Council (Persons to Address the Council); em. Prep. (Dept. of)
2009-0275

PETITION TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

St. Charles Parish Council Chairman
P. O. Box 302
Hahnville, LA 70057
(985) 783-5000

Today's Date: July 13, 2009

Dear Chairman:

Please place my name to address the Council on:

DATE: July 20, 2009

SPECIFIC TOPIC: Public safety and the failures of the St. Charles Parish Emergency Operations Center

(*see specific guidelines on reverse and refer to Parish Charter– Article VII., Sec. I.)

DOCUMENTS, IF ANY: (YES) / NO

NAME: Michael Kernan

MAILING ADDRESS: 116 Faith Place
Boutte LA 70039

PHONE: 504-481-5363

SIGNATURE: Michael Kernan

Dear Constituent:

Thank you for your active participation. Your views and comments will be considered by the Council in making our decisions. The Council has a considerable amount of business to conduct in a limited amount of time, therefore, please note the following items that are expected of you:

- The Home Rule Charter provides for citizens to address the Council. It makes no provision for initiating debate, discussion, or question and answer sessions with Councilmembers or Administration Officials. Your right is also guaranteed to examine public documents as you prepare your presentation. Should you have any questions for Councilmembers and/or Department Heads as you prepare, please forward such inquiries to the Council Office to insure a timely response. Should you wish to speak to any Official or Department personally, a complete list of contact information will be furnished at your request.
- Please be brief and limit your comments to the specific subject matter on which you have requested to address the Council.
- Please forward supporting documents to the Council Secretary for distribution to the Parish Council before your scheduled appearance in order for the Council to prepare themselves, if necessary.
- Upon completion of your allotted time to address the Council, please respect the time given to Councilmembers to respond to your comments by not interrupting or interjecting remarks.
- **Slanderous remarks and comments will not be tolerated.** If slanderous remarks or comments are made, your opportunity to address the Council will end, regardless of the remaining time left to address the Council.
- Repetitious comments and subject matter will be strictly limited.

A confirmation letter will follow when your name is placed on the agenda.

Sincerely

TERRY AUTHEMENT
COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

(OVER)

July 13, 2009

To St. Charles Parish Council:

I am alarmed at the failure of our parish officials to protect the citizens of this parish. The St. Charles Parish Emergency Operations Center took actions which resulted in unnecessary injury to hundreds of people, and I *urge the Council to immediately conduct an investigation.*

My concerns are as follows:

1. **If the release of ethyl acrylate from Dow Chemical was not a safety hazard, as parish officials claimed all morning on Tuesday July 7, then why were St. Charles Parish employees evacuated from the maintenance yard and Annex building in New Sarpy, all the way to Delta Drive in St. Rose, where they remained for the duration of the day?**

2. **Who gave the order to evacuate the parish employees from New Sarpy? While Public Information Officer Renee Simpson declared on WWL Radio 870 AM at 8:15 a.m. that ethyl acrylate is quote "not toxic, it's not hazardous, it's not dangerous," parish employees from New Sarpy had already been moved.**

3. **Why did our parish officials reverse their prior claims two days later, and advise citizens to "seek medical attention" if they experienced symptoms from ethyl acrylate in the air?**

4. **According to Dow's own Material Data Safety Sheet, ethyl acrylate "May cause severe eye irritation. May cause severe corneal injury. May *cause severe irritation to upper respiratory tract (nose and throat) and* lungs. May cause headache and nausea." When the St. Charles EOC became aware that hundreds of people reported these symptoms by 8 a.m. Tuesday morning, why weren't the emergency sirens activated to warn people to evacuate upwind?**

5. **Dow's Material Data Safety Sheet says: "Steps to be Taken if Material is Released or Spilled: Evacuate area. Keep personnel out of low areas. Keep upwind of spill...For large spills, warn public of downwind explosion hazard." Why were only parish employees evacuated and not everyone in Hahnville, Destrehan, New Sarpy and Norco, all of which are within five miles of Dow?**

6. **Dow's Material Data Safety Sheet also states ethyl acrylate is "known to the State of California to cause cancer." What are parish officials doing to contact the dozens who were hospitalized from its release and the hundreds who sought medical treatment in the days following the release of this known carcinogen? Does Dow or the St. Charles Parish Council feel any obligation to warn these people of the medium-term and long-term effects of this dangerous chemical?**

7. **Renee Simpson is quoted in the St. Charles Heraled Guide stating "this event did not warrant blowing the warning sirens because we were dealing with what the DEQ still identifies as a non-toxic concentration of this vapor." I ask the council, where are the results of these tests that Simpson refers to. DEQ did not begin air sampling until after 11 a.m. , at least six hours after Dow's 640,000 gallon tank ruptured! How can Renee Simpson and St. Charles Parish claim they have any idea of the real amount of ethyl acrylate that was present when hundreds of people were sickened, including two sheriff's deputies?**

It is glaringly obvious that St. Charles Parish officials let us all down, and took actions that resulted in greater injury to residents. If citizens had been properly evacuated alongside our parish employees, less injuries and sickness would have occurred. The attitude of our EOC that "this is Dow's problem" demonstrates their dangerous lack of knowledge and inability to perform their critical task of keeping us all safe! I urge the Council to investigate immediately, MK

MK **. My family and many of my neighbors no longer feel safe in this parish.**

Sincerely,

Michael Kernan

Michael Kernan, Boutte

Material Safety Data Sheet
The Dow Chemical Company

Product Name: ETHYL ACRYLATE 10-20 PPM MEHQ - DRUM

Issue Date: 01/19/2007
Print Date: 31 Mar 2009

The Dow Chemical Company encourages and expects you to read and understand the entire (M)SDS, as there is important information throughout the document. We expect you to follow the precautions identified in this document unless your use conditions would necessitate other appropriate methods or actions.

1. Product and Company Identification

Product Name
ETHYL ACRYLATE 10-20 PPM MEHQ - DRUM

COMPANY IDENTIFICATION
The Dow Chemical Company
2030 Willard H. Dow Center
Midland, MI 48674
USA

Customer Information Number: 800-258-2436

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBER
24-Hour Emergency Contact: 989-636-4400
Local Emergency Contact: 989-636-4400

2. Hazards Identification

Emergency Overview
Color: Colorless
Physical State: Liquid
Odor: Obnoxious
Hazards of product:

DANGER! Flammable liquid and vapor. Causes burns of the mouth and throat. Causes eye irritation. Prolonged exposure may cause skin burns. Harmful if absorbed through skin. May cause allergic skin reaction. Causes respiratory tract irritation. May cause skin irritation. May be harmful if inhaled. May be harmful if swallowed. Aspiration hazard. Can enter lungs and cause damage. Vapor explosion hazard. Vapors may travel a long distance; ignition and/or flash back may occur. Evacuate area. Keep upwind of spill. Stay out of low areas. Warn public of downwind explosion hazard. Elevated temperatures can cause hazardous polymerization. Avoid temperatures above 38°C (100°F)

OSHA Hazard Communication Standard
This product is a "Hazardous Chemical" as defined by the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard, 29 CFR 1910.1200.

Potential Health Effects

Eye Contact: May cause severe eye irritation. May cause severe corneal injury. Vapor may cause eye irritation experienced as mild discomfort and redness.

Skin Contact: Brief contact may cause moderate skin irritation with local redness. Prolonged contact may cause skin burns. Symptoms may include pain, severe local redness, swelling, and tissue damage.

Skin Absorption: Prolonged or widespread skin contact may result in absorption of harmful amounts.

Skin Sensitization: Skin contact may cause an allergic skin reaction.

Inhalation: Vapor concentrations are attainable which could be hazardous on single exposure. Excessive exposure may cause severe irritation to upper respiratory tract (nose and throat) and lungs. May cause headache and nausea due to odor. The odor of ethyl acrylate is noticeable at very low concentrations.

Ingestion: Low toxicity if swallowed. Swallowing may result in gastrointestinal irritation or ulceration. Swallowing may result in burns of the mouth and throat. Aspiration into the lungs may occur during ingestion or vomiting, causing tissue damage or lung injury.

Effects of Repeated Exposure: In animals, effects have been reported on the following organs: Nasal tissue.

Cancer Information: Has caused cancer in some laboratory animals. An increased incidence of stomach tumors was seen in animals given daily oral doses of ethyl acrylate. Tumors were judged to result from irritation. Long-term studies by more relevant routes of exposure (skin, inhalation) were negative. Workers exposed during 1933-1945 to very high vapor concentrations of ethyl acrylate and methyl methacrylate, and to volatile by-products of the ethyl acrylate/methyl methacrylate polymerization process, showed an increase in deaths due to colorectal cancer. Such increases were not observed in workers exposed after that time. Although suggestive, these findings do not establish a causal relationship between high level exposure to these acrylates and colorectal cancer.

3. Composition Information

Component	CAS #	Amount
Ethyl acrylate	140-88-5	>= 99.8 - <= 100.0 %

4. First-aid measures

Eye Contact: Wash immediately and continuously with flowing water for at least 30 minutes. Remove contact lenses after the first 5 minutes and continue washing. Obtain prompt medical consultation, preferably from an ophthalmologist.

Skin Contact: Immediately wash skin with soap and plenty of water for at least 15 minutes while removing contaminated clothing and shoes. Obtain medical attention without delay. Wash clothing before reuse. Destroy contaminated articles such as shoes.

Inhalation: Move person to fresh air. If not breathing, give artificial respiration; if by mouth to mouth use rescuer protection (pocket mask, etc). If breathing is difficult, oxygen should be administered by qualified personnel. Call a physician or transport to a medical facility.

Ingestion: Do not induce vomiting. Give one cup (8 ounces or 240 ml) of water or milk if available and transport to a medical facility. Do not give anything by mouth to an unconscious person.

Notes to Physician: Due to irritant properties, swallowing may result in burns/ulceration of mouth, stomach and lower gastrointestinal tract with subsequent stricture. Aspiration of vomitus may cause lung injury. Suggest endotracheal/esophageal control if lavage is done. Respiratory symptoms, including pulmonary edema, may be delayed. Persons receiving significant exposure should be observed 24-48 hours for signs of respiratory distress. Maintain adequate ventilation and oxygenation of the patient. Chemical eye burns may require extended irrigation. Obtain prompt consultation, preferably from an ophthalmologist. If burn is present, treat as any thermal burn, after decontamination. No specific antidote. Treatment of exposure should be directed at the control of symptoms and the clinical condition of the patient.

