo: www.taproot.com

The sole crude distillation unit at Chevron's Richmond, California, refinery may be shut for at least four to six months after the August 6 fire, industry intelligence group IIR Energy said in a report quoted by Reuters. Investigators have found "extensive damage" in the cooling towers, pipe racks and heater tower.

The fire erupted at a pump leaking a substance similar to diesel, according to a preliminary report the company filed with county pollution regulators last week.

Homes stand amidst the Chevron oil refinery in Richmond, Calif. Photo: Justin Sullivan/Getty Images

Here's coverage that's critical of the initial response to the discovery of a small leak (before the leak grew and ignited):

<http://fuelfix.com/blog/2012/08/08/chevron-response-to-refinery-fire-under-criticism/>

This section of the article was interesting:

"For years, Chevron has wanted to upgrade its Richmond refinery – replacing old equipment, increasing the amount of gasoline it can produce and giving the plant more flexibility in processing different grades of crude oil. But those plans have been blocked by residents and environmentalists, who say the changes could increase air pollution from the plant. Although the Richmond City Council approved the renovation project in 2008, a Contra Costa County Superior Court judge later blocked it, saying Chevron's environmental impact report didn't answer key questions."

"The crude unit at the center of Monday's fire was not one of the pieces of equipment that would have been replaced in the planned renovation, said several sources involved in the dispute."

Here is a link to the Chevron website about the fire:

<http://richmond.chevron.com/home/news/incidentresponse.aspx>

The probe into what caused a massive fire at the Chevron refinery Aug. 6 is stalled while engineers work to stabilize the site for investigators, but legal action stemming from the blaze that sent thousands of residents to hospitals is gathering steam.

Three Bay Area law firms announced they filed suit in Contra Costa County Superior Court on Wednesday, accusing the energy giant of "gross negligence" in its handling of refinery maintenance and emergency response to the fire.

http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci_21319770/claims-continue-mount-wake-chevron-refinery-fire-lawsuits

Article in your June Newsletter

Environmental Injustice: One Community's Story

This area is only 25 miles north of San Francisco, yet it is surrounded by 5 oil refineries, 3 chemical companies and scores of toxic waste sites. Health experts say the environment is taking a toll on residents' health.

Goto: <http://www.mnn.com/earth-matters/wilderness-resources/stories/environmental-injustice-one-communitys-story>

Toxic Mining Spill

More than 100 Sickened in Peru

More than 100 rural Peruvians have been sickened by the spill of a toxic copper concentrate produced at one of the Andean country's biggest mines. The Ancash state regional health office said 140 people were treated for "irritative symptoms caused by the inhalation of toxins" after a pipeline carrying the concentrate under high pressure burst open in their community.

Most of the injured had joined in efforts to prevent liquid copper slurry from reaching a nearby river after the pipeline linking the Antamina copper mine to the coast ruptured last week in the village of Santa Rosa de Cajacay, "Without taking into account the consequences, we pitched in to help" said the community's president, Hilario Moran. The people used absorbent fabric provided by the mine but were not given gloves or protective masks, said Antonio Mendoza, the mine's environmental director. Shortly afterward, people became ill, vomiting, suffering headaches and nose bleeds.

Greg Moller, a professor of environmental chemistry and toxicology at the University of Idaho-Washington State University, said "this was actually a toxic episode and these people are intoxicated," he said, adding that the alkaline copper concentrate likely damaged lung tissue, causing chemical burns. He said it was his understanding that the rupture released a mist of concentrate, which could have created a fine cloud of toxic airborne particles. "There are a lot of chemical and physical irritants in that mix,"

Moller said. Source: Carla Salazar and Frank Bajak, Associated Press

The director of the environmental group Cooperaccion, Jose de Echave, called the Cajacay spill another example of government neglect. He said local authorities in mining districts are unprepared to deal with such incidents and companies have inadequate safety precautions in place. "What is evident with this spill is that companies in their zones of influence effectively self-regulate. There is no presence of the state to control or regulate," De Echave said. One of the most serious toxic spills on record in Peru occurred in 2000 in Cajamarca when tanker truck carrying mercury crashed and broke open in the village of Choropampa, sickening more than 700 people. The mercury belonged to the Yanacocha consortium, whose majority owner is U.S.-based Newmont Mining Co. and which is in charge of the Conga project that has triggered the opposition in Cajamarca.

Source: www.naharnet.com



Photo: www.naharnet.com



Photo: Australian Mining

Esperance Lead Cleanup Complete

Esperance has finally finished its massive lead clean up and recovery project after the disastrous lead contamination of 2007. An inquiry into the incident found that lead dust had escaped from the port after Magellan Metal's lead carbonate was loaded onto ships in windy conditions. This also resulted in temporarily elevated levels of lead in the bloodstream of children in Esperance.

According to WA minister for emergency services, Troy Buswell, the three year, \$25.7 million Esperance Clean up and Recovery Project (ECRP) has managed to clean 1775 homes and buildings in the town following lead incident.

Following the inquiry the Esperance Port Authority was fined \$525 000 after pleading guilty to the charges of lead pollution and emitting lead odour, and was at the time Australia's largest penalty for polluting.

