West Fertilizer Plant Explosion

Regional Update

April 24, 2013, 1200 CDT

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- On April 23, 2013, EPA continued air monitoring activities with two stationary sites in a public park directly west of the facility and one mobile monitoring team that monitored in the neighborhoods west of the facility. EPA will continue monitoring for the same parameters that include volatile organic compounds, ammonia, carbon monoxide, and lower explosive limit of methane gas. No air monitoring readings above background were detected during today's operations.
- EPA Regional Administrator and TCEQ Chairman completed tour of the West Fertilizer property and residential area immediately west of the facility.
- EPA made recommendations for ATF to follow National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAPS) rules for asbestos during demolition activities.
- EPA continues to coordinate with ATF, OSHA, CSB, TCEQ, DSHS, and the Office of the Texas State Chemist on current and future site operations.
- An EPA OSC data manager was deployed to the field to address data needs.
- ATF reported that Ammonium Nitrate, Phosphates, and Sulfates were detected from 9 soil samples that were collected at the West Fertilizer facility.
- ATF investigation of the apartment complex included sifting through debris by hand and heavy equipment for evidence.
- ATF has not released an official statement of the cause of the incident has not been released. Investigations into the order of events and cause of the explosion are on-going.
- TCEQ reports that the event has transitioned from a response operation to a recovery and re-entry operation, with residents allowed re-entry in the least affected zone, but limited access with identification required in the intermediate zone. There remains no access into the zone most affected by the blast. A curfew remains in place from 7:00pm through 7:00am. Preliminary damage assessments are ongoing with estimates that 350 homes were impacted. Of these, 296 are single-family; 50 are multi-family; and 4 are mobile homes. Of the 350 homes impacted, 142 were destroyed; 51 sustained major damage; 27 sustained minor damage; and 130 were affected.
- TCEQ contractors continued conducting 24 hour air monitoring around the facility perimeter.
- FEMA mobilized their mobile command post to the West High School.
- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has joined ATF's investigation and will be assisting them with recommendations for field operations.
- POTUS will attend a memorial for citizens of West on Thursday in Waco.

Personnel	**EPA OSC In Field**	**EPA RSC in Field**	**R6 Contractor In Field**	**National Criminal Enforcement Response Team Agents**	**EPA In REOC**	**Contractor In REOC**	**Total**
Total	**2**	**2**	**4**	**1**	**3**	**0**	**12**

*Current as of 0700hrs 4/24. OSC's deployed with the Mobile Command Post.