TPC Group Plant Explosion and Fire Update
Port Neches, Texas
November 29, 2019 1500 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 within a four-mile radius of the site were ordered to evacuate.

Executive Overview:

- As of 1500 hours, the fire continues to burn. Currently there are five fires burning. 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 of fuel or vapors, the facility is not extinguishing fires where gas is actively leaking.
- At 1000 hours, the Jefferson County judge rescinded the mandatory evacuation.

- The current estimated rate of water use for fire suppression is approximately 19,000 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. Unified Command has given permission for foam use if necessary for safety reasons. The OSC has requested TPC provide Safety Data Sheets for each type of foam on site.
- The WWTP continues pumping firewater from the storage ponds into the WWTP. The current pumping rate is 5,000 gallons per minute (gpm).
- Firefighting water continues to overtop the tank containment berm. The water continues to discharge to the "201 Canal" which leads to a permitted containment discharge area.
- Due to the sheen observed in the 201 Canal the facility's Oil Spill Response Organization (OSRO) has placed absorbent boom every 50-100 feet along the canal. As of 1500 on November 29, 2019, the sheen has not made it to the permitted containment area.
- 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.
- TCEQ and EPA air monitoring did not report any detections over action levels for 1,3 butadiene, benzene, VOCs, Carbon Monoxide, Oxygen, Hydrogen Sulfide, and Explosive Limit.
- CTEH and EPA air monitoring have been detecting high particulate levels (300 ug/m3) west of the site as the low cloud ceiling and weather has forced the plume to ground level.
- Environmental Unit staff have provided comments to the OSC on the air monitoring plan and an air, water and soil/sediment sampling plan from TPC.
- 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.
- TPC hired Clean Harbors to address collect, dispose of, measure, document, and account for all waste streams and contain and recover the heaviest concentrations of free-floating product.
- EPA will conduct water sampling of the Neches River beginning November 30, 2019.
- 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 1500 on November 29, 2019

	EPA	Contractors
Port Neches	3	9
Off site	3	6