It wasn't until 2010 that the remnants of the lead contamination no longer posed a risk to humans. Source: Australian Mining



The Tasmania Fire Service advised residents to stay inside and close all doors after a hazardous chemical spill at the Nyrstar zinc smelter in Lutana. Picture: James Kerr Source: News Limited

Chemical Spill in Tasmania

The Environmental Protection Agency is investigating a chemical spill at the Nyrstar. The Tasmania Fire Service issued a warning following a "hazardous materials incident" -- a spill of sulphur trioxide at the Nyrstar refinery on Risdon Rd, Lutana -- saying exposure to the material may present a danger.

Residents of Lutana, Cornelian Bay, Risdon, Geilston Bay, Lindisfarne and Rose Bay were warned to stay inside, close all doors and windows and vents and turn air conditioners to recirculate or off.

EPA director Alex Schaap said a report from Nyrstar revealed elevated levels of sulphur dioxide and sulphur trioxide were released into the atmosphere.

"The release appears to be the result of reduced performance of scrubber equipment which normally removes much more of these chemicals from the emissions leaving the smelter's stack," Mr. Schaap said. Source: themercury.com.au



The EPA is investigating a chemical spill at the Nyrstar zinc smelter this morning that resulted in parts of the factory being evacuated. Picture: KIM EISZELE

Hot Work - ATSB Final Report on Cargo Fire at Port Hedland

Goto:

http://www.atsb.gov.au/publications/investigation_reports/2012/mair/293-mo-2012-002.aspx

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WorkSafe Confident Longford Gas Leak Won't Happen Again

WorkSafe is confident Esso has introduced systems to improve the safety of workers at the Longford Gas Plant in Gippsland.

The company was convicted and fined \$40,000 in the Sale

Magistrates Court yesterday, over a gas leak in November 2009.

The court heard an operator at the plant was injured when more than half-a-tonne of gas burst from a valve at high pressure.

Jarrold Edwards from WorkSafe says the company pleaded guilty and has improved staff training since the offence.

"Certainly WorkSafe takes all incidents that are reported to us seriously and we have diligently followed up to understand the reasons this has occurred and we have assured ourselves that Esso has the systems in place to not only prevent this happening again in the future but the systems in place to monitor the effectiveness of those systems," he said.

Mr. Edwards says Esso has rolled out more training for operators and job safety analysis systems since the offence.

"WorkSafe is pleased that such a significant scenario has been brought to light and that Esso and other operators can learn from the scenario as its unfolded here and the importance of having the systems in place to prevent the scenarios from occurring," he said.

Source: 7News Melbourne

Cyanide Delivered to Water Plant in Error

People who delivered deadly cyanide to a water treatment plant in Zimbabwe, apparently by mistake, will face charges, according to state media.

The state-owned Herald newspaper said on Thursday that drums of cyanide for use in mining and manufacturing were described as purifying chemicals on transportation documents.

The poison was identified before it was offloaded at the plant, averting a disaster, the paper said.

It said prosecutors ordered a police investigation into how 19 tonnes of cyanide arrived at the plant, which supplies water to Harare.

The people responsible would face attempted murder charges, the paper said.

Read more: <http://www.news.com.au/breaking-news/world/cyanide-delivered-to-water-plant-in-error/story-e6frfkui-1226441803770#ixzz23D6fmZN2>

I am grateful for any contributions – this month my thanks to Don Johnston and Peter Hunt.

Please email me robhogan@tpg.com.au if you have any interesting articles, noticed any opinions or newspaper pars, or any material or photographs that could contribute to entertaining and informing our Members.

Ammonia Kills
Woman Driving thru
Cloud

http://www.softeng.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1671:ammonia-kills-woman-driving-thru-cloud-video-news-account&catid=56:hardware-materials&Itemid=302

HSE Research Reports

[RR937 – Flammable vapour cloud risks from tank overfilling incidents](#)

This report documents research undertaken in 2007 and 2008 to examine the important factors affecting the production of flammable vapour in incidents where large storage tanks of volatile liquids are overfilled.

[RR936 – Buncefield investigation: Liquid flow and vapour production](#)

Blast and fire damage at Buncefield followed ignition of an extensive low-lying cloud rich in hydrocarbons. This cloud developed during overfilling of a tank with unleaded petrol. The purpose of this report is to explain the connection between the loss of containment and the generation of a combustible cloud.

Source: hse.gov.uk

Updated Hazardous Substance Information System

Safe Work Australia has updated the Hazardous Substance Information System (HSIS) online database. Although this update includes a new look and will make the HSIS more accessible to the Australian public, the functionality and content of the database remains the same.

The HSIS database contains advisory information on some of the hazardous properties of chemicals and substances, and lists the current exposure standard (if any) that applies to substances. The HSIS does not contain information on how the hazards of chemicals would be classified under the

[new WHS model hazardous chemical regulations](#).

For a list of chemicals which have been classified for all physical and health hazards by the European Commission using the Globally Harmonised System of Classifying and Labelling Chemicals visit the [European Substances Information System](#).

