Message

From: Acevedo, Janie [Acevedo.Janie@epa.gov]
Sent: 3/23/2019 8:19:18 PM
To: Gray, David [gray.david@epa.gov]
CC: Bokun, Lisa [Bokun.Lisa@epa.gov]
Subject: Media Inquiry for review and approval

Q: What is EPA doing?

A: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) are working in Unified Command in response to a fire at the Intercontinental Terminals Company (ITC) Deer Park facility near Houston, TX. The Unified Command consists of EPA, TCEQ, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), Harris County Pollution Control Services (HCPCS) and ITC. Emergency responders have extinguished the fires. EPA has conducted, and continues to conduct, ground level air monitoring with hand held equipment and the Airborne Spectral Photometric Environmental Collection Technology aircraft (ASPECT). The EPA Trace Atmosphere Gas Analyzer (TAGA) has arrived in LaPorte and is operating in the Deer Park area. It is monitoring for organic compounds in the air. EPA began collecting water samples in Tucker Bayou on March 20, 2019, and in Buffalo Bayou on March 21, 2019.

Q: How many EPA representatives are on the ground?

A. EPA currently has about 20 people working at the Unified Command and onsite. They are being supported by staff in the Dallas office as needed.

Q. Exactly how long are air quality conditions expected to be hazardous?

A. See TCEQ's news release for an update: https://www.tceq.texas.gov/response/itc-terminal-fire-update

Q: Does the EPA plan on doing long-term monitoring of benzene levels in the population around Deer Park, TX?

A: As part of the long-term ambient air network maintained by the TCEQ, volatile organic compounds, including benzene, are measured. Results are reported on the TCEQ webpage at https://www.tceq.texas.gov/cgi-bin/compliance/monops/agc_monthly_summary.pl

Janie Acevedo-Beauchamp
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of External Affairs
Region 6 - Dallas
214-665-2120