Message

From: Assunto, Carmen [Assunto.Carmen@epa.gov]
Sent: 3/21/2019 2:05:02 PM
To: Gray, David [gray.david@epa.gov]
CC: Bokun, Lisa [Bokun.Lisa@epa.gov]
Subject: Draft Media Response needing approval - KPRC Channel 2

This has been approved by IC and SF:

1) What is the EPA in charge of in this investigation, what is exactly being done. Which agencies are accountable for which parts of the investigation (Who is accountable?).

EPA joined with ITC, the U.S. Coast Guard, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Harris County, and local response agencies in a Unified Command on March 17, 2019. EPA and TCEQ are working together to conduct area air monitoring and collect water samples along the firefighting water drainage path. EPA and TCEQ are providing monitoring results and data to the Unified Command. Other agencies are providing assistance according to their expertise.

2) What are the potential health concerns that you are watching closely and why? What test are you doing to check these?

EPA and TCEQ are monitoring the for possible elevate levels of volatile organic compounds and sampling runoff water that could contain chemicals released during the response to the incident.

3) Shell in Deer Park told its employees not to come to work because of benzene levels which exceed the permissible limit. Is your investigation finding this? Were you aware of this?

Because fires are no longer burning up fuel sources in the tanks, EPA and TCEQ have observed concentrations of benzene fluctuating in the vicinity of the ITC property. Vapor suppression activities are being conducted at the site.

An instantaneous handheld air monitoring reading at 12:17 pm on March 20, 2019 by EPA adjacent to the ITC facility detected 900 ppb of benzene. On March 21, 2019, EPA will have its Trace Atmospheric Gas Analyzer, or TAGA bus, which is a self-contained mobile laboratory capable of real-time sampling and of outdoor air or emissions monitoring in the area.

EPA and TCEQ continue to monitor air quality with handheld equipment, and the EPA ASPECT airplane will continue to provide air monitoring flights over the area.

Local government officials will use this data to further assess any necessary actions regarding public health.

4) ITC mentioned that it had concerns over returning to the investigation because of safety and that it would do soil testing. Is this this a concern for public health? What is the status of your soil, water and air investigations? *Where can we get timely updates to your findings?

Onsite soil contamination at ITC would not be a cause of immediate concern for public health. Our current focus is on the air and water assessments. Our environmental data is available at https://response.epa.gov/site/site_profile.aspx?site_id=14150

5) Where can people get information if they are concerned about the investigations or public health concerns?

People should always listen to local authorities for information about concerns in their area. Harris County is posting information to https://www.readyharris.org/Deer-Park-Fire**. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality information is at** https://www.tceq.texas.gov/response/itc-terminal-fire-update**. In addition, ITC is providing information on its website at** http://www.iterm.com/**.**

6) What will be coming down your pipeline next? What will we be hearing from you and when can we expect updates?

We will continue to assist the Unified Command and publish our sampling data at https://response.epa.gov/site/site_profile.aspx?site_id=14150 **as it becomes available.**

Incoming:

From: Aragon, Rose-Ann <raragon@kprc.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2019 1:09 PM
To: Gray, David <gray.david@epa.gov>
Subject: KPRC Questions 3/20

Hi David:

My name is Rose-Ann Aragon, and I am a reporter with KPRC-TV in Houston. I am emailing about the Deer Park tank fire at ITC. Our goal is to get the most accurate and updated information to help our viewers and keep them informed. As you can imagine, there is a lot of confusion and potential fear that we would like to put to rest with good information from credible sources. We believe the following questions are fair and reasonable considering the magnitude of the fire and the impact on the community. We are constantly hearing from our viewers who are particularly interested in transparency and potential issues with public health. We are hoping that you can answer these to the best of your abilities.

I will follow up with you on these questions. I appreciate your help.

Topic 1) What is the EPA in charge of in this investigation, what is exactly being done. Which agencies are accountable for which parts of the investigation (Who is accountable?).

2) What are the potential health concerns that you are watching closely and why? What test are you doing to check these?

3) Shell in Deer Park told its employees not to come to work because of benzene levels which exceed the permissible limit. Is your investigation finding this? Were you aware of this?

4) ITC mentioned that it had concerns over returning to the investigation because of safety and that it would do soil testing. Is this this a concern for public health? What is the status of your soil, water and air investigations? *Where can we get timely updates to your findings?

5) Where can people get information if they are concerned about the investigations or public health concerns?

6) What will be coming down your pipeline next? What will we be hearing from you and when can we expect updates?

Please feel free to call if you need clarification on any questions. Thank you again!

Rose-Ann Aragon
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