For more information on the HSIS see <http://hsis.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/>

Comcare Alert: Methyl Bromide-Toxic Fumigant In Cargo Containers

Cargo containers may pose a risk of exposure to toxic fumigants including Methyl Bromide. When an inspection is conducted on such a shipping container, vehicle operators and other persons may be exposed to Methyl Bromide if containers are opened and ventilated in their presence. Goto:

http://www.comcare.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/99432/Safety_alert_Methyl_bromide.pdf



Rescuers remove debris at an explosion-hit workshop in Wenzhou city. Thirteen people died and 14 were injured after an explosion rocked a family-owned workshop in East China's Zhejiang province on Sunday afternoon. [Photo/Xinhua]



A large sinkhole is shown in this aerial photo over Assumption Parish, La., Aug. 9, 2012. (Courtesy Assumption Parish Police Jury)

13 Dead after East China Workshop Blast

Thirteen people died and 14 have been injured after an explosion rocked a family-owned workshop in East China's Zhejiang province Sunday afternoon, local authorities said.

The accident happened in a village in Wenzhou city's Ouhai district and a fire raged in an area of 200 to 300 square meters after the explosion, rescuers said.

The Government of Ouhai District said that the workshop was illegal and was focused on polishing and processing hardware locks. The explosion happened after the thick dust in the workshop was ignited by the sparks from the polishing machine, government officials said. A further investigation into the cause of the accident is under way.

Source: China Daily USA

Louisiana Sinkhole Raises Further Fears of Gas Explosions

The sinkhole, about 50 miles south of Baton Rouge in Louisiana that appeared on August 4 could threaten an explosion risk from underground gas, according to local reports. It has already swallowed hundreds of full-size trees and caused a mandatory evacuation order to be imposed for 150 residences nearby. There is visible bubbling in the water of the sinkhole, thought to be gas, and the state's Department of Environmental Quality said water samples from the sinkhole showed oil and diesel on its surface.

The sinkhole is 100 metres in diameter and up to 150 metres deep, according to John Boudreaux, director of the Office of Homeland Security in Assumption Parish.

It is adjacent to a well containing 1.5 million barrels of liquid butane, Assumption Parish Sheriff Mike Waguespack told CNN. If the well is breached, it could be released as a highly flammable vapour, a possibility Waguespack described as potentially catastrophic.

An an out-of-use underground salt cavern operated by Texas Brine is thought to be the cause, and that company has been ordered by the Louisiana Office of Conservation to investigate whether the old cavern may have opened the sinkhole or caused the gas bubbling. Gas pipelines have been closed or rerouted around the affected area, and a nearby highway was temporarily closed, but has now been reopened.

Source: ABC World News

Explosion and fire destroys New Zealand Olympic BBQ in London

An external barbecue area at Kiwi House near King's Cross in London caught fire after gas canisters exploded on August 8. There were no injuries, and 300 mainly New Zealand Olympic fans watching their country's team on giant televisions, were evacuated amid fears of more explosions.

Witnesses said intense flames reaching nearly two storeys in height at its peak following several explosions and thick black smoke billowed into the air.

Firefighters quickly brought the blaze under control but not before it had caused extensive damage to the BBQ site, with its wood walls and tree canopy. A cordon was put around the building in case other gas cylinders exploded.

Source: Photo and Material, HazardEx



Iran Petrochemical Plant Fire Kills Three

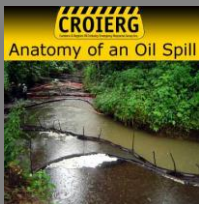
A fire at Iran's Imam Khomeini Petrochemical Complex on August 4 killed three, with 14 others injured, according to the country's Fars news agency. Governor Manoochehr Hayati in the southwestern city of Mahshahr said a gas leak in a supply line was the cause of the fire.

Qodratollah Nasiri of Iranian National Petrochemical Industry said the processing units of the petrochemical complex were not damaged, adding that some of the production units are offline while other units are functioning regularly.

He said the fire was contained and the cause of the fire was under investigation and the results would be announced soon.

The complex has 4 million tons production capacity per year and produces oil derivatives including fuel.

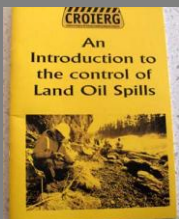
Source: AAP



Anatomy of an Oil Spill

CROIERG has had an informative booklet titled "ANATOMY OF AN OIL SPILL" - this booklet is a step-by-step account of an actual oil spill in Scotland and describes just how the events unfolded over the days involved. That and another publication "An Introduction to the Control of Land Oil Spills" are available in the Member's Area of their website.

Goto: <http://www.croierg.com.au/>



Hong Kong Choked under the Worst Smog ever Recorded in the City

with residents warned to stay indoors, away from the blanket of toxic haze. Air pollutant readings broke records going back to 1999. Anti-pollution activists said Hong Kong could not keep blaming the weather or factories in neighbouring mainland China for its recurring pollution problems.

