

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
Division of Spill Prevention and Response
Prevention and Emergency Response Program

SITUATION REPORT

INCIDENT NAME: F/T Aurous Ammonia Release

SITREP #: 1 and Final

SPILL NUMBER: 04239907001

LEDGER CODE: Requested

TIME/DATE OF SPILL: 7:00 p.m., March 10, 2004. PASSCO Refrigeration (the contractor) that the bank had hired reported the spill to ADEC at 11 a.m., March 11, 2004.

TIME/DATE OF SITUATION REPORT: 4:20 p.m., March 11, 2004

TIME/DATE OF THE NEXT REPORT: None this is the final report

TYPE/AMOUNT OF PRODUCT SPILLED: Liquid Ammonia, 150 to 210 pounds as estimated by the contractor.

LOCATION: Small Boat Harbor, Homer

CAUSE OF SPILL: One of the valves to the accumulator tank failed while trying to tighten. Because of the valve failure venting at 60 PSI of ammonia vapor, resulted in the contractor dumping the liquid contents of the low pressure accumulator tank to minimize any further ammonia venting.

POTENTIAL RESPONSIBLE PARTY (PRP): 1st National Bank Alaska (owner of Aurous)

RESPONSE ACTION: On the evening of March 8, 2004 and the morning of March 9, ADEC and USCG investigators met with the contractor on the F/T Aurous after hearing reports that the contractor was venting ammonia vapors to a water diffusion system. The contractor was hired by the owner to control the ammonia vapors from seeping from the vessel's refrigeration system. Efforts were made to isolate the bulk of the ammonia to the low pressure accumulator tank while venting residual ammonia vapors to the diffuser saltwater system on the deck of the Aurous and further diluting to the surrounding saltwater in the small boat harbor.

On March 10, the PRP and the contractor drafted the ammonia removal plan for the vessel under guidance of the ADEC responder after which the ADEC responder returned to Anchorage.

On March 11, the contractor reported that while attempting to tighten a valve in the fish processing room at about 7:00 pm on March 10, the valve mechanically failed, filling the room with ammonia that eventually vented outside of the vessel. Immediate emergency measures to control the release of vapor into the air were initiated by directing the liquid ammonia in the accumulator tank into the waters of the small boat harbor. By releasing the ammonia into the water it was diluted thereby minimizing exposure to ammonia vapor.

Both vessels adjacent to the Aurous were uninhabited at the time of the ammonia release.

SOURCE CONTROL: The valve failure caused the ammonia vapor to vent which precipitated emergency response actions by the contractor to pump and dilute the contents of the low pressure accumulator tank into nearby saltwater.

RESOURCES AFFECTED: Marine waters within the small boat harbor. Harbor Master office in Homer and the contractor reported that no wildlife impacts were observed.

FUTURE PLANS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: The contractor will continue to vent off the residual ammonia vapors in the refrigeration system, to the water diffuser system. The contractor will continue to monitor the vessels

entire refrigeration system for leaks of ammonia vapors and liquids. The contractor will establish a catch-basin for the potential release of any residual ammonia liquids from the accumulator tank.

WEATHER: March 10, 2004: Winds calm, cloudy, temperatures in mid 30s. Today: Rain and snow showers, areas of fog in the morning, highs in the mid 30s to mid 40s. South winds with 10 to 15 mph with higher gusts.

UNIFIED COMMAND AND PERSONNEL:

Incident Commander: Mike Dye (1st National Bank Alaska)
F.O.S.C.:
S.O.S.C.: Gary Folley (ADEC)
Field S.O.S.C.:

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT: Frank Wesser, ADEC 907-269-3062.

AGENCY/STAKEHOLDER NOTIFICATION LIST

AGENCY	NAME	Sent Via		Telephone	Facsimile
USCG MSO Anch	Captain Morris	Fax		271-6700	271-6751
ADPS	State Troopers	Fax		428-7200	428-7204
USEPA	Matt Carr	Fax		271-3616	271-3424
USCG MSD Kenai		Fax		283-3292	283-5085
OTHER	NAME	Sent Via		Telephone	Facsimile
CIRCAC	Mike Munger	Fax/Email	munger@circac.org	283-7222	283-6102
Kenai Pen. Borough	Dave Gibbs, OEM	Fax		262-4910	262-8603
			Session/Interim		
Senate R/Kodiak	Gary Stevens	Fax	Juneau 5/16 - 1/09 Juneau 1/10 - 5/15	465-4925 465-4925	465-3517 465-3517
House 35/Homer	Paul Seaton	Fax	Homer 5/16 - 1/09 Juneau 1/10 - 5/15	235-2921 465-2689	235-4008 465-3472
House 36/Homer	Dan Ogg	Fax	Kodiak 5/16-1/09 Juneau 1/10 - 5/15	486-8872 465-2487	486-5264 465-4956