5. Fire Fighting Measures

Extinguishing Media: Water fog or fine spray. Dry chemical fire extinguishers. Carbon dioxide fire extinguishers. Foam. Do not use direct water stream. Straight or direct water streams may not be effective to extinguish fire. Alcohol resistant foams (ATC type) are preferred. General purpose synthetic foams (including AFFF) or protein foams may function, but will be less effective.
Fire Fighting Procedures: Keep people away. Isolate fire and deny unnecessary entry. Stay upwind. Keep out of low areas where gases (fumes) can accumulate. Water may not be effective in extinguishing fire. Use water spray to cool fire exposed containers and fire affected zone until fire is out and danger of reignition has passed. Fight fire from protected location or safe distance. Consider the use of unmanned hose holders or monitor nozzles. Do not use direct water stream. May spread fire. Eliminate ignition sources. Move container from fire area if this is possible without hazard. Burning liquids may be moved by flushing with water to protect personnel and minimize property damage. Avoid accumulation of water. Product may be carried across water surface spreading fire or contacting an ignition source.
Special Protective Equipment for Firefighters: Wear positive-pressure self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) and protective fire fighting clothing (includes fire fighting helmet, coat, trousers, boots, and gloves). Avoid contact with this material during fire fighting operations. If contact is likely, change to full chemical resistant fire fighting clothing with self-contained breathing apparatus. If this is not available, wear full chemical resistant clothing with self-contained breathing apparatus and fight fire from a remote location. For protective equipment in post-fire or non-fire clean-up situations, refer to the relevant sections.
Unusual Fire and Explosion Hazards: Container may vent and/or rupture due to fire. Vapors are heavier than air and may travel a long distance and accumulate in low lying areas. Ignition and/or flash back may occur. Flammable mixtures may exist within the vapor space of containers at room temperature. Flammable concentrations of vapor can accumulate at temperatures above flash point; see Section 9.
Hazardous Combustion Products: During a fire, smoke may contain the original material in addition to combustion products of varying composition which may be toxic and/or irritating. Combustion products may include and are not limited to: Carbon monoxide. Carbon dioxide.

6. Accidental Release Measures

Steps to be Taken if Material is Released or Spilled: Small spills: Absorb with materials such as: Non-combustible material. Dirt. Sand. Large spills: Dike area to contain spill. Contain spilled material if possible. Ground and bond all containers and handling equipment. Collect in suitable and properly labeled containers. Pump with explosion-proof equipment. If available, use foam to smother or suppress. See Section 13, Disposal Considerations, for additional information.
Personal Precautions: Evacuate area. Keep personnel out of low areas. Keep upwind of spill. Ventilate area of leak or spill. No smoking in area. Only trained and properly protected personnel must be involved in clean-up operations. Eliminate all sources of ignition in vicinity of spill or released vapor to avoid fire or explosion. For large spills, warn public of downwind explosion hazard. Check area with combustible gas detector before reentering area. Ground and bond all containers and handling equipment. Vapor explosion hazard. Keep out of sewers. Refer to Section 7, Handling, for additional precautionary measures. Use appropriate safety equipment. For additional information, refer to Section 8, Exposure Controls and Personal Protection. See Section 10 for more specific information.
Environmental Precautions: Material may float on water and any runoff may create an explosion or fire hazard if ignited. Prevent from entering into soil, ditches, sewers, waterways and/or groundwater. See Section 12, Ecological Information.

7. Handling and Storage

Handling
General Handling: Keep away from heat, sparks and flame. Do not swallow. Avoid contact with eyes, skin, and clothing. Avoid breathing vapor. Wash thoroughly after handling. Keep container

closed. Use with adequate ventilation. Never use air pressure for transferring product. No smoking, open flames or sources of ignition in handling and storage area. Vapors are heavier than air and may travel a long distance and accumulate in low lying areas. Ignition and/or flash back may occur. Electrically bond and ground all containers and equipment before transfer or use of material. Containers, even those that have been emptied, can contain vapors. Do not cut, drill, grind, weld, or perform similar operations on or near empty containers. Use of non-sparking or explosion-proof equipment may be necessary, depending upon the type of operation. See Section 8, EXPOSURE CONTROLS AND PERSONAL PROTECTION.

Storage

Minimize sources of ignition, such as static build-up, heat, spark or flame. Keep container closed. Store in a dry place. Store away from direct sunlight or ultraviolet light. Store away from incompatible materials. See STABILITY AND REACTIVITY section. Maintain inhibitor and dissolved oxygen level. Do not purge containers of this material with nitrogen. Recommended inhibitor level is: 10 to 20 ppm. Recommended oxygen level is: 5 to 8 vol. %. Uninhibited monomer vapors can polymerize and plug relief devices. See Section 10 for more specific information. When appropriate, unique handling information for containers can be found on the product label. Ask for a product brochure.

Shelf life: Use within 12 Months
Storage temperature: < 38 °C

8. Exposure Controls / Personal Protection

Exposure Limits

Component	List	Type	Value
Ethyl acrylate	ACGIH	TWA	5 ppm
	ACGIH	STEL	15 ppm
	OSHA Table Z-1	PEL	100 mg/m3 25 ppm SKIN

A "skin" notation following the exposure guideline refers to the potential for dermal absorption of the material including mucous membranes and the eyes either by contact with vapors or by direct skin contact.
It is intended to alert the reader that inhalation may not be the only route of exposure and that measures to minimize dermal exposures should be considered.

Personal Protection

Eye/Face Protection: Use chemical goggles. If exposure causes eye discomfort, use a full-face respirator.
Skin Protection: Use protective clothing chemically resistant to this material. Selection of specific items such as face shield, boots, apron, or full body suit will depend on the task. Safety shower should be located in immediate work area. Remove contaminated clothing immediately, wash skin area with soap and water, and launder clothing before reuse or dispose of properly. Items which cannot be decontaminated, such as shoes, belts and watchbands, should be removed and disposed of properly.

Hand protection: Use gloves chemically resistant to this material. Examples of preferred glove barrier materials include: Chlorinated polyethylene. Polyethylene. Ethyl vinyl alcohol laminate ("EVAL"). Polyvinyl alcohol ("PVA"). Styrene/butadiene rubber. Examples of acceptable glove barrier materials include: Butyl rubber. Nitrile/butadiene rubber ("nitrile" or "NBR"). Polyvinyl chloride ("PVC" or "vinyl"). Viton. Avoid gloves made of: Neoprene. NOTICE: The selection of a specific glove for a particular application and duration of use in a workplace should also take into account all relevant workplace factors such as, but not limited to: Other chemicals which may be handled, physical requirements (cut/puncture protection, dexterity, thermal protection), potential body reactions to glove materials, as well as the instructions/specifications provided by the glove supplier.

Respiratory Protection: Respiratory protection should be worn when there is a potential to exceed the exposure limit requirements or guidelines. If there are no applicable exposure limit requirements or guidelines, use an approved respirator. Selection of air-purifying or positive-pressure supplied-air will depend on the specific operation and the potential airborne concentration of the material. For emergency conditions, use an approved positive-pressure self-contained breathing apparatus. In

confined or poorly ventilated areas, use an approved self-contained breathing apparatus or positive pressure air line with auxiliary self-contained air supply. The following should be effective types of air-purifying respirators: Organic vapor cartridge.
Ingestion: Avoid ingestion of even very small amounts; do not consume or store food or tobacco in the work area; wash hands and face before smoking or eating.

Engineering Controls
Ventilation: Use engineering controls to maintain airborne level below exposure limit requirements or guidelines. If there are no applicable exposure limit requirements or guidelines, use only with adequate ventilation. Local exhaust ventilation may be necessary for some operations.

9. Physical and Chemical Properties

Physical State	Liquid
Color	Colorless
Odor	Obnoxious
Flash Point - Closed Cup	9 °C (48 °F) *Literature*
Flash Point - Open Cup	20 °C (68 °F) *Tag Open Cup ASTM D1310*
Flammable Limits In Air	**Lower:** 1.7 %(V) *Literature* **Upper:** 11.8 %(V) *Literature*
Autoignition Temperature	383 °C (721 °F) *Literature*
Vapor Pressure	28.8 mmHg @ 20 °C *Literature*
Boiling Point (760 mmHg)	100 °C (212 °F) *Literature* .
Vapor Density (air = 1)	3.5 *Literature*
Specific Gravity (H2O = 1)	No test data available
Liquid Density	0.923 g/cm3 @ 20 °C *Literature*
Freezing Point	-71 °C (-96 °F) *Literature*
Melting Point	Not applicable to liquids
Solubility in Water (by weight)	1.85 % @ 25 °C *Literature*
pH	No test data available
Molecular Weight	100.12 g/mol
Evaporation Rate (Butyl Acetate = 1)	3.3
Dynamic Viscosity	0.55 cps @ 25 °C *Literature*

10. Stability and Reactivity

Stability/Instability
Stable under recommended storage conditions. See Storage, Section 7. Unstable at elevated temperatures. Hygroscopic.
Conditions to Avoid: Avoid temperatures above 38°C (100°F) Exposure to elevated temperatures can cause product to decompose. Avoid static discharge. Avoid moisture. Do not blanket or purge with an inert gas to avoid depleting the oxygen concentration. Avoid direct sunlight or ultraviolet sources.
Inhibitor: Methyl ether of hydroquinone. Inhibitor Concentration (ppm): 10 - 1,100

Incompatible Materials: Avoid contact with oxidizing materials. Avoid contact with: Aldehydes. Amines. Azides. Ethers. Free radical initiators. Halides. Mercaptans. Mineral acids. Peroxides. Strong inorganic bases. Avoid contact with metals such as: Brass. Copper. Avoid unintended contact with: Activated carbon. Avoid contact with absorbent materials such as: Clay-based absorbents. Aluminum oxide. Silica gel. Avoid unintended contact with peroxides.

Hazardous Polymerization
Can occur. Elevated temperatures can cause hazardous polymerization. Maintain inhibitor and dissolved oxygen level. Do not purge containers of this material with nitrogen. Polymerization can be

catalyzed by: Absence of air. Free radical initiators. High temperature. Peroxides. Presence of water can accelerate rate of polymerization. Uninhibited monomer vapors can polymerize and plug relief devices.

Thermal Decomposition
Decomposition products depend upon temperature, air supply and the presence of other materials.

