TPC Group Plant Explosion and Fire Update
Port Neches, Texas
November 29, 2019 0700 Update

Incident Management Objectives:

Objective 1: Ensure the health and safety of the public and response personnel.

Objective 2: Establish an incident management structure and processes employing the Incident Command System to enable effective overall management of the event with deployment of resources (staff and equipment) in a rapid, focused and well-coordinated manner.

Objective 3: Encourage a collaborative federalism approach, where Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments interact cooperatively and collectively to solve common problems.

Objective 4: Take actions to assess the on-site and off-site impacts during the emergency response phase of this incident. Provide this information to state and local authorities to assist them in their decision to protect the local citizens.

Objective 5: Conduct activities to prevent off-site releases from the TPC facility.

Objective 6: Respond to, mitigate and recovery off-site releases from the TPC facility.

Objective 7: Maintain open communication with Regional management.

Incident Overview:

On November 27, 2019, a report was received from the National Response Center about an explosion at a facility in Port Neches, TX.

A second explosion occurred at approximately 1400 on November 27, 2019. Residents in a four-mile radius of the site have been ordered to evacuate.

Executive Overview:

- As of 0700, the fire continues to burn. Currently there are nine fires burning, 3 of which are being actively fed. The facility has been working a block isolation plan to address the fires which has been successful in slowing down some of the fires. To prevent releases or fuel or vapors, the facility is not extinguishing fires where gas is actively

leaking. As a result, the mandatory 4-mile evacuation radius remains in place and the Command Post remains at the Holiday Inn Suites in Beaumont, TX.

- At approximately 2100 on November 28, 2019, generators were powered on at the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and began pumping firewater from the storage ponds into the WWTP. The current pumping rate is 5,000 gallons per minute (gpm).
- Firefighting water overtopped the tank containment berm on November 27, 2019. The water discharged to the "201 Canal" which leads to a permitted containment discharge area.
- On November 28, 2019, a sheen was observed in the 201 Canal. As of 0700 on November 29, 2019, the sheen has not made it to the permitted containment area.
- TPC brought in Clean Harbors and Resolute as their Oil Spill Removal Organization (OSRO) contractor rather than as an Incident Management Team as was stated in the previous update. The OSRO has deployed 4 drum skimmers, hard boom, sorbents, and trash pumps to remediate the sheen. Additional personnel and equipment are scheduled to arrive on November 29, 2019 to contain the sheen.
- The current estimated rate of water use for fire suppression is approximately 16,700 gpm. To date, four partial totes of foam have been used, the facility has additional foam on hand for vapor suppression and firefighting, however the plan is not to use it unless necessary.
- The main compounds of concern are Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC), and 1,3 Butadiene, although other chemicals may be involved. The air monitoring action levels (AL) for VOCs is 5.0 parts per million (ppm). The action level for Butadiene is 0.5 ppm.
- Airborne Spectral Photometric Environmental Collection Technology (ASPECT) aircraft did not conduct monitoring due to a low cloud ceiling November 28, 2019 but will attempt to conduct monitoring again on November 29, 2019. The final report from the November 27, 2019 flights was loaded to the [HYPERLINK "https://response.epa.gov/south4groupfire"] website and made public.
- TCEQ and EPA air monitoring did not report any detections over action levels during the last operational period. The compounds being monitored for include; 1,3 butadiene, benzene, VOCs, Carbon Monoxide, Oxygen, Hydrogen Sulfide, Lower Explosive Limit and particulates.
- On behalf of TPC, CTEH air monitoring teams continue to collect air monitoring data throughout the evacuation zone. CTEH air monitoring teams are reporting readings below the action level for both VOCs and Butadiene.
- EPA has received an air monitoring plan and an air, water and soil/sediment sampling plan from TPC for review. These are being reviewed by Environmental Unit staff.
- EPA has requested environmental sampling and monitoring data from all Unified Command partners. This data will be shared with ATSDR for the purposes of a health consultation.
- The site hired Clean Harbors to address collect, dispose of, measure, document, and account for all waste streams and contain and recover heaviest concentrations of free-floating product.
- Around 0500 on November 29, 2019, an employee from a neighboring facility drove through a barricade and broke a 12-inch supply-line to a pumper impacting firefighting operations. No injuries were reported. Personnel are working to fix the supply-line.
- Three manned firetrucks and 6 unmanned hose monitors are currently actively fighting the fire.
- Incident is currently operating in a 24-hour operational period: 0600 to 0600.
- A Story Map has been created for the incident and is public at the [HYPERLINK "https://response.epa.gov/south4groupfire"] website.

Resources as of 0700 on November 29, 2019

	EPA	Contractors
Port Neches	3	9
Dallas	3	3