The network said monitoring stations in the bustling shopping district of Causeway Bay on Wednesday recorded levels of the most dangerous fine particles that were three times higher than World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines. The government announced revisions to its air quality objectives for the first time in 25 years in January, after University of Hong Kong research showed pollution-related illnesses killed more than 3,000 residents a year. The new objectives impose more stringent limits on the atmospheric concentration for seven pollutants including sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and lead. For the first time the city has started measuring airborne particles smaller than 2.5 micrometres in diameter, known as PM2.5, which are more harmful than the larger particles. Heavy polluting vehicles will be phased out, hybrid or electric vehicles will be promoted and more use will be made of natural gas. But independent analysts say the measures are too little, too late, and fall short of WHO guidelines. (c) 2012 AFP

Read more at: <http://phys.org/news/2012-08-hong-kong-worst-air-pollution.html#jCp>

Toxic Chemical Spill at Tomago, NSW

Factories and businesses along Old Punt Road, Tomago were evacuated following a toxic chemical spill, which has now been contained.

The chemical, methyl ethyl ketone, also known as Butanone, was spilt from a 1000 litre plastic container at CQMS Razer in Laverick Avenue.

It is estimated 100 litres of the chemical escaped from the drum when it split after falling off a forklift. The chemical, commonly used as an industrial solvent, has an ignition point of -6 degrees.

It did not get into any waterways.

A 300 metre exclusion zone was set up around the site and about 75 people were evacuated.

A NSW Fire and Rescue spokesman said crews had isolated all potential ignition points and were focusing on mopping-up the spill.

Source: Newcastle Herald, Sam Rigney and Matthew Kelly



The site at Tomago.
Picture: Marina Neil



Flammable Vapour Cloud Risks from Tank Overfilling Incidents

This report documents research undertaken in 2007 and 2008 to examine the important factors affecting the production of flammable vapour in incidents where large storage tanks of volatile liquids are overfilled. This is an important output from the Buncefield response programme that was not published on completion due to constraints on HSL staff involved in the investigation arising from the legal case. The work was summarised for the Process Safety Leadership report but has not been published in full. It includes much useful information from a joint study of tank designs carried out with Shell Global Solutions. The analysis describes how different tank designs are likely to behave in an overflow situation, and the impact on the production rate of flammable vapour.

It also contains the results of some early Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) modelling studies into the vapourisation of volatile components of multi component hydrocarbon mixtures.

Simulations are presented that examine the effect of a number of factors on the vapour cloud behaviour, including the bund shape and location, tank proximity, presence of obstacles and spray pattern from the overfilling tank.

The work provides a first step towards developing a mathematical model to predict the size of flammable vapour clouds from overfilling releases, based on simple measures such as the tank dimensions, tank design type, pumping rates and liquid composition.

This work highlights the fact that there are important processes occurring at the bottom of the cascade near to the tank base that were not well understood at the time the report was completed, most notably splashing and pool evaporation. These issues have been explored in a later research report RR908.

This report and the work it describes were funded by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Its contents, including any opinions and/or conclusions expressed, are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily reflect HSE policy.

Click here to read this report:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrpdf/rr937.pdf>



New BSI Standard PD CEN ISO/TS 15011-6:2012

Health and safety in welding and allied processes. Laboratory method for sampling fume and gases. Procedure for quantitative determination of fumes and gases from resistance spot welding

Hot Work Hazards!

A contract welder and a foreman were repairing an agitator support On top of an atmospheric pressure storage tank containing a polyvinyl fluoride slurry, with a flammable concentration of vinyl fluoride in the vapor space.

An explosion killed the welder, injured the foreman, and blew most of The top off of the tank, leaving the agitator hanging over the tank side. The US Chemical Safety Board (CSB) investigated the incident and determined that vinyl fluoride vapor from connected process tanks le undetected into the storage tank and ignited while the welder was working.

The CSB report noted that, in February 2010, it had issued a “Hot WorkSafety Bulletin” reviewing 11 similar fatal incidents. All of these Incidents are examples of improperly monitored hot work activities Involving flammable conditions inside a container. In April 2012, the CSB released its report on this incident, along with a safety video (available from www.csb.gov) describing what happened. A few weeks later, in May 2012, the CSB sent a team to El Dorado, Arkansas to investigate another fatal hot work incident!

Source: <http://www.aiche.org/uploadedFiles/CCPS/Publications/Beacon/201208BeaconEnglish.pdf>



A facility was told they needed secondary containment around their fuel tank. No one was given any specifics, just that they needed secondary containment. This was the result.

Items that may be a problem:

1. Capacity seems a bit shy.
2. the plug is missing (see circled area)

Without any instructions or an EHS professional on site, you just have to step back and give credit. The effort was sincere, but the results were a tad lacking. But hey, at least the secondary containment is grounded!

Source: www.safeteng.net

Crude Oil and Natural Gas Liquids Involved in Virginia USA Explosion

An explosion at a trucking company involved crude oil and natural gas liquids, a fire official in Elk City said.

About 100 people were evacuated from their homes Saturday after the explosion that injured two people and sent flames and a plume of black smoke into the air at Hodges Trucking. Capt. Jackie Addington said the explosion was in the business's yard and described the material inside a "frac tank" apparently involved in the incident as "highly explosive." "Frac tank" is industry slang for a portable steel storage tank, said Jim Gipson, a spokesman for the energy company.