11. Toxicological Information

Acute Toxicity
Ingestion
LD50, Rat > 500 mg/kg
Skin Absorption
LD50, Rabbit 462 - 1,800 mg/kg
Inhalation
LC50, 4 h, Vapor, Rat 1,400 - 2,180 ppm
Sensitization
Skin
Skin contact may cause an allergic skin reaction.
Repeated Dose Toxicity
In animals, effects have been reported on the following organs: Nasal tissue.
Chronic Toxicity and Carcinogenicity
Has caused cancer in some laboratory animals. An increased incidence of stomach tumors was seen in animals given daily oral doses of ethyl acrylate. Tumors were judged to result from irritation. Long-term studies by more relevant routes of exposure (skin, inhalation) were negative. Workers exposed during 1933-1945 to very high vapor concentrations of ethyl acrylate and methyl methacrylate, and to volatile by-products of the ethyl acrylate/methyl methacrylate polymerization process, showed an increase in deaths due to colorectal cancer. Such increases were not observed in workers exposed after that time. Although suggestive, these findings do not establish a causal relationship between high level exposure to these acrylates and colorectal cancer.
Carcinogenicity Classifications:

Component	List	Classification
Ethyl acrylate	IARC	Possible carcinogen.; 2B

Developmental Toxicity
Did not cause birth defects or any other fetal effects in laboratory animals.
Genetic Toxicology
In vitro genetic toxicity studies were negative in some cases and positive in other cases. Animal genetic toxicity studies were negative in some cases and positive in other cases.

12. Ecological Information

CHEMICAL FATE
Data for Component: **Ethyl acrylate**

Movement & Partitioning
Bioconcentration potential is low (BCF less than 100 or log Pow less than 3). Potential for mobility in soil is very high (Koc between 0 and 50).
Henry's Law Constant (H): 2.54E-4 atm*m3/mole; 25 °C Estimated
Partition coefficient, n-octanol/water (log Pow): 1.32 Measured
Partition coefficient, soil organic carbon/water (Koc): 12 Estimated

Persistence and Degradability
Based on stringent OECD test guidelines, this material cannot be considered as readily biodegradable; however, these results do not necessarily mean that the material is not biodegradable under environmental conditions. Material is inherently biodegradable (reaches > 20% biodegradation in OECD test(s) for inherent biodegradability).

Indirect Photodegradation with OH Radicals

Rate Constant	Atmospheric Half-life	Method
1.09E-11 cm3/s	11.8 h	Estimated

OECD Biodegradation Tests:

Biodegradation	Exposure Time	Method
> 60 %	11 d	OECD 302B Test
52 %	14 d	OECD 301C Test

Biological oxygen demand (BOD):

BOD 5	BOD 10	BOD 20	BOD 28
18 %	27 %	50 %	

Theoretical Oxygen Demand: 1.92 mg/mg

ECOTOXICITY

Data for Component: Ethyl acrylate

Material is moderately toxic to aquatic organisms on an acute basis (LC50/EC50 between 1 and 10 mg/L in most sensitive species tested).

Fish Acute & Prolonged Toxicity
LC50, rainbow trout (Oncorhynchus mykiss), flow-through, 96 h: 4.6 mg/l
LC50, sheepshead minnow (Cyprinodon variegatus), 96 h: 2.0 mg/l
Aquatic Invertebrate Acute Toxicity
EC50, water flea Daphnia magna, 48 h, immobilization: 5.9 mg/l
Aquatic Plant Toxicity
EC50, green alga Selenastrum capricornutum, biomass growth inhibition, 96 h: 11 mg/l

13. Disposal Considerations

DO NOT DUMP INTO ANY SEWERS, ON THE GROUND, OR INTO ANY BODY OF WATER. All disposal practices must be in compliance with all Federal, State/Provincial and local laws and regulations. Regulations may vary in different locations. Waste characterizations and compliance with applicable laws are the responsibility solely of the waste generator. DOW HAS NO CONTROL OVER THE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OR MANUFACTURING PROCESSES OF PARTIES HANDLING OR USING THIS MATERIAL. THE INFORMATION PRESENTED HERE PERTAINS ONLY TO THE PRODUCT AS SHIPPED IN ITS INTENDED CONDITION AS DESCRIBED IN MSDS SECTION: Composition Information. FOR UNUSED & UNCONTAMINATED PRODUCT, the preferred options include sending to a licensed, permitted: Incinerator or other thermal destruction device. As a service to its customers, Dow can provide names of information resources to help identify waste management companies and other facilities which recycle, reprocess or manage chemicals or plastics, and that manage used drums. Telephone Dow's Customer Information Group at 1-800-258-2436 or 1-989-832-1556 (U.S.), or 1-800-331-6451 (Canada) for further details.

14. Transport Information

DOT Non-Bulk
Proper Shipping Name: ETHYL ACRYLATE, STABILIZED
Hazard Class: 3 **ID Number:** UN1917 **Packing Group:** PG II

DOT Bulk
Proper Shipping Name: ETHYL ACRYLATE, STABILIZED
Hazard Class: 3 **ID Number:** UN1917 **Packing Group:** PG II

IMDG
Proper Shipping Name: ETHYL ACRYLATE, STABILIZED
Hazard Class: 3 **ID Number:** UN1917 **Packing Group:** PG II
EMS Number: F-E,S-D

Marine pollutant.: No

ICAO/IATA
Proper Shipping Name: ETHYL ACRYLATE, STABILIZED
Hazard Class: 3 **ID Number:** UN1917 **Packing Group:** PG II
Cargo Packing Instruction: 307
Passenger Packing Instruction: 305

Additional Information

Reportable quantity: 1,000 lb – ETHYL ACRYLATE

This information is not intended to convey all specific regulatory or operational requirements/information relating to this product. Additional transportation system information can be obtained through an authorized sales or customer service representative. It is the responsibility of the transporting organization to follow all applicable laws, regulations and rules relating to the transportation of the material.

15. Regulatory Information

OSHA Hazard Communication Standard
This product is a "Hazardous Chemical" as defined by the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard, 29 CFR 1910.1200.

Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 Title III (Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986) Sections 311 and 312

Immediate (Acute) Health Hazard	Yes
Delayed (Chronic) Health Hazard	Yes
Fire Hazard	Yes
Reactive Hazard	Yes
Sudden Release of Pressure Hazard	No

Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 Title III (Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986) Section 313
This product contains the following substances which are subject to the reporting requirements of Section 313 of Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 and which are listed in 40 CFR 372.

Component	CAS #	Amount
Ethyl acrylate	140-88-5	<= 100.0 %

Pennsylvania (Worker and Community Right-To-Know Act): Pennsylvania Hazardous Substances List and/or Pennsylvania Environmental Hazardous Substance List:
The following product components are cited in the Pennsylvania Hazardous Substance List and/or the Pennsylvania Environmental Substance List, and are present at levels which require reporting.

Component	CAS #	Amount
Ethyl acrylate	140-88-5	<= 100.0 %

Pennsylvania (Worker and Community Right-To-Know Act): Pennsylvania Special Hazardous Substances List:
The following product components are cited in the Pennsylvania Special Hazardous Substance List, and are present at levels which require reporting.

Component	CAS #	Amount
Ethyl acrylate	140-88-5	<= 100.0 %

California Proposition 65 (Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986)
WARNING: This product contains a chemical(s) known to the State of California to cause cancer.

Component	CAS #	Amount
Ethyl acrylate	140-88-5	<= 100.0 %

US. Toxic Substances Control Act
All components of this product are on the TSCA Inventory or are exempt from TSCA Inventory requirements under 40 CFR 720.30
CEPA - Domestic Substances List (DSL)
All substances contained in this product are listed on the Canadian Domestic Substances List (DSL) or are not required to be listed.

16. Other Information

Product Literature
Additional information on this product may be obtained by calling your Dow Chemical Company sales or customer service contact. Ask for a product brochure. Additional information on this and other Dow products may be obtained by visiting our web page at www.dow.com.

Hazard Rating System

NFPA	Health	Fire	Reactivity
	3	3	1

Recommended Uses and Restrictions
Chemical intermediate.

Revision
Identification Number: 82919 / 1001 / Issue Date 01/19/2007 / Version: 1.1
Most recent revision(s) are noted by the bold, double bars in left-hand margin throughout this document.

Legend

N/A	Not available
W/W	Weight/Weight
OEL	Occupational Exposure Limit
STEL	Short Term Exposure Limit
TWA	Time Weighted Average
ACGIH	American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists, Inc.
DOW IHG	Dow Industrial Hygiene Guideline
WEEL	Workplace Environmental Exposure Level
HAZ_DES	Hazard Designation
Action Level	A value set by OSHA that is lower than the PEL which will trigger the need for activities such as exposure monitoring and medical surveillance if exceeded.

The Dow Chemical Company urges each customer or recipient of this (M)SDS to study it carefully and consult appropriate expertise, as necessary or appropriate, to become aware of and understand the data contained in this (M)SDS and any hazards associated with the product. The information herein is provided in good faith and believed to be accurate as of the effective date shown above. However, no warranty, express or implied, is given. Regulatory requirements are subject to change and may differ between various locations. It is the buyer's/user's responsibility to ensure that his activities comply with all federal, state, provincial or local laws. The information presented here pertains only to the product as shipped. Since conditions for use of the product are not under the control of the manufacturer, it is the buyer's/user's duty to determine the conditions necessary for the safe use of this product. Due to the proliferation of sources for information such as manufacturer-specific (M)SDSs, we are not and cannot be responsible for (M)SDSs obtained from any source other than ourselves. If you have obtained an (M)SDS from another source or if you are not sure that the (M)SDS you have is current, please contact us for the most current version.

Disclaimer: These guidelines were developed under contract using generally accepted secondary sources. The protocol used by the contractor for surveying these data sources was developed by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the Department of Energy (DOE). The information contained in these guidelines is intended for reference purposes only. None of the agencies have conducted a comprehensive check of the information and data contained in these sources. It provides a summary of information about chemicals that workers may be exposed to in their workplaces. The secondary sources used for supplements 111 and 1V were published before 1992 and 1993, respectively, and for the remainder of the guidelines the secondary sources used were published before September 1996. This information may be superseded by new developments in the field of industrial hygiene. Therefore readers are advised to determine whether new information is available.

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH GUIDELINE FOR ETHYL ACRYLATE

INTRODUCTION

This guideline summarizes pertinent information about ethyl acrylate for workers and employers as well as for physicians, industrial hygienists, and other occupational safety and health professionals who may need such information to conduct effective occupational safety and health programs. Recommendations may be superseded by new developments in these fields; readers are therefore advised to regard these recommendations as general guidelines and to determine whether new information is available.

SUBSTANCE IDENTIFICATION

* Formula

C(5)H(8)O(2)

* Structure

(For Structure, see paper copy)

* Synonyms

Ethyl-2-propenoate, ethyl propenate, acrylic acid ethyl ester, ethoxycarbonyl ethylene

* Identifiers

1. CAS No.: 140-88-5

2. RTECS No.: AT0700000

3. DOT UN: 1917 26 (ethyl acrylate, inhibited)

carcinogen [ACGIH 1991, p. 571].

HEALTH HAZARD INFORMATION

* Routes of Exposure

Exposure to ethyl acrylate can occur through inhalation, ingestion, and eye or skin contact.

