

Message

From: Bennett, Tate [Bennett.Tate@epa.gov]
Sent: 8/31/2017 9:30:35 PM
To: Bennett, Tate [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group
(FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=1fa92542f7ca4d01973b18b2f11b9141-Bennett, E]
Subject: Additional Fuel Waivers Issued, and other comments

Below is the latest from EPA. In sum, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt yesterday was on the ground in Texas assessing existing and potential environmental damage caused by Harvey, has approved additional emergency fuel waivers, has deployed staff on the ground near a chemical facility and finally has issued a joint statement with Texas DEQ. Let me know if you have any questions.

-Tate

Elizabeth Tate Bennett
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EPA Approves Emergency Fuel Waivers for 38 States and Washington, D.C.

WASHINGTON (August 31, 2017) – As a result of the continuing impacts on Gulf Coast-area refineries and disruption to the fuel distribution system caused by Hurricane Harvey, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator

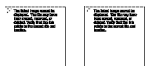
Scott Pruitt today exercised EPA's emergency fuel waiver authority to help ensure an adequate supply of fuel throughout the country.

EPA has waived requirements for reformulated gasoline and low volatility conventional gasoline through September 15 in the following states and the District of Columbia: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Wisconsin, Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, and Texas. Today's waiver supersedes and expands the areas covered by the waiver issued on August 30. The sale of gasoline containing up to 15 percent ethanol (E15) must continue to comply with federal rules, which are designed to minimize the potential for E15 being used in vehicles that are not designed to use this fuel.

The waiver authority was exercised under the Clean Air Act and was granted by EPA Administrator Pruitt, in coordination with the U.S. Secretary of Energy Rick Perry.

As required by law, EPA and the Department of Energy (DOE) evaluated the situation and determined that granting a short-term waiver was consistent with the public interest. EPA and DOE are continuing to actively monitor the fuel supply situation as a result of Hurricane Harvey, and will act expeditiously if extreme and unusual supply circumstances exist in other areas.

To mitigate any impacts on air quality, the Clean Air Act provides strict criteria for when fuels waivers may be granted, and requires that waivers be limited as much as possible in terms of their geographic scope and duration.



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Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20460 United States

EPA Statement on Reported Explosion at Chemical Plant in Crosby, Texas

WASHINGTON (August 31, 2017) – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt released the following statement on the report of an explosion at an Arkema facility in Crosby, Texas that occurred in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey:

"EPA's focus is on the safety of those around the facility and we urge those in the area to follow the safety instructions of local authorities. EPA is providing assistance and resources to the first responders in Harris County and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

"EPA has emergency response personnel on the scene and the Agency is currently reviewing data received from an aircraft that surveyed the scene early this morning. This information indicates that there are no concentrations of concern for toxic materials reported at this time.

"We will consider using any authority we have to further address the situation to protect human health and the environment."

Additional Background:

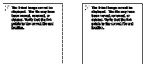
At approximately 2:45 a.m. CT this morning the National Response Center received a report from Arkema concerning a reported explosion at their facility in Crosby, Texas.

As described in the National Contingency Plan (a federal regulation under the CERCLA statute), EPA is required to prepare for and respond to any release or threat of release of oil, hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants into the environment that may present an imminent and substantial threat to public health or welfare and the environment.

As a result, EPA has deployed an ASPECT aircraft to secure chemical information from the smoke cloud and EPA's federal on-scene coordinator will arrive shortly to ensure all federal resources are available to first responders. EPA is also sending additional air monitoring personnel and equipment to augment the current efforts of the state and local first responders, and monitoring teams from Houston will arrive on-scene in the next few hours.

EPA provides the Co-Chair of the Region 6 standing Regional Response Team, a group federal agencies that support a response, and provides pre-designated On-Scene Coordinators for the inland zone. The Coast Guard is the other Co-Chair. EPA is responsible for providing expertise regarding ecological and environmental effects of pollution releases and environmental pollution control techniques

There is a 1.5-mile radius exclusion area around the explosion site and EPA personnel are getting as close to the scene as possible. Currently, a zone has been set by the local fire marshal to protect the area from potential additional explosions.



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EPA/TCEQ Statement on Water Quality of Flood-Impacted Areas from Hurricane Harvey

WASHINGTON (August 31, 2017) – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) release the following statement today, in regards to the water quality of flood-impacted areas from Hurricane Harvey.

“EPA and TCEQ are aware that releases of wastewater from sanitary sewers occur during major flood events. The Agencies actively work to monitor those facilities that have reported spills, as well as conducting outreach and providing technical guidance to all other wastewater facilities in flood-impacted areas.

“Floodwaters may contain many hazards, including bacteria and other disease agents. Precautions should be taken by anyone involved in cleanup activities or any others who may be exposed to flood waters. These precautions include heeding all warnings from local and state authorities regarding boil water notices, swimming advisories, or other safety advisories. In addition to the drowning hazards of wading, swimming, or driving in swift floodwaters, these waters can carry large objects that are not always readily visible that can cause injuries to those in the water. Other potential hazards include downed power lines and possible injuries inflicted by animals displaced by the floodwaters.

“Federal and state mobile command is currently about 200 people, who are working elbow-to-elbow, starting in Corpus Christi and moving east with primary responsibility of the health and safety of those affected by Hurricane Harvey. As we continue to respond to this natural disaster and its devastating effects on the people of Texas, the biggest threat to public health at this time is ensuring they have access to safe drinking water and ensuring waste water systems are being monitored, tested for safety and managed appropriately.”