In this case, the tanks were being used to store crude oil and natural gas liquids that caught fire during the explosion.

According to its website, Hodges Trucking is an oil-field and heavy haul transportation company and an affiliate of Chesapeake Energy Corporation.

Read more: <http://newsok.com/crude-oil-natural-gas-liquids-involved-in-elk-city-explosion/article/3700379#ixzz23wmq2yHX>

Explosion and Fire at USA Soybean Plant

Three people suffered injuries in a dust explosion and fire at the CHS soybean processing plant in the southern Minnesota city of Fairmont.

Fire Chief Doug Borchardt said an employee of CHS was treated for minor burns, and two firefighters trying to put out the resulting flames received minor injuries as well, one with steam burns, the other from heat exhaustion.

The extent of the damage was not immediately clear, but Borchardt says crews had to tear off equipment and parts of the building while they chased the blaze through the facility. He says crews were worried about the fire spreading into the extraction portion of the facility, which contains explosive hexane gas.

Source: ABC6News

Burning Tanker Cut Highway Traffic

A burning fuel tanker closed the Bruce Highway in both directions three kilometres north of Maryborough earlier this month.

The truck hit a guard rail. Police said there were minor explosions but the driver was not hurt.

Police said the highway was expected to remain closed for several hours. Source: ABC News



Thick black smoke billowing from the trucking company AP Photo, Elk City Daily News Kat



A firefighter hoses down a truck destroyed by fire on the Bruce Highway. Photo: John Wilson

Mushroom Farms & Toxic Gas Safety

Before three people were killed at a Langley mushroom farm, WorkSafeBC (British Columbia) officials had investigated at least two other instances where mushroom farm workers were knocked unconscious by toxic gases. Despite accidents in 2006 and 2008, no broad warning was issued to the province's five companies that produce mushroom compost or the 40 farms that use it.

Six weeks before the fatal incident in Langley – a Central Composting employee was hospitalized, overcome in the composting barn by deadly fumes including ammonia and methane in an oxygen-depleted environment in Abbotsford. A stop-work order was issued over fears gases in the composting barn and its bunkers presented a risk of injury, serious illness or even death.

The WorkSafeBC inspectors noted the worker who fell ill was likely dehydrated, exposed to toxic gases and not properly equipped with a respirator. They also found Central Composting lacked an "exposure control plan," a long-standing requirement for workplaces with harmful air contaminants above an acceptable limit.

Composting facilities regularly produce hydrogen sulphide, ammonia, methane and carbon dioxide. Numerous other safety violations were cited at Central Composting. The farm had no occupational health and safety program; no exposure control plan to protect workers from toxic gases; workers were not wearing properly fitting respiratory equipment; and there was no safety program to manage hazardous chemicals.

Nearly two years before the incident at Central Composting, in June 2006, a contractor was injured when overcome by methane after climbing into a tank at nearby Mountainview Mushrooms, which was found to be lacking first aid procedures as well.

It wasn't until after the fatal incident in Langley that officials took a close look at safety in the mushroom industry.

On Sept. 5., 2008, Han Pham, Ut Van Tran and Jimmy Chan, workers at now-bankrupt A1 Mushroom Substratum Ltd., were killed after breathing in hydrogen sulphide and ammonia while in a pump shed at a facility in Langley. Michael Phan and Thang Tchen survived but with severe brain damage. After the deaths, which prompted a two-year investigation and a coroner's inquest, WorkSafeBC inspected the province's five mushroom composting facilities and close to 40 white mushroom farms. It also renewed enforcement of the Workers' Compensation Act regulation requiring employers to create and maintain an exposure control plan to educate workers on safety when there are toxic gases in the workplace.

Source: By Zoe McKnight and Gordon Hoekstra, Vancouver Sun



Three workers were killed and two left with severe brain damage after being overcome by a toxic gas leak at a Fraser Valley mushroom farm on September 5, 2008. (Darryl Dyck/Canadian Press)

Johnson & Johnson Promises to Remove Toxic Chemicals by 2015

Johnson & Johnson have announced that they will remove 1, 4-dioxane and quaternium-15 from nearly all of their toiletry and cosmetic products worldwide within 3 1/2 years. According to the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics, 1,4-dioxane is a likely carcinogen while quaternium-15 releases formaldehyde which is a known carcinogen. Johnson & Johnson will phase out those two chemicals as well as others that raise a red flag, such as triclosan, phthalates and parabens, as well as certain fragrance ingredients.

In an interview with the Associated Press, Johnson & Johnson commented that baby products would be given the first priority and would be reformulated with safer ingredients by the end of 2013 while products marketed to adults will be reformulated by the end of 2015.

Source:

http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2012/08/15/us/ap-jj-chemical-protest.html?_r=2&hp#h



Photo by juhansonin/sxc.hu

Rail Cars Explode, Burn after Derailment in Eastern Montana

A train west of Plevna derailed and eight cars carrying alcohol caught on fire. Burlington Northern Santa Fe reports that 15 rail cars went off track, fourteen of the cars were carrying denatured alcohol, which is used as a fuel additive. The fifteenth car was carrying cardboard.