* Summary of toxicology

1. Effects on Animals: Ethyl acrylate is a strong irritant of the eyes, nose, upper respiratory tract, and skin. This substance is also carcinogenic in mice and rats, causing tumors of the forestomach after oral gavage [IARC 1986]. The LC(50) in rats is 2180 ppm for 4 hours, and the oral LD(50) in rats is 400 mg/kg [NIOSH 1991]. The dermal LD(50) in rabbits is 1834 mg/kg [NIOSH 1991]. Direct contact of the liquid with the skin or eyes caused injury [ACGIH 1991]. Rats exposed to 300 or 540 ppm ethyl acrylate for 30 days died, and postmortem examination revealed pulmonary congestion, cloudy swelling of the liver and renal tubules, congestion of the liver, and excessive pigmentation of the spleen [ACGIH 1991]. Exposure to higher concentrations caused pulmonary edema, degenerative changes in the heart, liver, and kidneys, and death [ACGIH 1991]. Four monkeys were exposed by inhalation to concentrations of 24.5, 26.2, 272, or 1024 ppm (one monkey at each level). The monkeys exposed to 24.5 or 26.2 ppm for 130 7-hour exposures showed no signs of toxicity; the monkey exposed to 272 ppm was lethargic, lost weight, and had mucosal irritation after 28 days of exposure. The monkey exposed to 1024 ppm died after 2 days [ACGIH 1991]. Dose-related increases in the incidence of nonneoplastic lesions (hyperplasia, metaplasia) of the olfactory mucosa were seen in mice and rats of both sexes after exposure to 25, 75, or 225 ppm ethyl acrylate for 6 hours/day for 5 days/week for 6 or 27 months [IARC 1986]. Male mice exposed to ethyl acrylate by inhalation (225 ppm) showed an excess of thyroid follicular adenomas. Ethyl acrylate is fetotoxic at near-toxic maternal doses and has caused skeletal abnormalities in the offspring of pregnant rats fed ethyl acrylate during gestation [NLM 1991].

2. Effects on Humans: Ethyl acrylate is a strong irritant of the eyes, skin, mucous membranes, respiratory system, and gastrointestinal tract in humans [Clayton and Clayton 1982; Hathaway et al. 1991]. At a concentration of 50 ppm, for a period of exposure described only as "prolonged," exposure to ethyl acrylate caused drowsiness, headache, and nausea [ACGIH 1991; Hathaway et al. 1991]. Ethyl acrylate causes sensitization in some exposed individuals; a 4 percent concentration in petroleum jelly caused skin sensitization in 10 of 24 volunteers [ACGIH 1991; Hathaway et al. 1991].

* Signs and symptoms of exposure

1. Acute exposure: Acute exposure to ethyl acrylate vapor may cause irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat, with tearing, runny nose, and burning of the throat.

2. Chronic exposure: Chronic exposure to ethyl acrylate may cause skin sensitization, with redness, swelling, and itching of the affected areas.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL PROCEDURES

* Emergency medical procedures: [NIOSH to supply]

The medical, environmental, and occupational history interviews, the physical examination, and selected physiologic or laboratory tests that were conducted at the time of placement should be repeated at the time of job transfer or termination to determine the worker's medical status at the end of his or her employment. Any changes in the worker's health status should be compared with those expected for a suitable reference population.

* Biological monitoring

Biological monitoring involves sampling and analyzing body tissues or fluids to provide an index of exposure to a toxic substance or metabolite. No biological monitoring test acceptable for routine use has yet been developed for ethyl acrylate.

WORKPLACE MONITORING AND MEASUREMENT

Determination of a worker's exposure to airborne ethyl acrylate should be made using a charcoal tube (100/50 mg sections, 20/40 mesh). Samples should be collected at a maximum flow rate of 0.2 liter/minute (TWA) until a maximum collection volume of 10 liters is reached. The charcoal tube is then treated with carbon disulfide. Analysis is conducted by gas chromatography using a flame ionization detector. The limit of detection for this procedure is 0.02 mg per sample. This method is described in NIOSH Method No. 1450 [NIOSH 1994] and in the OSHA Computerized Information System [OSHA 1992].

PERSONAL HYGIENE PROCEDURES

If ethyl acrylate contacts the skin, workers should flush the affected areas immediately with plenty of water, followed by washing with soap and water.

Clothing contaminated with ethyl acrylate should be removed immediately, and provisions should be made for the safe removal of the chemical from the clothing.

A worker who handles ethyl acrylate should thoroughly wash hands, forearms, and face with soap and water before eating, using tobacco products, using toilet facilities, applying cosmetics, or taking medication.

Workers should not eat, drink, use tobacco products, apply cosmetics, or take medication in areas where ethyl acrylate or a solution containing ethyl acrylate is handled, processed, or stored.

STORAGE

Ethyl acrylate should be stored in a cool, dry, well-ventilated area in tightly sealed containers that are labeled in accordance with OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard [29 CFR 1910.1200]. Containers of ethyl acrylate should be protected from moisture and physical damage, and should be stored separately from oxidizers, peroxides, polymerizers, or strong alkalies.

SPILLS AND LEAKS

In the event of a spill or leak involving ethyl acrylate, persons not wearing protective equipment and clothing should be restricted from contaminated areas until cleanup has been completed. The following steps should be undertaken following a spill or leak:

1. Stop the leak if it is possible to do so without risk.

2. Notify safety personnel of large leaks.

3. Remove all sources of heat and ignition.

4. Provide maximum explosion-proof ventilation.

5. Use non-sparking tools.

6. Water spray may be used to reduce vapors, but the spray may not prevent ignition in closed spaces.

7. For small spills, take up with sand or other noncombustible absorbent material and place into closed containers for later disposal.

8. For large spills, build dikes far ahead of the spill to contain the ethyl acrylate for later reclamation or disposal.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirements for emergency planning, reportable quantities of hazardous releases, community right-to- know, and hazardous waste management may change over time. Users are therefore advised to determine periodically whether new information is available.

* Emergency planning requirements

Ethyl acrylate is not subject to EPA emergency planning requirements under the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) (Title III) in 42 USC 11022.

* Reportable quantity requirements for hazardous releases

A hazardous substance release is defined by EPA as any spilling, leaking, pumping, pouring, emitting, emptying, discharging, injecting, escaping, leaching, dumping, or disposing into the environment (including the abandonment or discarding of contaminated containers) of hazardous substances. In the event of a release that is above the reportable quantity for that chemical, employers are required to notify the proper Federal, State, and local authorities [40 CFR 355.40].

The reportable quantity of ethyl acrylate is 1000 pounds. If an amount equal to or greater than this quantity is released within a 24-hour period in a manner that will expose persons outside the facility, employers are required to do the following:

- Notify the National Response Center **immediately** at (800) 424-8802 or at (202) 426-2675 in Washington, D.C. [40 CFR 302.6].

* Community right-to-know requirements

Employers who own or operate facilities in SIC codes 20 to 39 that employ 10 or more workers and that manufacture 25,000 pounds or more of ethyl acrylate per

calendar year or otherwise use 10,000 pounds or more of ethyl acrylate per calendar year are required by EPA [40 CFR Part 372.30] to submit a Toxic Chemical Release Inventory form (Form R) to EPA reporting the amount of ethyl acrylate emitted or released from their facility annually.

* Hazardous waste management requirements

EPA considers a waste to be hazardous if it exhibits any of the following characteristics: ignitability, corrosivity, reactivity, or toxicity as defined in 40 CFR 261.21-261.24. Under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) [40 USC 6901 et seq.], EPA has specifically listed many chemical wastes as hazardous. Ethyl acrylate is listed as a hazardous waste under RCRA and has been assigned EPA Hazardous Waste No. U113. This substance has been banned from land disposal until treated by fuel substitution or incineration.

Providing detailed information about the removal and disposal of specific chemicals is beyond the scope of this guideline. The U.S. Department of Transportation, EPA, and State and local regulations should be followed to ensure that removal, transport, and disposal of this substance are conducted in accordance with existing regulations. To be certain that chemical waste disposal meets EPA regulatory requirements, employers should address any questions to the RCRA hotline at (703) 412-9810 (in the Washington, D.C. area) or toll-free at (800) 424-9346 (outside Washington, D.C.). In addition, relevant State and local authorities should be contacted for information on any requirements they may have for the waste removal and disposal of this substance.

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION

* Conditions for respirator use

Good industrial hygiene practice requires that engineering controls be used where feasible to reduce workplace concentrations of hazardous materials to the prescribed exposure limit. However, some situations may require the use of respirators to control exposure. Respirators must be worn if the ambient concentration of ethyl acrylate exceeds prescribed exposure limits. Respirators may be used (1) before engineering controls have been installed, (2) during work operations such as maintenance or repair activities that involve unknown exposures, (3) during operations that require entry into tanks or closed vessels, and (4) during emergencies. Workers should only use respirators that have been approved by NIOSH and the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA).

* Respiratory protection program

Employers should institute a complete respiratory protection program that, at a minimum, complies with the requirements of OSHA's Respiratory Protection Standard [29 CFR 1910.134]. Such a program must include respirator selection, an evaluation of the worker's ability to perform the work while wearing a respirator, the regular training of personnel, respirator fit testing, periodic workplace monitoring, and regular respirator maintenance, inspection, and cleaning. The implementation of an adequate respiratory protection program (including selection of the correct respirator) requires that a knowledgeable person be in charge of the program and that the program be evaluated regularly. For additional information on the selection and use of respirators and on the medical screening of respirator users, consult the latest edition of the NIOSH

News

ETHYL ACRYLATE ODOR UPDATES

Posted Date: 7/9/2009

8 a.m. / July 10, 2009

There continues to be the possibility of odor related to Tuesday's Ethyl Acrylate i Operations in Hahnville.

Air monitors from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Louisiana Dep Quality continue to show readings well below levels for public safety. Monitoring throughout the duration of the event.

However, because this odor is extremely strong, some could experience mild trai irritated eyes, nose and throat, headaches or nausea. Others will not have a react

If you experience any of these symptoms, you are advised to move away from the by visiting your doctor or calling 911. We are sensitive to those in the community that could be adversely affected by this odor. St. Charles Parish Emergency Oper these individuals as necessary.

Those experiencing higher odor levels in their homes than outside are advised to outdoors. Residents may also choose to set their air conditioners to discontinue 1

Please be aware Dow St. Charles Operations has advised this event could contin time. No further protective actions are recommended at this time.

For more information please contact the St. Charles Parish Emergency Operatio Dow has set up a hotline at (985) 783-3423.

