West Fertilizer Plant Explosion

Regional Update

April 20, 2013

- 24-hour operations included mobile air monitoring for volatile organic compounds, ammonia, carbon monoxide, and lower explosive limit of methane gas. No air monitoring readings above background were detected.
- EPA OSCs, Region 6 Risk Assessors, and START finalized a QASP for assessment of the areas potentially affected by pesticides involved in the West Fertilizer, Inc. explosion. Sampling will begin on 21 April 2013.
- At 1000 on 20 April 2013, the County began resident re-entry activities for residents located in the secondary exclusion zone approximately outside the ½ mile radius of the facility. EPA conducted mobile air monitoring throughout the area. No readings were detected above background.
- From 2040-2130 on 20 April 2013, TCEQ and Union Pacific railroad personnel transferred the remaining anhydrous ammonia from on-site tanks into tanker trucks for removal off-site. EPA conducted stationary air monitoring downwind of the transfer operations and coordinated with TCEQ throughout the operation.
- EPA OSCs continued to coordinate with the City of West and McLennan County officials on written property access. Verbal access to the to conduct soil sampling within the City and County right-of-ways and West Independent School District property was granted on 20 April.
- EPA OSCS attended site briefings and law enforcement/operational briefings, conducted a meeting with CSB, TCEQ, and OSHA, and coordinated with ATF, CSB, TCEQ, OSHA, DOT, the Office of the Texas State Chemist, and EPA CID on current and future site operations.
- EPA will attend a meeting for all Federal Agencies as requested by FEMA on Monday, April 22.
- 4-EPA OSCs, 1 EPA PIO, and 6 START contractors conducted 24-hour site operations, spaced over two shifts. The Regional MCP is on-site.
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