No injuries were been reported. Highway 12, which is near the derailment, was been blocked off at both ends to secure the accident scene. "Eight cars were on fire. It was a chain reaction of one car catching fire and another car catching fire as well," said Gus Melonas, BNSF spokesman. "It's a fuel additive. There are no air-quality issues. They are letting the product burn."

Four or five of the tank cars are on their sides.

Firefighters rushed in to extinguish grass set on fire by the derailment, then retreated to a safe spot a half mile away as the rail cars exploded. "We were just waiting for the cars to blow up and got a good mushroom percussion," said Kelly Gray, of Plevna, who fought the fire with her father, Roscoe. One after another, four of the cars exploded, then the fire crews rushed back in to put out new grass fires, which they were still mopping up seven hours after the derailment.

Source: The Missoulian



A flaming mushroom cloud rises from a train derailment Sunday west of Plevna, where 14 rail tankers filled with denatured alcohol left the tracks. Photo: AAP

Former RAAF Firefighters Exposed to Toxic Chemicals

Former RAAF firefighters are being struck down by cancer and neurological diseases they say are caused by the burning of toxic chemicals at bases around the country.

One such site is Point Cook in Melbourne's west, where firefighters were trained to put out chemical fires - simulating blazes typical of plane crashes.

The work was hard and hot, and according to the firemen great fun, but following orders might now be coming back to haunt them. Pat Mildren is one of 1,200 ex-RAAF firefighters who trained at Point Cook, and like many of his colleagues has suffered serious health problems. He has had both bowel and bladder cancer, and believes the chemicals he was exposed to during his time in the RAAF are to blame.

"When I did my basic training course I can remember my senior instructor saying to me: 'get in there you mob of bloody wimps, a bit of smoke's not going to kill you'," he said. "Twenty years later when I returned there as the chief instructor I said exactly the same thing to the trainees that were going through." "And it was killing them and is killing them still." Mr. Mildren says the same thing happened at ever major RAAF base in the country. "I believe that it was a chemical dumping ground. We were there to burn the chemicals that they wanted to get rid of," he said. "Anything and everything that they wanted to get rid of they sent to us to burn. This went on on every major RAAF base in the Air Force. "We were putting out fires six to seven times a week and every time you'd be completely immersed in smoke."

RAAF fire pits across the country became a dumping ground for any company looking to get rid of their toxic waste.

John Lyons, a former fire fighter who was based in Townsville, said during his time in the RAAF they burnt everything from furniture to industrial waste, all without proper protection. "At Townsville we sort of burnt anything - we had tyres, batteries, de-icing fluid used to come from the aircraft, and all the old furniture, mattresses used to get thrown into the pit. Anything they wanted to get rid of," he said. "The protection was nil, virtually all we had was a type of raincoat. We didn't have breathing apparatus."

Mr. Lyons, who now suffers from leukaemia, says while they were not told what much of the fuel was, it was obvious how toxic it was. "We had purple stuff, we had mustard coloured stuff. It was like sludge coming out of the drums, it was so thick you'd have lay the drums down on the side of the pits to empty themselves out," he

See the Video:

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-08-02/raaf-firies-want-toxic-chemical-answers/4173528>

**A RAAF Firefighter
extinguishes a blaze at a
base. Photo: ABC**



said. "They'd put off a shocking smell, you'd open the bung and push the drum over and leave it on the side of the pit, and you'd have to shift away because the smell was so great."

Lawrie Heath knows all too well the smell and feel of the toxic sludge - he had to wade through it. "One instance I had a fellow fireman fall into the mess, and the fire was coming towards us and he was completely in the liquid. And I went up to my waist to drag him out," he said. "It was very heavy liquid, very thick and sticky, you sort of stuck to it and took a lot of effort to get him and myself to get out of the pit before the fire got there."

Mr. Heath's doctor, John Berick, says the Federal Government should take responsibility for the firefighters' illnesses. "If they've been exposed to such severe toxic elements in their service they should be responsible for looking after them even though there's not a definitive proof on the balance of probabilities there's the very strong chance it was the cause of his problems," he said.

A recent Federal Government investigation found 120 different chemicals in the soil at Point Cook's fire training ground.

Among them were 12 deadly toxins, including benzene, a known cause of leukaemia.

Mr. Mildren says it is proof of the validity of their claims.

"What we've asked for is a full-scale inquiry to find out if these chemicals have caused our health conditions, because in the past we have been told that we had no proof that we actually used all these chemicals. Now we have the proof," he said.

Almost \$30 million is being spent to clean up the Point Cook site, but so far nothing has been paid in compensation to the RAAF firefighters.

In a statement, Defence acknowledged that RAAF staff were "involved in the handling and burning of many chemicals" and that "some of these can cause chronic health problems". It says firefighters "concerned about health effects they believe are associated with the exposure to chemicals should lodge claims with the Department of Veterans' Affairs".

So many different chemicals and so many different diseases makes it virtually impossible to directly link cause and effect. As a result, Defence is reviewing the rules governing military compensation for firefighters.

The recent discovery of a cancer cluster at the Country Fire Authority's training base at Fiskville, west of Melbourne, adds weight to the claims. RAAF firefighters also trained at Fiskville and the Air Force provided many of the chemicals burnt by the CFA.