Information from St. Charles Parish Hospital Emergency Room about first aid for ethyl acrylate:

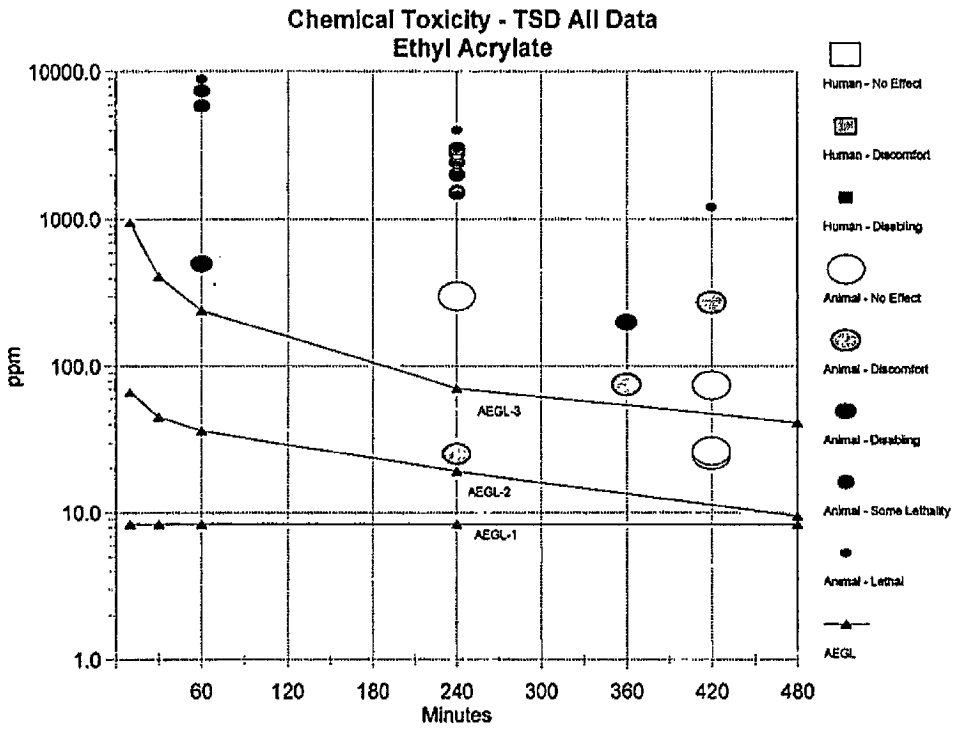
EYES: First check the victim for contact lenses and remove if present. Flush victim's eyes with water or normal saline solution for 20 to 30 minutes while simultaneously calling a hospital or poison control center. Do not put any ointments, oils, or medication in the victim's eyes without specific instructions from a physician. IMMEDIATELY transport the victim after flushing eyes to a hospital even if no symptoms (such as redness or irritation) develop.

SKIN: IMMEDIATELY flood affected skin with water while removing and isolating all contaminated clothing. Gently wash all affected skin areas thoroughly with soap and water. IMMEDIATELY call a hospital or poison control center even if no symptoms (such as redness or irritation) develop. IMMEDIATELY transport the victim to a hospital for treatment after washing the affected areas.

INHALATION: IMMEDIATELY leave the contaminated area; take deep breaths of fresh air. If symptoms (such as wheezing, coughing, shortness of breath, or burning in the mouth, throat, or chest) develop, call a physician and be prepared to transport the victim to a hospital. Provide proper respiratory protection to rescuers entering an unknown atmosphere. Whenever possible, Self-Contained

INGESTION: DO NOT INDUCE VOMITING. Corrosive chemicals will destroy the membranes of the mouth, throat, and esophagus and, in addition, have a high risk of being aspirated into the victim's lungs during vomiting which increases the medical problems. If the victim is conscious and not convulsing, give 1 or 2 glasses of water to dilute the chemical and IMMEDIATELY call a hospital or poison control center. IMMEDIATELY transport the victim to a hospital. If the victim is convulsing or unconscious, do not give anything by mouth, ensure that the victim's airway is open and lay the victim on his/her side with the head lower than the body. DO NOT INDUCE VOMITING. Transport the victim IMMEDIATELY to a hospital. (NTP, 1992)

Reactivity



No effect = No effect or mild discomfort
Discomfort = Notable transient discomfort/irritation consistent with AEGL-1 level effects
Disabling = Irreversible/long lasting effects or an impaired ability to escape
Some lethality = Some, but not all, exposed animals died
Lethal = All exposed animals died

www.epa.gov/oppt/aegl/pubs/ethyl_acrylate_tsd_interimversion_2_08_2007.pdf

using n = 3 for extrapolating to the 10- and 30-minute time points and n = 1 for the 4- and 8-hour time points. A total uncertainty factor of 3 was used including a 1 for interspecies extrapolation and 3 for intraspecies extrapolation. Use of greater uncertainty factors was not necessary because the lesion is reversible, the mechanism of irritation is not expected to differ between individuals, and similar lesions were found in monkeys, guinea pigs, rabbits, and rats. AEGL-2 values are supported by other animal studies. Similar microscopic lesions of the olfactory epithelium were observed in rats following a single exposure (Frederick et al. 2002) and in rats and mice following subchronic and chronic exposures. Repair of the lesions was evident in animals exposed to 225 ppm, 6 hours/day, 5 days/week for 6 months and held for 3-6 months (BASF 1989). A monkey survived 28 exposures to 272 ppm for 7 hours each but clinical signs of irritation and slight lethargy were observed (Treon et al. 1949).

Animal data relevant to derivation of AEGL-3 values are limited to 1- and 4-hour LC_{50} studies in rats. These were well conducted studies with analytically determined exposure concentrations and which included mortality ratios at all concentrations. Clinical signs of irritation were observed in animals during exposure and death was attributed to cardiopulmonary collapse. Calculated LC_{50} values were 6493 ppm for 1 hour (Nachreiner and Dodd 1989; Union Carbide 1989) and 2180 ppm for 4 hours (Oberly and Tansy 1985). From these data, 1- and 4-hour $BMCL_{05}$ values were calculated by a log-probit analysis using US EPA Benchmark Dose Software version 1.3.2. The resulting 1-hour $BMCL_{05}$ of 2387 ppm was used to derive the 10-minute, 30-minute, and 1-hour AEGL-3 values. The resulting 4-hour $BMCL_{05}$ of 706 ppm was used to derive the 4- and 8-hour AEGL-3 values. Values were scaled using the equation $C^n \times t = k$ where n ranges from 0.8 to 3.5 (ten Berge et al. 1986). By combining the 1- and 4- hour LC_{50} data sets in a 3-dimensional probit analysis, the value of n = 1.3 was calculated (Zwart et al. 1992). A total uncertainty factor of 10 was used including a 3 for interspecies extrapolation and 3 for intraspecies extrapolation. Use of greater uncertainty factors was not necessary because the mechanism of irritation is not expected to differ between individuals and similar lesions were found in monkeys, guinea pigs, rabbits, and rats.

The calculated values are listed in the tables below.

Summary of AEGL Values for Ethyl Acrylate

Classification	10-minute	30-minute	1-hour	4-hour	8-hour	Endpoint (Reference)
AEGL–1 (Nondisabling)	8.3 ppm (34 mg/m^3)	8.3 ppm (34 mg/m^3)	8.3 ppm (34 mg/m^3)	8.3 ppm (34 mg/m^3)	8.3 ppm (34 mg/m^3)	Reversible lesions in the olfactory epithelium (Frederick et al. 2002)
AEGL–2 (Disabling)	66 ppm (270 mg/m^3)	45 ppm (180 mg/m^3)	36 ppm (150 mg/m^3)	19 ppm (78 mg/m^3)	9.4 ppm (39 mg/m^3)	Reversible lesions in the olfactory epithelium (Harkema et al. 1997; Rohm and Haas 1994)
AEGL–3 (Lethal)	950 ppm (3900 mg/m^3)	410 ppm (1700 mg/m^3)	240 ppm (980 mg/m^3)	71 ppm (290 mg/m^3)	41 ppm (170 mg/m^3)	$BMCL_{05}$ (Nachreiner and Dodd 1989; Union Carbide 1989; Oberly and Tansy 1985)

References

AEGL = Acute Exposure Guideline Levels

EPA: Do not have to release

Pete Ricca 225-219-3620

Enforcement division 225-219-3715

Not in Baton Rouge

Peggy Hatch 991 Lourdes Ituarde.

Jeffry Myers administrator

Ricca said State Police and DEQ not notified until 7 AM.

D.H.H. Office of Public Health. Thibodaux.

Leak ... continues from 1A

St. Charles Parish Sheriff Greg Champagne said that two deputies working checkpoints near the plant were treated and released from St. Charles Parish Hospital. Hospital spokesman Brandon Kelly said that 27 patients were seen by the hospital on Tuesday and Wednesday, all presenting with symptoms of throat and eye irritation.

"All have been discharged," Kelly said. "As far as I'm aware there have been no serious cases."

Some residents also evacuated to a temporary shelter set up by the parish at E.J. Landry Alternative School. Parish spokeswoman Renee Simpson said that 12 people registered at the shelter, though not all of them stayed after registering.

Butler didn't leave her River Park apartment, but said that many of her neighbors were unsure of what exactly was going on Tuesday morning.

"No one knew anything," she said. "I asked my apartment manager what the smell was and she didn't know, and my mother called and said she was having trouble breathing because of the smell.

"She said she opened the door to get some air, but the smell was much worse outside.

When the Sheriff's Office began blocking off the street, Butler and the rest of her neighbors found out that the odor was coming from Dow.

"I thought they usually run sirens if something happens at the plant, but I didn't hear anything," she said.

Jonathan Menard/Herald-Guide

Sheriff's deputies block off River Road in front of River Park Apartments after ethyl acrylate vapor leaked from Dow.

Simpson said that the parish did not run the sirens because the vapor's concentration was non-toxic.

"From an emergency management standpoint, this event did not warrant blowing the warning sirens because we were dealing with what the DEQ still identifies as a non-toxic concentration of this vapor," she said. "Blaring the sirens would have created panic at a time when EOC was still working as quickly as possible to gather correct information to get to the public via our own media outlets, such as Channel 6, our Web site, the AM radio station and Connect CTY call-out messages."

Champagne said that his office responded immediately after learning of the problem from Dow and set up road blocks on River Road. Traffic control points were also set up near the area. At around 6:45 a.m., Dow began working with the parish's Department of Emergency Preparedness.

Dow treated the tank with foam in order to neutralize the substance, though the smell lingered into Wednesday. The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality also conducted air quality testing near the Dow site on both sides of the river, and late Tuesday night the parish reported that all readings coming back from their own air quality sampling were below allowable levels.

