cc: Mr. H. O. Bourque
Mr. D. M. McDonald
M&C Supervision
Maintenance Committeemen
Central Safety Committee

ETHYL CORPORATION

INTER-OFFICE



To - Mr. L. R. Parker **Address**

From R. J. Guillot **Address**

Subject Near Serious Accident **Date** February 15, 1983

Investigated by: R. J. Guillot, E. McGeorge and F. D. Roberts

INCIDENT:

On January 24, 1983, in the Hopper Shop, an ironworker was attempting to straighten a piece of bent 1", schedule 80 pipe, approximately 3' long which had been heated at the mid-point by a welder's torch. As the ironworker raised the pipe to strike it on the metal table, an explosion took place within the pipe. Dirt and debris impacted in the end of the pipe was projected upward striking a flourescent tube above the table completely destroying it. The repercussion knocked the ironworker back against the wall but did not cause any bodily harm.

INVESTIGATION:

The piece of pipe in question had previously been driven in the ground and used as a support for the plastic chain fence immediately east of the No. 3 Change House Lunch Room (northeast corner). The pipe and residue from the explosion (deposited in the metal table) were brought to the Development Laboratory for analysis along with core samples taken from the earth in the near vicinity of the pipe location.

The samples were analyzed by R&D and other than moisture, a trace of methane was all that was found.

CONCLUSION:

It is strongly suspected that water was trapped between two plugs of dirt in the pipe. When the pipe was heated, steam was produced eventually forcing the dirt plug out with great velocity.

RECOMMENDATION:

Clean, flush and decontaminate any such pipe prior to heating. Publicize this incident plant-wide.

R. J. Guillot pmk

R. J. Guillot

RJG:pmk

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