Source: ABC News, Guy Stayner

Ex-Official: Chemical Plants Security at Risk

After 9/11, America realized that more than 4,000 chemical plants were sitting ducks for a terrorist attack -- tanks of lethal toxins were stored around many of our biggest cities. Five years ago, Homeland Security started a program to secure those plants. Half a billion dollars have been spent. But it turns out 90 percent of the most threatening plants have not even been inspected. Todd Keil was once in charge of this program and he told what he knows to CBS News.

"As the program stands today," Keil said, "it's not effectively protecting the American people from high-risk chemical facilities that may be vulnerable."

Keil was the assistant secretary at Homeland Security responsible for overseeing the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards program, known as CFATS, from late 2009 to February 2012. He said he was so concerned about problems with the program that he asked for an internal review.

The review found that after four-and-a-half years and \$480 million:

- There had not been a single inspection of a chemical plant.
- No plant has a site security plan.
- The review also found "...a catastrophic failure to ensure personal and professional accountability."

"There were administrative missteps," said Keil. "There were management missteps, and there were substantive missteps, that just led the program down a path of failure."

So in other words, broken? "Broken," Keil said. "I knew we had to put all of the dirty laundry on the table so we could make corrections, so we could make the program effective."

As for the response from Keil's bosses about the problem, the former assistant secretary said: "'Let's keep this internal. We'll see what we can do.' And my efforts at correcting the program were thwarted."

Last week, the Government Accountability Office reported that as of the end of June, not one of the 4,400 chemical plants in the program had been fully inspected.

"The CFTAS program has been, I think, a tremendous success to date," said Rand Beers in March 2010, the Homeland Security Undersecretary in charge of the program. He was Todd Keil's boss. Beers told CBS News that 120 chemical plants pose a severe risk -- and of those 120, his program had done preliminary inspections on 11.

"What the American public has gotten for \$480 million is a map of the vulnerabilities that this country has with respect to chemical facilities, and the process of developing the plans to make those

Watch the Video:

<http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-18563-162-57485847/ex-official-chemical-plants-security-at-risk/>

Chemical plants a potential risk

A report to Congress says that more than 100 chemical plants in 23 states are located in areas that could affect millions of people in a disaster. The report does not identify the facilities by name or exact location.

Facilities with large amounts of toxic and flammable material located near communities of at least 1 million people

1 to 2 3 to 6 7 to 10 11 to 20 21 to 30



SOURCE: Congressional Research Service AP

Diagram:

msnbc.msn.com

sites safer for the American public," said Beers. "And we have made significant progress in that regard."

When told that four-and-a half-years into the program, there were no inspections, no approved site security plans -- as well as a large number of inspectors that were said to be unqualified for the jobs they were doing, and "an environment of fraud, waste and abuse" -- Beers responded:

"We certainly face some management challenges. And I think we have, as a result of the good hard work of the people who are associated with this program, we are moving forward properly according to the basic risk and management standards that are set by independent organizations."

Sen. Charles Grassley of Iowa, the ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, wants answers. "I think it's about time that the Department of Homeland Security comes clean," he said, "and admits that this program isn't running because the longer they try to mislead Congress, when the truth comes out, the more egg they're going to have on their face."

Todd Keil, who told CBS News about the problems, said he was forced to resign in February. The Department of Homeland Security wouldn't comment officially on his resignation.

Source: CBS Interactive Inc., Armen Keteyian

Reporters Notebook:

The Houston metropolitan area comprises the largest petrochemical manufacturing area in the world. From Galveston Bay north on the banks of the Houston Ship Channel, plants manufacture synthetic rubber, insecticides and fertilizers. The area is the world's leading center for building oilfield equipment. More than 3,000 energy-related establishments, including many of the top oil and gas exploration and production firms and petroleum pipeline operators call Houston home. Houston dominates U.S. oil and gas exploration and production. The city remains unrivaled as a center for the American energy industry. In January 2005, the Houston Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas (PMSA) accounted for: 31% of all U.S. jobs in oil and gas extraction (38,300 of 123,400), and 14% of all U.S. jobs in support activities for mining (28,100 of 200,900).

The \$15 billion petrochemical complex at the Houston Ship Channel is the largest in the country. Supporting the industry is a complex of several thousand miles of pipeline connecting 200 chemical plants, refinery, salt domes and fractionation plants along the Texas Gulf Coast, which allows transfer of feedstocks, fuel and chemical products among plants, storage terminals and transportation facilities. Houston has more than 400 chemical manufacturing



Photos: Digital Media News

establishments with more than 35,000 employees. Houston has two of four largest U.S. refineries. ExxonMobile's complex in Baytown is one of the oldest in the area and one of the largest of its kind in the world More than 235 establishments in the Houston metro area manufacture plastic and rubber products. Houston dominates the U.S. production of three major resins: polyethylene (38.7% of U.S. capacity); polyvinyl chloride (35.9% of U.S. capacity) and polypropylene (8.4% of U.S. capacity).

