

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
St. Helens Highway Incident - Removal Polrep
Initial and Final Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region X

Subject: **POLREP #1**
Initial & Final POLREP
St. Helens Highway Incident

Portland, OR
Latitude: 45.5773472 Longitude: -122.7616361

To:
From: Richard Franklin, On-Scene Coordinator
Date: 12/23/2015
Reporting Period: 12/13/2015 - 12/23/2015

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	Contract Number:
D.O. Number:	Action Memo Date:
Response Authority: OPA	Response Type: Emergency
Response Lead: EPA	Incident Category: Removal Action
NPL Status:	Operable Unit:
Mobilization Date: 12/13/2015	Start Date: 12/13/2015
Demob Date: 12/13/2015	Completion Date: 12/13/2015
CERCLIS ID:	RCRIS ID:
ERNS No.:	State Notification:
FPN#: E16002	Reimbursable Account #: 2016 HR 10NAXHR 303D91 Z0EI

1.1.1 Incident Category

Emergency Response, Oil Spill Response

1.1.2 Site Description

The incident site is located on U.S Highway 30 (aka NW St. Helens Road), and an immediately adjacent rail line and rail spur near the St. John's Bridge. A tanker truck and trailer carrying over 11,000 gallons of gasoline ran off the road and collided with several parked rail cars loaded with asphalt oil (blowing flux), resulting in a large fire and explosion, and impacting several rail cars. U.S. Highway 30 connects Portland, Oregon with suburbs and communities to its northwest, and runs near the base of steep hills and a large interurban park with hiking and biking trails.

1.1.2.1 Location

The location of the site is at 7200 NW St. Helens Road, northwest of downtown Portland, in Multnomah County, Oregon. The site is adjacent to, and up-gradient of several oil terminals, an ammonia plant, and the Willamette River.

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

The entire contents of the tanker truck, over 11,000 gallons of unleaded gasoline, were ultimately discharged from the tanker truck upon its collision with the parked railcars. Further, a resulting large explosion and fire impinged directly on seven, asphalt oil-filled rail cars. The seven cars contained a total of 152,000 gallons of asphalt oil, which potentially could have discharged. Therefore, a substantial threat of discharge of oil to the Willamette and intervening ponds existed at the incident scene. The Willamette River is a navigable waterway of the U.S., in fact.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

During and after the incident, continued assessment of the area was conducted to determine if oil from the tanker truck, fire run-off water and foam, or any asphalt oil had flowed toward nearby ponds and the river, or whether discharged fluids had flowed overland or through any hidden underground conduits or sewer systems. No oil was found to have discharged to the river.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

On the morning of December 13, 2015, OSC Franklin was notified by the manager of the nearby Owens-Corning Asphalt terminal that a tanker truck had lost control and run off St. Helen's Highway into several parked railroad tank cars full of asphalt oil. Also, at about the same time, the National Response Center notified the EPA Phone Duty Officer, OSC Whittier, that the accident occurred. The asphalt product was owned by Owens-Corning, and due to be delivered to the nearby Owens-Corning Asphalt plant. Subsequent reports from the BNSF Railway and fire departments responding to the scene indicated several railroad tank cars were on fire and spilling oil. Initially, there was a very large explosion, fire and smoke plume, but the fire was quickly extinguished by the Portland International Airport (PDX) Fire team and Portland Fire Bureau.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

EPA OSC Franklin responded to the scene to assess the site and enter Unified Command. OSC Franklin also notified the State OSC (Oregon Department of Environmental Quality) of the incident, and that EPA was responding. Responding agencies included Portland Fire and Hazmat, Vancouver Fire/Hazmat, PDX Airport Fire, BNSF Railway, Portland & Western Railway, ODOT, USCG, and response contractors (NRCES) for Portland and Western Railway and BNSF Railway. Several local media outlets were already on scene.

An assessment by fire teams and the BNSF railway showed that only the tanker truck had caught fire and exploded, and although 7 railcars were impacted by the truck accident and fire, none were leaking oil, none were on fire, and none had derailed. It is believed that most of the fuel from the tanker truck burned up in the incident. Further, no fuels or oil from the tanker truck were initially found to have flowed toward the Willamette River. An on-water assessment of the Willamette River was also conducted by response OSROs, and no oil was found to have discharged to the river.

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

During the initial response, and due to the extreme damage to the truck, response agencies could not identify the truck or its owner. However, after a significant search of local terminal and transport companies, the tanker transport truck was identified as being owned and operated by Kenan Advantage Group, Inc. (KAG), a large national fuels transport company. On 12/23/201, OSC Franklin spoke with, and delivered a Notice of Federal Interest (NOFI) to the Safety Manager at the Portland Office of KAG.

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

None

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

None

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

EPA has referred this case to the ODEQ for follow-up and oversight of clean up activities. Case Closed.

2.2.2 Issues

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

2.5.1 Safety Officer

Portland Fire Bureau

2.5.2 Liaison Officer

Portland Fire Bureau

2.5.3 Information Officer

Portland Fire Bureau

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

Portland Fire Bureau

Portland & Western Railway

USCG Sector Columbia River

EPA

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

Vancouver Washington Fire Dept.

Portland International Airport Fire Department

BNSF Railway

Oregon Department of Transportation

Owens-Corning Asphalt

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.