

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT  
Air Liquide America Specialty Gasses - Removal Polrep  
Initial Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Region VI

**Subject:** **POLREP #1**  
**Initial**  
**Air Liquide America Specialty Gasses**  
  
**West Baton Rouge, LA**  
**Latitude: 30.5030250 Longitude: -91.3206017**

**To:**  
**From:** Roberto Bernier, FOSC  
**Date:** 5/21/2012  
**Reporting Period:** 1630 to 2045 hours

## 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> EPA	<b>Incident Category:</b> Removal Assessment
<b>NPL Status:</b> Non NPL	<b>Operable Unit:</b>
<b>Mobilization Date:</b> 5/21/2012	<b>Start Date:</b> 5/21/2012
<b>Demob Date:</b>	<b>Completion Date:</b>
<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

At 1025 hours on 21 May 2012, the LDEQ reported that the Air Liquide facility near Port Allen, La. had experienced a fire at the acetylene cylinder storage pad. The National Response Center (NRC) has not yet been notified of the incident and the release or potential release of acetylene and other combustible hazardous material. Due to the flammability and potential for explosion or violent reaction, a one mile evacuation was set in place by the LSP. In addition, Hwy 190 and the Union Pacific railroad, both next to the facility, were shut down as a precaution. The cause of the fire is believed to be a faulty valve on one of the cylinders.

#### 1.1.2 Site Description

The site consists of a facility building/warehouse, tanker trucks with a transfer area, and approximately 500 acetylene cylinders. The facility is located in a sparsely populated area surrounded by farmland and other industries. There are several residences nearby to the north of the site

##### 1.1.2.1 Location

The incident occurred at the Air Liquide facility located at 7425 Highway 190 West, West Baton Rouge Parish, Port Allen, LA. The facility is bordered by Hwy 190 and Union Pacific Railroad to the north, a lumberyard to south and east, and rural farmland to the west. The nearest residence is approximately 500 feet to the north of the facility.

##### 1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

A fire initiated in an acetylene holding area on the property during a routine servicing of a residue cylinder. The belief is that the cylinder had a faulty valve leading to the ignition of the fire. The initial fire is being allowed to burn out. The facility building and three tanker trucks in the proximity of the fire have thus far not been impacted. The primary threat at this time is considered to be the close proximity of these tankers to the burning acetylene cylinders. LDEQ has conducted perimeter air monitoring (1 mile radius) near the incident location. All air monitoring results have been reported as non-detect except one 6.0 ppb acetone reading during the initial round earlier today. Smoke initially inhibited visibility along Highway 190 but has since subsided. Fire from the cylinders did escape and started a grass fire along US Hwy 190 but has since been extinguished. Acetylene is highly flammable and can react violently under certain conditions. When pressurize, acetylene is commonly mixed with other hazardous substances such as acetone or dimethylformamide to stabilize the pressure and make it safer for transport.

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

OSC Bernier and START-3 contractors responded to the incident and met with LDEQ, Louisiana State

Police (LSP), Erwinville and Port Allen Fire Departments, West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriffs and Air Liquide representatives. The initial fire is being allowed to burn out. Once extinguished, Air Liquide has suggested that no one enter the burn area until 12 hours post burn to allow adequate cooling before handling the cylinders. Three tanker trucks located closer to the facility thus far have not ignited. The primary threat at this time is considered to be the close proximity of these tanks to the burning acetylene cylinders. LDEQ has conducted VOC, LEL, and CO2 air monitoring utilizing Porta Sens monitors at the 1 mile perimeter near the incident location. LDEQ has also mobilized the mobile air monitoring lab (MAML) to the scene and began air monitoring and summa canister sampling. All air monitoring results have been reported as non-detect. Initially no one was allowed to access grounds of the facility. LSP, local fire departments, and HAZMAT did enter the site to do a preliminary assessment at 1800 hours. It was decided then to let the remaining smoldering to burn out itself. At around 1830 hrs, no substantial visible plume or smoke was noted. Air monitoring will continue overnight.

## **2. Current Activities**

### **2.1 Operations Section**

#### **2.1.1 Narrative**

Since the fire and threat has considerably diminish, the residual smoldering will be let to burn out itself before an actual entry to remove the damaged cylinders can begin.

#### **2.1.2 Response Actions to Date**

Air Liquide, local fire departments and Louisiana State Police HAZMAT representatives have made one entry to inspect the incident area. There are approximately 500 acetylene cylinders located along the western boundary of the property. The cylinders contain various volumes of acetylene. There are also three tanker trucks capable of holding 7,200 pounds of material located closer to the facility that thus far have not been impacted by the burning cylinders. The current action plan is to allow the cylinders to burn out and reassess after that time. At around 1930 hrs, the responders decided to shut down activities to resume and reassess in the morning. LDEQ will remain on site overnight (outside the 1 mile radius) to continue air monitoring in case the conditions change and will notify OSC Bernier of any changes to reassess the monitoring plan. LSP will also continue their presence overnight to control access to the area.

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

Air Liquide located at 7425 Hwy 190 West, Port Allen, LA is listed as the responsible party.

### **2.2 Planning Section**

#### **2.2.1 Anticipated Activities**

Currently the action plan is to allow the ignited acetylene cylinders to burn off the remaining gas until the morning of May 22, 2012, and reassess at that time.

##### **2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities**

All other response activities are to resume at 0630 hours Tuesday, May 22, 2012. LDEQ will continue to perform air monitoring throughout the evening and into Tuesday morning.

##### **2.2.1.2 Next Steps**

Once the acetylene cylinders have burned off the remnant gases and the fire has been extinguished the crews will allow a 12 hour cooling period before reassessing the situation and determining next steps.

##### **2.2.2 Issues**

A 1 mile radius evacuation will continue as a precaution, including the shut down of Hwy 190 and the railroad.

### **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.

