

**United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region VI
POLLUTION REPORT**

Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2009

From: Mark Hayes

Subject: Citgo Refinery Fire
1801 Nueces Bay Blvd, Corpus Christi, TX
Latitude: 27.8093090
Longitude: -97.4266880

POLREP No.:	2	Site #:
Reporting Period:		D.O. #:
Start Date:	7/19/2009	Response Authority: CERCLA
Mob Date:	7/20/2009	Response Type: Emergency
Demob Date:		NPL Status:
Completion Date:		Incident Category:
CERCLIS ID #:		Contract #:
RCRIS ID #:		

Site Description

On 19 July 2009, at approximately 0835 hours, an equipment failure resulted causing a fire of released Butane and a potential release of Hydrogen Fluoride from a #2 Alkylation Unit at the Citgo Corpus Christi east plant. Perimeter monitoring conducted by TCEQ and Citgo did not detect any VOCs or Hydrogen Fluoride. The fire fighting and water spray suppression appear to have prevented any releases from being detectable at the site perimeter. One injury resulted from the initial fire.

Current Activities

On 21 and 22 July 2009 EPA perimeter air monitoring for VOCs and HF continues to reflect non-detect of HF. At 2100 hours on 22 July 2009 CITGO confirmed that the fires were out. At 1015 hours on 22 July 2009 storage of fire fighting water is becoming critical so CITGO is supplying data for a permission to discharge water that exceeds their permit limits for fluoride. At 1615 hours on 22 July 2009, CITGO indicated there were four continuing leaks on the Alkylation Unit, 2 of LPG and 2 of HF. The leaks were identified by observation of the interaction on the leaks with the water curtain as the internal unit monitoring system was damaged by the fire. The Alkylation Unit perimeter monitoring continues to show that no airborne HF has left the unit. CITGO has estimated that 70 barrels of HF is contained in the fire fighting water stored on the facility or discharged through the plant treatment system. On 22 July 2009 at 1930 Citgo initiated an unauthorized discharge of run-off water containing elevated levels of fluoride, exceeding NPDES permit limits, into a ship channel adjacent to the facility. The run-off water was diverted into secondary containment throughout the facility during fire suppression operations.

Planned Removal Actions

Incident is being monitored. None planned by EPA at this time.

Next Steps

Continue perimeter monitoring until hydrogen fluoride leaks are stopped and coordinate with other state and federal agencies. Potentially collect additional water samples to monitor plant discharge.

Key Issues

There has been a non-detect of VOCs and HF from air monitoring around the perimeter of the facility. Monitoring is ongoing of fire fighting efforts and the potential for HF release. Unauthorized discharge of water containing elevated levels of fluoride into the nearby ship channel.