Dow was still working to neutralize the ethyl acrylate odor at 4:30 a.m. on Wednesday, and the company loaded the tank into rail cars to eliminate all odor concerns once it was safe to do so.

75¢ WEEK OF JULY 9 - 15, 2009

Dow vapor sends 27 to hospital

Odor caused throat, eye irritation

BY JONATHAN MENARD
Editor
jonathanm@heraldguide.com

When Pam Butler awoke in her River Park apartment at 5:45 a.m. Tuesday, she was greeted with a headache and dizziness.

"Then I smelled that odor," she said. "I thought the AC unit at the apartment was broken."

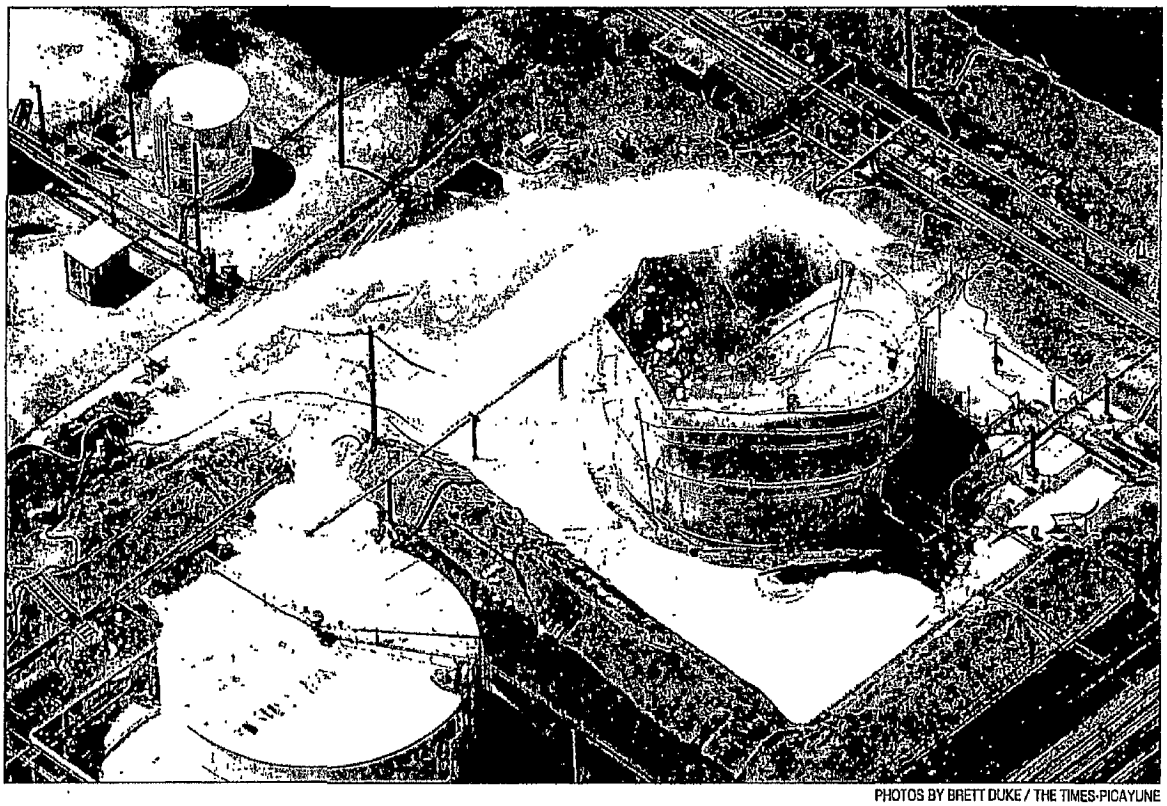
But it wasn't a leaky AC unit, instead ethyl acrylate vapor was leaking out of the nearby Dow Chemical plant. According to a Dow statement, a tank at the site began to release the odor shortly before 5 a.m. Tuesday after the structural condition of the tank became an issue. Dow officials said that the odor causes no long-term health effects, but that it can cause nose and throat irritation as well as headaches and nausea.

That proved to be the case for several residents living or working near the site.

LEAK on page 6A

Odor could linger for days, Dow says

AILING RESIDENTS SHOULD GET HELP, ST. CHARLES SAYS



PHOTOS BY BRETT DUKE / THE TIMES-PICAYUNE

Foam is sprayed on a tank Thursday at the Dow Chemical plant in Hahnville to help knock out the odor that blanketed the New Orleans area after ethyl acrylate leaked from the tank.

'It burned my head real bad and hurt my stomach. It cut my breath.'

MARC ZERINGUE, who lives less than a mile from the Dow Chemical plant.

By Victoria St. Martin
River Parishes bureau

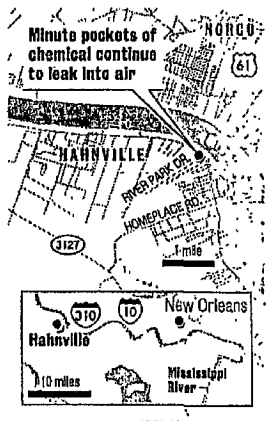
Dow Chemical plant spokesman Tommy Faucheux said that "minute pockets" of ethyl acrylate left in a storage tank continue to react and send bursts of the pungent odor into the air in St. Charles Parish.

It could be days before the air clears completely, he said during a press conference on Thursday at the parish courthouse in Hahnville.

"A reaction in the tank caused it (chemical) to start venting through a seam in the tank," leading to the smell that resurfaced Thursday and spread to several communities across the parish, Faucheux said.

A drop of ethyl acrylate can emit a strong odor, Faucheux said. The company used caustic, which neutralizes the chemical, and foam, which

See **DOW**, *A-9*



THE TIMES-PICAYUNE

Vent valve suspected as cause of leak

DOW, *from A-1*

is made up of 90 percent water, to knock out the odor.

Because the odor is extremely strong, parish officials said some residents could experience mild transient health effects such as irritated eyes, nose and throat, headaches or nausea. They advised anyone who had those symptoms to seek medical attention.

Dow company workers are loading the material onto sealed rail cars to contain the smell. Once on the rail cars, Faucheux said it will be disposed of on site at the Hahnville plant.

A malfunctioning vent on the 640,000 gallon tank apparently led to the initial release on Tuesday, and plant officials say an unrelated problem with that same tank was reported to the state in April.

State officials say only "single digits" parts per million of the chemical escaped during the initial leak on Tuesday, but nothing close to the 25 ppm toxicity level.

Rodney Mallet, a spokesman with state Department of Environmental Quality, said when the chemical reaches 25 ppm over an eight-hour period, it is considered at an "action" level.

Neither Dow nor parish and state officials would say exactly how much of the chemical escaped and became airborne. Residents living closest to the plant were allowed back home Wednesday afternoon when authorities said the chemical had been neutralized.

BRETT DUKE / THE TIMES-PICAYUNE

Dow Chemical plant spokesman Tommy Faucheux said it could be days before the air clears completely during a news conference Thursday at the St. Charles Parish courthouse in Hahnville.

Roof caves in

Reports of the odor came from all over the parish on Thursday, including Hahnville, the Mimosa Park area of Luling, Boutte, St. Rose and New Sarpy. On Tuesday, the chemical fumes blanketed much of the metro New Orleans area with a pungent smell.

An aerial view of the plant Thursday afternoon showed workers continuing to spray foam on a collapsed tank that presumably contained the chemical ethyl acrylate.

Taft Triche, a fenceline neighbor who said he retired from Union Carbide Corp., now a subsidiary of Dow, after working 30 years as a hydrocarbon unit operator, took a reporter and photographer up in his Cessna plane for a look-see Thursday around 3 p.m.

From the air the tank resembles a crushed soda can with the sides pinched inward and the top buckled down.

Faucheux said the roof of the tank, which is a 60-foot-wide cylinder, caved in and continues to fall into itself. He did not say what caused the roof to cave in.

Triche, who did not evacuate, said the smell is strong, but that he hasn't had a negative reaction from the chemical. He said he stayed because he couldn't take his dogs to the shelter or a nearby hotel.

"If it's safe enough for my dogs to stay, it's safe enough for me," Triche, 64, said.

Faucheux said a problem with the same tank was reported in April but that it was unrelated to Tuesday's event.

Notification issue raised

Anne Rolfes, executive director of The Louisiana Bucket Brigade, an environmental watchdog group, said that according to that report sent to the DEQ by Dow, a vent valve on an ethyl acrylate tank at the plant had malfunctioned.

"These reports get filed and just collect dust," said Rolfes, who said her office fielded calls about the odor Thursday.

Rolfes, who was disappointed that state officials have not released sample testing results since the leak, also questioned whether residents were properly notified. She called the event a "systematic failure."

However, parish officials said they took many steps to notify residents about Tuesday's leak.

Scott Whelchel, the parish's emergency preparedness director, said the first call from a business owner came into his office about an odor Tuesday at 3:57 a.m. He said his office immediately notified Dow of the complaints.

The emergency level alert was raised at 7:10 a.m. once EOC was notified by Dow that the leak was not contained to the plant and some protective measures should be taken by nearby residents, Whelchel said.

However, some residents say they were not notified for several hours that a leak had occurred.

Marc Zeringue, who lives on Olivia Drive less than a mile from the plant, said he was pulling out of his driveway around 8 a.m. when firefighters told him he should leave.

"It burned my head real bad and hurt my stomach," said Zeringue, 68, who left town with his wife Tuesday morning. "It cut my breath."

On Thursday, authorities reported that two people sought medical attention because of reactions to the smell. A total of 32 people had been treated and later released at St. Charles Parish Hospital after complaining of burning eyes and throat irritation.

Remaining vigilant

Air monitors from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality continue to show readings well below levels for public safety.

Monitoring has and will continue throughout the duration of the event, Faucheux said.

Residents are advised to use fans to push the odor outdoors and to set their air conditioners to discontinue taking in air from the outside if the odor appears stronger indoors.

St. Charles Parish officials allowed residents closest to the plant who were forced to leave Tuesday to return home late Wednesday night after the leak of ethyl acrylate was thought to have been neutralized.

St. Charles Parish President V.J. St. Pierre Jr. said he organized Thursday's press conference to keep residents updated.

Residents with concerns about the leak can contact the St. Charles Parish Emergency Operations Center at 985.783.5050. Dow's hotline is 985.783.3423.

Victoria St. Martin can be reached at vstmartin@timespicayune.com or 985.652.0952.

UPDATED: 9 :32 a.m. CDT, July 08, 2009

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Chemical leak raises big stink in metro N.O.

