

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT  
Invista Tank Explosion - Removal Polrep  
Initial and Final Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Region IV

**Subject:** POLREP #1  
Initial and Final  
Invista Tank Explosion  
Wilmington, NC  
Latitude: 34.2257255 Longitude: -77.9447102

**To:**  
**From:** Kenneth Rhame, OSC  
**Date:** 9/28/2010  
**Reporting Period:**

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background

<b>Site Number:</b>		<b>Contract Number:</b>	
<b>D.O. Number:</b>		<b>Action Memo Date:</b>	
<b>Response Authority:</b> CERCLA		<b>Response Type:</b>	Emergency
<b>Response Lead:</b> PRP		<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Action
<b>NPL Status:</b> Non NPL		<b>Operable Unit:</b>	
<b>Mobilization Date:</b> 5/30/2010		<b>Start Date:</b>	5/30/2010
<b>Demob Date:</b> 5/30/2010		<b>Completion Date:</b>	5/30/2010
<b>CERCLIS ID:</b>		<b>RCRIS ID:</b>	
<b>ERNS No.:</b>		<b>State Notification:</b>	
<b>FPN#:</b>		<b>Reimbursable Account #:</b>	

#### 1.1.1 Incident Category

CERCLA - Emergency Response

#### 1.1.2 Site Description

On the Morning of May 30th, 2010, EPA received a request from New Hanover County to investigate a fire and explosion that occurred at the Invista Wilmington Plant. Upon arrival, EPA met with Invista staff as well as the local Fire Dept. EPA learned that a fire and explosion did occur at approximately 4:40 am the morning of May 30th. The fire involved an above ground storage tank (T-6305). T-6305 contained Dimethyl Terephthalate (DMT) at a temperature above 300 degrees Fahrenheit. The top of the tank had separated landing approximately 150 feet away. Vapors ignited and caught fire.

##### 1.1.2.1 Location

Invista Plant  
4600 Hwy 421 N  
Wilmington  
Tank T-6305 D-Line

##### 1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

Facility is adjacent to the Cape Fear River.  
Damage potential to additional tanks in the tank farm.

##### 1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

Upon arrival, EPA observed the damaged tank, the fire had been extinguished.  
Invista investigated damage to adjacent tanks, and provided a Work Plan to EPA.

## 2. Current Activities

### 2.1 Operations Section

#### 2.1.1 Narrative

On the Morning of May 30th, 2010, EPA received a request from New Hanover County to investigate a fire and explosion that occurred at the Invista Wilmington Plant. Upon arrival, EPA met with Invista staff as well as the local Fire Dept. EPA learned that a fire and explosion did occur at approximately 4:40 am the morning of May 30th. The fire involved an above ground storage tank (T-6305). T-6305 contained Dimethyl Terephthalate (DMT) at a temperature above 300 degrees Fahrenheit. The top of the tank had separated landing approximately 150 feet away. Vapors ignited and caught fire.

The overpressure and fire is believed to have been caused when methanol inadvertently overflowed from the scrubber system into the T-6305 Tank, the elevated temperatures caused vaporization, and over pressurization which resulted in the incident.

**2.1.2 Response Actions to Date**

Invista shut down the process line. Invista has completed a root cause investigation and provided a report to EPA and NCOSHA. Invista is in the process of considering and implementing corrective actions to prevent recurrence. Invista investigated damage to the adjacent tanks per the Work Plan provided to EPA. Invista is continuing to evaluate the quantity of the release.

**2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)**

Potential Responsible Party is Invista.

**2.1.4 Progress Metrics**

<i>Waste Stream</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Manifest #</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Disposal</i>

**2.2 Planning Section**

**2.2.1 Anticipated Activities**

Review Work Plan Provided by Invista

**2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities**

See 2.1.2

**2.2.1.2 Next Steps**

See 2.1.2

**2.2.2 Issues**

Communication with local responders needs improvement. Invista has met with local responders to discuss.

**2.3 Logistics Section**

No information available at this time.

**2.4 Finance Section**

No information available at this time.

**2.5 Other Command Staff**

No information available at this time.

**3. Participating Entities**

No information available at this time.

**4. Personnel On Site**

No information available at this time.

**5. Definition of Terms**

No information available at this time.

**6. Additional sources of information**

No information available at this time.

**7. Situational Reference Materials**

No information available at this time.