

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

Date: Friday, July 31, 2009

From: Nancy Jones

Subject: Initiation of Response Activities
El Dorado Chemical Fire
6232 West Highway 21, Bryan, TX

POLREP No.:	1	Site #:	
Reporting Period:	07/30/2009	D.O. #:	
Start Date:	7/30/2009	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	7/30/2009	Response Type:	Emergency
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	
CERCLIS ID #:		Contract #	
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

The State of Texas State Operations Center (SOC) received a report of a large chemical fire at the El Dorado Chemical plant located at 6232 West State Highway 21 in Bryan, Brazos County. The building contains fertilizer, of which one is ammonium nitrate (Dangerous; strong oxidizer. Contact with other material may cause fire or explosion. Harmful if swallowed or inhaled; causes irritation to skin, eyes and respiratory tract). An incident command post has been established. A three mile radius evacuation has been enacted. EPA OSC Jones has been deployed to site. ASPECT plane deployed to gather plume data

Current Activities

Upon arrival at the site START and EPA meet with the Unified Command (Bryan and College Station Fire Departments). Unified command informed START and EPA of the situation. Initially a 3-mile evacuation was ordered which covered the northern half of Brazos County and impacted up to 85,000 residents. An evacuation shelter was established at Reed Arena for the displaced residents. After establishing an evacuation zone Unified Command made an initial entry to determine the nature and extent of the fire and facility. At that time it was determined to allow the fire to burn out based on the amount of ammonium nitrate and the potential explosive hazards associated with the material.

During the initial assessment it was also determined that the primary chemical of concern and by-product of the fire would be ammonia gas. The EPA ASPECT data also detected levels of ammonia ranging between non-detect downwind of the fire to as high as 5 parts per million directly over the fire.

Based on the data collected during the initial entry and the ASPECT data Unified Command reduced the evacuation zone to a 2-mile radius of the site (impacting approximately 1,000 residents).

A second entry was conducted by the PRP's contractor to gather additional site information and begin preparing a remediation plan. Ammonia concerns ranged from non-detect to 18 parts per million.

Due to limited visibility and the nature of the material Unified Command decided to allow the fire to smolder overnight.

Planned Removal Actions

Unified Command will re-asses site conditions during day light hours on 31 July 2009.

EPA, TCEQ, and Civil Support Team (CST) will develop an air monitoring program to assist and aid Unified Command with determining if the evacuation zone will be required or adjusted. Air monitoring will be conducted overnight. Additionally, the EPA ASPECT plane is schedule to collect more data early 7/31/09 morning.

Key Issues

An evacuation shelter was established at Reed Arena located at 730 Olsen Road, College Station.

Due to the explosive nature of ammonium nitrate extreme caution will be required during the remediation of the site.

response.epa.gov/eldofire