State agency plays down health concerns stemming from Hahnville incident

Wednesday, July 08, 2009

By Matt Scallan, Martha Carr

and Ramon Antonio Vargas%%par%%Staff writers

Cleanup work continued into the night around a storage tank at Dow Chemical's sprawling Hahnville complex after a foul-smelling chemical rousted nearby residents from their beds anc prompted the closure of River Road for most of the day on Tuesday.

The leak of ethyl acrylate, a chemical used in the manufacture of a wide variety of household and cleaning products, caused a stench that permeated much of the metro area, possibly aided by strong westerly winds as thunderstorms swept through the area.

The leak was reported shortly before 6 a.m., and more than 14 hours later some residents living between Champagne Trailer Park and the plant still were not allowed to return home "due to safety reasons."

a.m. CT
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- Crime & Safety
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The trailer park is less than a mile downriver from the plant.

St. Charles Parish authorities did not say what those safety concerns were, but officials say the chemical can cause nose and throat irritation, nausea or headaches.

Plant and parish officials have not said how much ethyl acrylate leaked after a vent on the 640,000-gallon tank apparently malfunctioned.

"We were getting calls from as far away as St. Bernard Parish," said Anne Rolfes, executive director of The Louisiana Bucket Brigade, an environmental watchdog group.

The leak resulted when "the structure of the tank became an issue," according to a Dow news release.

--- Gauging the risks ---

Officials from the state Department of Environmental Quality were monitoring the air around the plant on Tuesday and said there did not appear to be an immediate health hazard. DEQ spokesman Rodney Mallett said Tuesday afternoon that the results of those tests were not available.

CONTINUED 1 | 2 | 3 Nex

UPDATED: 9 :33 a.m. CDT, July 08, 2009

PRINT EDITION

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- Two New Orleans murder victims identified after bloody Tuesday 8:21

Chemical leak raises big stink in metro N.O. - Page 2

State agency plays down health concerns stemming from Hahnville incident

Still, a dozen people, including two St. Charles Parish sheriff's deputies guarding a roadblock near the plant, sought treatment at St. Charles Parish Hospital in Luling for burning eyes and noses.

St. Charles Parish opened a temporary shelter at Eual J. Landry Alternative School, but only a handful of residents took advantage of the shelter.

"I've got six kids. I had to get them out of there," said Kawanda White of Killona, who said the stench forced her to flee.

CONTINUE STORY

a.m. CT
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- St. Tammany school construction projects near completion 4:45 p.m. CT
- More in St. Tammany oppose Slidell Landfill's request to stay open past 2010 3:49 p.m. CT
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- Average local price of gasoline is down this morning 8:29 a.m. CT
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Rolfes said the pronouncements that there was little danger seemed to fly in the face of residents' experience.

"They always say that. It's like a script they have whenever anything like this happens," she said.

Dr. Joe Guarisco, the director of emergency services for Ochsner Health System, said being exposed to this chemical is much less dangerous than being exposed to carbon monoxide while sitting in a car, because a person can ingest a toxic amount of the odorless carbon monoxide without even noticing it.

Ethyl acrylate produces a pungent odor at .001 parts per million in the air, Guarisco said. Ethy acrylate isn't toxic to humans until it reaches a level of 500 ppm, he said.

"The good thing about this chemical is that you smell it long before it becomes a danger to individuals," Guarisco said.

He added that the best thing to do for anyone feeling ill is to move away from the odor.

Dow spokesman Tommy Faucheux declined to discuss the size of the tank or the amount of the chemical released into the air. However, he said work at the 1,300-acre complex went on as normal after workers evacuated the immediate area of the leak.

Previous 1 | **2** | 3 Nex

UPDATED: 9 :34 a.m. CDT, July 08, 2009

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Chemical leak raises big stink in metro N.O. - Page 3

State agency plays down health concerns stemming from Hahnville incident

The area affected by the stench, which some compared to the smell of burnt spaghetti sauce and others to burning plastic, may have been exacerbated by the weather.

Mike Efferson, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service, said rainstorms passing through the area early Tuesday may have kept the vapor at low altitudes while strong westerly winds accompanying the storms pushed the vapor into the most populous areas of the city.

--- Dealing with the smell ---

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Parish officials say if the odor is stronger in your home than outside, you should air out your home by using fans to push the odor out. You also can set your air conditioner to stop pulling in air from the outside.

"It's a strong odor, but just because you smell it, it doesn't mean it's a threat to your health," Mallet said. "Right now, it's just a big stink. It can really stink for quite some time before it affects someone's health. But it will affect people differently."

Concerned residents in parishes across the metro area deluged police and fire agencies with calls beginning early Tuesday, saying the smell had permeated their neighborhoods, homes and cars, and was causing some to feel ill.

. . . . . .

Staff writers Mark Schleifstein, Valerie Faciane and Littice Bacon-Blood contributed to this report.

Matt Scallan can be reached at mscallan@timespicayune.com or 985.652.0953. Martha Carr can be reached at mcarr@timespicayune.com or 504.826.3306. Ramon Antonio Vargas can be reached at rvargas@timespicayune.com or 504.826.3371.

Previous 1 | 2 | :

Clean up from Dow leak could be finished today, some residents allowed back home

Posted by mscallan July 08, 2009 11:30AM

BRETT DUKE / THE TIMES-PICAYUNEBrian Tusa, of the Department of Environmental Quality, takes air readings Wednesday, July 8, 2009 on top of the Mississippi River levee in Hahnville.

St. Charles Parish officials say they are "hopeful" that clean up efforts from Tuesday's early morning leak of ethyl acrylate at the Dow Chemical plant in Hahnville will be finished by the end of day.

Although parish spokeswoman Renee Allemand Simpson couldn't put a timeline on when the all-clear signal would be given and the roadblocks on River Road removed, she said Dow officials have said they were "close" to finishing.

"We're hopeful that it will be done by the end of the day," she said.

Meanwhile, fenceline neighbors of Dow Chemical plant are still being kept out of their homes because of the leak that forced a voluntary call for evacuation of nearby residents and filled the air around metro New Orleans with a pungent smell.

About 15 families who live closest to the plant were being housed at a hotel courtesy of Dow while state Department of Environmental Quality officials continue to monitor the air, Simpson said.

However, residents at the Champagne Trailer Park, located less than a mile from the plant, have been allowed to return home after a voluntary evacuation turned into a mandatory stay away order late Tuesday.

"I was out at Champagne Trailer Park around 8:30 this morning and I really couldn't smell anything," Simpson said.

St. Charles Parish sheriff's deputies have set up access points beginning at Home Place, also known as Louisiana 3160, along River Road to restrict access.

The state DEQ is conducting air quality testing near Dow and on both sides of the river and parish

News

ETHYL ACRYLATE ODOR UPDATES

Posted Date: 7/9/2009

8 a.m. / July 10, 2009

There continues to be the possibility of odor related to Tuesday's Ethyl Acrylate i Operations in Hahnville.

Air monitors from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Louisiana Dep Quality continue to show readings well below levels for public safety. Monitoring throughout the duration of the event.

However, because this odor is extremely strong, some could experience mild trai irritated eyes, nose and throat, headaches or nausea. Others will not have a react

If you experience any of these symptoms, you are advised to move away from the by visiting your doctor or calling 911. We are sensitive to those in the community that could be adversely affected by this odor. St. Charles Parish Emergency Oper these individuals as necessary.

Those experiencing higher odor levels in their homes than outside are advised to outdoors. Residents may also choose to set their air conditioners to discontinue t

Please be aware Dow St. Charles Operations has advised this event could contin time. No further protective actions are recommended at this time.

For more information please contact the St. Charles Parish Emergency Operatio Dow has set up a hotline at (985) 783-3423.

officials say all readings have been shown to be below allowable levels.

However, parish officials were told earlier that the leak has been contained, but that there may be small "bursts" of chemical releases as Dow tries to clean up the 640,000 gallon tank.

Meanwhile, thousands of workers headed for the Taft industrial complex earlier this morning were being detoured away from the west bank River Road in St. Charles Parish as Dow continued to transfer a foul-smelling chemical from a damaged storage tank.

Residents and employees reporting for work in the industrial corridor are being sent to Louisiana 3127 and Louisiana 3142 in order to reduce traffic on River Road in Hahnville and Taft. Simpson said.

A roadblock has been set up at Elm Street and River Road in Hahnville that will only allow residents and Dow St. Charles employees through. The roadblock at Champagne Street is still in place and limits access to essential personnel only.

The Red Cross will keep its shelter at Eual J. Landry Alternative School open for the duration of the cleanup, Simpson said.

While the chemical fumes aren't toxic, they will make people feel ill by causing annoying symptoms such as irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, authorities said. Anyone complaining of symptoms should move away from the smell.

Chemical fumes began leaking from the damaged tank early Tuesday morning and spread throughout much of the New Orleans area. A dozen people checked into St. Charles Parish Hospital in Luling complaining of burning eyes and noses but were quickly released, officials said.

Dow is moving the remaining ethyl acrylate from the damaged tank into railcars, spokesman Tommy Faucheux said.

Faucheux said the company's current information indicates there is no danger to the public.

Ethyl acrylate is an ingredient in the manufacture of plastics and adhesives.

Categories: Breaking News, Environment/Coastal erosion, News, News: Baton Rouge, News: East Jefferson, News: New Orleans, News: North Shore, News: River Parishes, News: St. Bernard, News: Washington, D.C., News: West Bank, Traffic

Comments

poppa53 says...

People in Kenner and Metarie were smelling this stuff, what was in the tank I would guess is pure, so some where between pure and low there should be medium and high information on the effects of, and appropriate response to this exposure and where these changes in level occour would be more useful information. Mr. St. Pierre's people ain't gonna ruffle Dow they are the biggest tax payer in the Parish.

Posted on 07/08/09 at 7:15AM

sleazy4 says...

Dow, St. Charles sound "all clear;" source of chemical stench neutralized

Posted by mscallan July 08, 2009 22:10PM

St. Charles Parish officials sounded the all-clear alert in the Hahnville area 35 hours after foul-smelling fumes began to escape from a faulty storage tank at Dow Chemical's St. Charles Operations facility in Hahnville.

THE TIMES-PICAYUNE

The stench from the ethyl acrylate housed in the tank sent at least 27 people to the hospital reporting eye and nose irritation, and forced parish officials to block off parts of River Road near the plant.

Ethyl acrylate is used in producing plastics and adhesives.

The acrid smell, which residents compared to that of burning plastic, drifted over much of the New Orleans area on Tuesday.

Dow workers filled the 640,000-gallon tank with foam to dampen the fumes and treated the material with other chemicals to neutralize it.

Dow spokesman Tommy Faucheux said the material will be loaded onto railcars in the yard, where it will be disposed of in the plant's normal waste-processing facilities. About 15 families were evacuated from homes closest to the plant overnight as employees of the state Department of Environmental Quality tested the air.