Source: <http://dmnewsi.com/2012/08/02/reporters-notebook-ex-official-says-chemical-plants-security-at-risk/>

Changes to Hazardous Chemical Labels under the WHS Regulations

The new Work Health and Safety (WHS) Regulations introduce a new system of labelling for hazardous chemicals based on the United Nations' Globally Harmonised System (GHS) of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals. Manufacturers and importers of hazardous chemicals have 5 years from 1 January 2012 to move to the new labelling system.

SafeWork Australia has issued a fact sheet on how to understand the new labelling system for hazardous chemicals under the WHS Regulations.

Goto:

http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA/AboutSafeWorkAustralia/WhAtWeDo/Publications/Documents/707/Understanding_Labels_for_Hazardous_Chemicals.pdf

NIOSH: New Health Monitoring and Surveillance Tool For First Responders

Emergency responders have been called to duty over the past decade by an increasing number of natural and man-made disasters, as evidenced by 9/11 in 2001, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010. As each large-scale disaster occurred, the importance of how best to ensure the safety and health of professional and volunteer emergency responders before, during and after a disaster has grown. While some guidance had been developed about how best to prepare response workers both before and during deployment, less attention had been placed on assessing responders' health after they complete their deployment. The full ERHMS document as well as a summary document is available on the NIOSH website:

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/erhms>



Mobile Ban at Petrol Stations is Pointless

Signs which warn of the dangers of using a mobile phone at a petrol station are based on an urban myth and are not based on any facts.

For years, petrol station owners have placed signs warning mobile phone owners to switch off their phones when refuelling. The fear is that the mobile phone will somehow cause petrol vapour to ignite.

The chief executive of the Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association, Chris Althaus said that it is an urban myth that won't go away.

Goto:

<http://news.techau.net.au/nla/mobile-ban-at-petrol-stations-is-pointless>

Cell Phones Banned from Petrol Stations

HA NOI — Customers who use cell phones at petrol stations will now be fined up to VND5 million (US\$240), a new Government decree has stipulated.

Decree 52/2012, which will take effect from August 4, stipulates fines for many types of fire-related violations. The goal is to prevent and control explosions.

Those who use cell phones at petrol stations and near fuel storage and those who cut metal without taking preventive measures will receive the highest fines - between VND2-5 million (\$96-240), the decree said.

Police and local authorities at district and grassroots levels will be in charge of spotting violations and fining the perpetrators.

Lieutenant Dinh Van Ngan, head of HCM City's Fire Prevention and Fighting Police Department told Tuoi Tre (Youth) newspaper that the decree was necessary to warn people about the risks of cell phone-caused fires.

Ngan said the department would be responsible for educating people about the regulation. Tens of thousands of informational leaflets will be distributed.

Source: Viet Nam News

W.A. Report - 2011 Reportable Situations and Incidents

OVERVIEW: "This report describes dangerous goods and explosives incidents that occurred in 2011. The report also compares the 2011 incident data with comparable data collected since 1992, and provides some statistical analysis of incident data for that period. The quantity of dangerous goods being stored, handled and transported across the State continues to increase with economic activity. Unfortunately, there was one fatality attributed to dangerous goods in 2011, as well as a number of minor injuries. Looking at 20 years of data, the total number of reported incidents, excluding major hazard facility (MHF) incident reports, has remained relatively constant over the period. It is acknowledged that the actual number of incidents is likely to be greater than the number reported, so year-to-year variations should not be over-interpreted. For example, the significant increase in explosives incident reports since 2008 is probably more attributable to increased awareness of reporting responsibilities by mining companies."

Goto:

http://www.dmp.wa.gov.au/documents/Reports/RSD_DGS_ReportableSituationsAndIncidentLogs_2011.pdf



The illegal diesel plant found in Newry. (© HMRC)

Illegal Fuel Factories Found Across Northern Ireland

Revenue and Customs officers uncovered one facility hidden in a storage shed at a house in Dungannon.

They seized a large steel tank, which they said was used to "wash" up to four million litres of diesel a year, along with pumps and filtration tubes.

It comes after a plant was found in commercial premises in Newry. The HMRC and PSNI seized and removed 3,100 litres of illegal fuel, 3,600 litres of toxic waste and storage tanks.

Together the two operations were capable of producing almost five million litres of illegal fuel a year, with an estimated duty loss to the public purse of £3m per year.

And in an unconnected operation in east Belfast, officers raided a filling station and seized the forecourt pumps along with 12,500 litres of diesel and 12,300 litres of petrol on Friday.

The underground fuel storage tanks were also removed during the operation.

"Fuel fraud represents a significant threat to the economic, social and environmental welfare of Northern Ireland," said Graeme Anderson of the HMRC.

"Laundered fuel is being sold at a reduced price and motorists may think they are getting a good deal; but it is unregulated and dangerous and I would caution them to think again as the true cost is far from a bargain.

"HMRC will continue to carry out raids and roadside checks to detect those attempting to smuggle, launder, sell or use illicit fuel but this fraud could be happening in your area with the profits from it funding organised crime.

Source: <http://www.u.tv>



AIDGC Conference, September 14, Sydney

Corporate Member, StoreSafe will be exhibiting at our conference this year. Take this opportunity to speak to Grant Breeze or Joe Carrillo about your problems.