DEQ spokesman Rodney Mallett said Wednesday that DEQ employees with air sampling monitors got no readings close to the federal workplace safety standard for volatile organic compounds of 25 parts per million.

Ethyl acrylate is in that category of chemical.

"None of the samples came up to even half that amount, " Mallett said.

There also is a fixed air quality monitor near the Dow site.

Mallett said he was relying on information from DEQ agents in the field, and did not have immediate access to the data.

One of the characteristics of ethyl acrylate is its pungent smell, which becomes noticeable well below toxic levels.

Some residents near the plant who woke up to the smell and were affected by the odor early Tuesday complained that they were told that nothing serious was going on.

Dow officials said they called the St. Charles Parish Emergency Operations Center about 4:45 a.m., well before firefighters began knocking on doors in the community shortly after 7 a.m.

However, it wasn't clear what the EOC knew about the full effects of the chemical, which it said was "non life-threatening."

"We're going to look at what we did, and we'll be honest about how we could have done better, " emergency preparedness director Scott Whelchel said.

St. Charles Parish public school officials did not ask summer school and camp participants to evacuate or shelter in place during the event because the EOC didn't make that recommendation, spokeswoman Rochelle Cancienne-Touchard said.

St. Charles and Dow officials continuously said that the level of ethyl acrylate released, while malodorous, was not toxic.

Plant and parish officials have yet to say just how much ethyl acrylate was leaked.

Parish officials say it could take days for the smell to completely dissipate, but that any residual odors don't pose a health risk.

.....

Matt Scallan can be reached at mscallan@timespicayune.com or 985.652.0953.

Categories: Accident, Breaking News, Business, Environment/Coastal erosion, News, News: Baton Rouge, News: East Jefferson, News: New Orleans, News: North Shore, News: River Parishes, News: St. Bernard, News: West Bank, Traffic

Comments

XcockroachX says...

"...Officials said the material will then be loaded onto railcars for disposal...".

I wonder where those railcars are headed & whether or not they'll be on the tracks at Press Street at some point....

Posted on 07/08/09 at 5:21PM

beatlebum says...

so, who's going to spearhead the class action suit when we all get some arcane cancer from dow's malodorous bestowing?

Posted on 07/08/09 at 5:22PM

porcobot says...

Hey idiot DEQ spokesman, a civilians personal property does not fall within the federal workplace safety standard for airborne emissions. DEQ makes lots of money from these plants. You pay DEQ what they want and they'll help you remediate your problem and get everyone off your back. Do Not Believe Them!

Posted on 07/08/09 at 5:33PM

CataouatcheC says...

The key phrase is "However, plant and parish officials have yet to say just how much ethyl acrylate was leaked at the height of the release."

It obviously breached "safe" levels for some unknown period of time---when the reported samples were taken, it was likely hours after the height of the danger. It's pretty embarassing that the local news media isn't picking up on this---they don't have the courage to challenge DEQ apparently.

And so we all pay for it by breathing in chemical fumes. Scott Whelchel should be fired or disciplined for his amateur handling of this emergency. He gave people the false impression it was safe for us to go to work in St. Charles Parish Tuesday morning when it was not safe at all! It takes two minutes for anyone to search "ethyl acrylate" on the internet to see that it is listed as a harmful chemical capable of skin, eye and lung irritation. This information was not publicized immediately as it should have been. People should not have been breathing it and told that it was harmless!

While only 27 people went to the hospital, many people out here suffered symptoms and many report a sore throat still today! There were far more than 27 people injured by Dow's negligence!

The DEQ is an utter failure. Governor Jindal should start an immediate investigation into the many failures that transpired yesterday. We need better officials for the next chemical incident---I do not feel safe!

Posted on 07/08/09 at 7:46PM

algierslady says...

This chemical leak was pungent in Algiers. Smell was in the house around 7:00am. Air conditioner must have dragged it inside, so don't let DOW get off with it won't hurt you. Got out of bed feeling nausea...

Posted on 07/08/09 at 11:53PM

saintsfan25 says...

WE NEED TO GET RID OF THAT DO-NOTHING V.J. ST. PIERRE.

Posted on 07/09/09 at 1:31AM
Footer

Aniedra - went home. 2 deputies went in the hospital.
Lee refused to give last name
Was not concerned about symptoms.
EPA: 8926 mg/m - causes death. Lee still claims the chemical is harmless.
Parish employees evacuated from Eastbank yard/Arterbury building at 6:30AM.
Suton Delta Drive in St Rose

7:31 "Insist it is not hazardous."

WWL 8:10 No call back from St. Charles Parish.
"We're getting numerous calls of people saying the smell is overwhelmi.

8:11 Dave Cohen reports "People feeling lightheaded, dizzy, and nauseated."
"Officially we've been trying to get information.

8:12 "We have not been able to get a statement from Parish officia

8:16 Renee Allenan says "she just got to work. Not dangerous at the levels being released . . . at this time it is not dangerous."

Michael from St. Rose
7:45 "I work for a petroleum co. that tests ethyl acrylate. I think it is extremely harmful. You can get sick from it. We take extreme precautions when it is brought into our laboratory."

800-887-6063 (epa)

www.wwl.com/pages/1050632.php

18:
"We've had callers that work for example at Dow, and they say when they work with that at work they wear masks."

9:04:42 "Public Information Officer for St. Charles Parish Renee Allenan says in the levels it's being emitted from the Hahnville Dow Chemical Plant, this ethyl acrylate is not dangerous."

Everything New Orleans

The Times-Picayune

Odor could linger for days, Dow says

Ailing residents should get help, St. Charles says

Friday, July 10, 2009

By Victoria St. Martin

River Parishes bureau

Dow Chemical plant spokesman Tommy Faucheux said that "minute pockets" of ethyl acrylate left in a storage tank continue to react and send bursts of the pungent odor into the air in St. Charles Parish.

It could be days before the air clears completely, he said during a press conference on Thursday at the parish courthouse in Hahnville.

"A reaction in the tank caused it (chemical) to start venting through a seam in the tank," leading to the smell that resurfaced Thursday and spread to several communities across the parish, Faucheux said.

A drop of ethyl acrylate can emit a strong odor, Faucheux said. The company used caustic, which neutralizes the chemical, and foam, which is made up of 90 percent water, to knock out the odor.

Because the odor is extremely strong, parish officials said some residents could experience mild transient health effects such as irritated eyes, nose and throat, headaches or nausea. They advised anyone who had those symptoms to seek medical attention.

Dow company workers are loading the material onto sealed rail cars to contain the smell. Once on the rail cars, Faucheux said it will be disposed of on site at the Hahnville plant.

A malfunctioning vent on the 640,000 gallon tank apparently led to the initial release on Tuesday, and plant officials say an unrelated problem with that same tank was reported to the state in April.

State officials say only "single digits" parts per million of the chemical escaped during the initial leak on Tuesday, but nothing close to the 25 ppm toxicity level.

Rodney Mallet, a spokesman with state Department of Environmental Quality, said when the chemical reaches 25 ppm over an eight-hour period, it is considered at an "action" level.

Neither Dow nor parish and state officials would say exactly how much of the chemical escaped and became airborne. Residents living closest to the plant were allowed back home Wednesday afternoon when authorities said the chemical had been neutralized.

--- Roof caves in ---

Reports of the odor came from all over the parish on Thursday, including Hahnville, the Mimosa Park area of Luling, Boutte, St. Rose and New Sarpy. On Tuesday, the chemical fumes blanketed much of the metro New Orleans area with a pungent smell.

An aerial view of the plant Thursday afternoon showed workers continuing to spray foam on a collapsed tank that presumably contained the chemical ethyl acrylate.

Taft Triche, a fenceline neighbor who said he retired from Union Carbide Corp., now a subsidiary of Dow, after working 30 years as a hydrocarbon unit operator, took a reporter and photographer up in his Cessna plane for a look-see Thursday around 3 p.m.

From the air the tank resembles a crushed soda can with the sides pinched inward and the top buckled down.

Faucheux said the roof of the tank, which is a 60-foot-wide cylinder, caved in and continues to fall into itself. He did not say what caused the roof to cave in.

Triche, who did not evacuate, said the smell is strong, but that he hasn't had a negative reaction from the chemical. He said he stayed because he couldn't take his dogs to the shelter or a nearby hotel.

"If it's safe enough for my dogs to stay, it's safe enough for me," Triche, 64, said.

Faucheux said a problem with the same tank was reported in April but that it was unrelated to Tuesday's event.

--- Notification issue raised —

Anne Rolfes, executive director of The Louisiana Bucket Brigade, an environmental watchdog group, said that according to that report sent to the DEQ by Dow, a vent valve on an ethyl acrylate tank at the plant had malfunctioned.

"These reports get filed and just collect dust," said Rolfes, who said her office fielded calls about the odor Thursday.

Rolfes, who was disappointed that state officials have not released sample testing results since the leak, also questioned whether residents were properly notified. She called the event a "systematic failure."

However, parish officials said they took many steps to notify residents about Tuesday's leak.

Scott Whelchel, the parish's emergency preparedness director, said the first call from a business owner came into his office about an odor Tuesday at 3:57 a.m. He said his office immediately notified Dow of the complaints.

The emergency level alert was raised at 7:10 a.m. once EOC was notified by Dow that the leak was not contained to the plant and some protective measures should be taken by nearby residents, Whelchel said.

However, some residents say they were not notified for several hours that a leak had occurred.

Marc Zeringue, who lives on Olivia Drive less than a mile from the plant, said he was pulling out of his driveway around 8 a.m. when firefighters told him he should leave.

"It burned my head real bad and hurt my stomach," said Zeringue, 68, who left town with his wife Tuesday morning. "It cut my breath."

On Thursday, authorities reported that two people sought medical attention because of reactions to the smell. A total of 32 people had been treated and later released at St. Charles Parish

Hospital after complaining of burning eyes and throat irritation.

--- Remaining vigilant ---

Air monitors from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality continue to show readings well below levels for public safety.

Monitoring has and will continue throughout the duration of the event, Faucheux said.

Residents are advised to use fans to push the odor outdoors and to set their air conditioners to discontinue taking in air from the outside if the odor appears stronger indoors.

St. Charles Parish officials allowed residents closest to the plant who were forced to leave Tuesday to return home late Wednesday night after the leak of ethyl acrylate was thought to have been neutralized.

St. Charles Parish President V.J. St. Pierre Jr. said he organized Thursday's press conference to keep residents updated.

Residents with concerns about the leak can contact the St. Charles Parish Emergency Operations Center at 985.783.5050. Dow's hotline is 985.783.3423.

. . . . . .

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