

Interoffice Communication

To : Jim Barton
From : David Hollis
Date : February 13, 1978
Subject : D-400 MISCHARGE

SINCE THERE WERE NO
EXPOSURES, THIS INCIDENT
WAS NOT REPORTED.

3-9-78
JLH

On 2/10/78, at approximately 8:00 p.m., the condenser lid gasket on D-400 blew out during charge. This resulted in a loss of 23,150 # the VCM to the atmosphere. No one was exposed. Events leading up to the release are as follows:

D-400 was dumped and rinsed for 15 minutes. The reactor was then held down 30 minutes to allow the temperature recorder to be calibrated. After instrument was in working order, "A" operator, Sammy Stokes, checked the sight glass and reported D-400 empty. Lead operator, Bud Stone, checked the amps on the agitator, it was below 50. He then placed the reactor under evacuation. Stokes reported a vacuum of 29.5 inches mercury and vacuum was broken by Stone. Stokes said the reactor sounded strange, but could find nothing wrong so gave word to charge reactor.

Charge was near completion when Stokes radioed that the condenser gasket had blown. The MSA system had not gone off so he radioed to reset it. Stone immediately stopped the charge on D-400. D-500 was dumping, he stopped that. D-300 was recovering and that was stopped. Stone reset the MSA unit and sounded the vapor release alarm. Stone started venting reactor through atmospheric vent on reactor. I gave word to vent it through vent on evacuation system. The MSA unit in V-11 had not come on. I put on Scott Air Pack and went outside. Stokes and I went to examine the post-indicating valves controlling water to the V-11 building. All valves showed open. Al Sather, Safety Director, came in the plant and found that the valve to the V-11 building had been mislabeled and was not open. The system still would not come on. A manual activator near the MSA controller was turned on but the system still would not come on. Using a pipe, a sensor inside the building was broken, system finally came on. Two fire monitors were turned onto the streams coming from the reactor. When the streams coming from the reactor had stopped being steady liquid, the recovery system was turned on it. Stone reported amps were below 50 so he added water through spray nozzles to leave charge system alone until it was examined. When the reactor amps went above 100 he shut off water and began stripping. The reactor was stripped to 164°F and 5 inches mercury vacuum. When the recovery system was started, the vents were shut and the MSA units and fire monitors shut off. The area was checked with a HNU gas analyzer and reported clear of VCM. The "all clear" was sounded. Readings on the area Honeywell had dropped. The lab and dryer control room Honeywell units had not had any readings. The wind was from the north, away from these areas.

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People in the area were Sammy Stokes, J. D. Sims, Bud Stone, Charlie Little, Joe Shackleford, and myself. Stokes was outside and circled the reactor area to the dryer building. J. D. Sims was in the dryer area and stayed there. The rest stayed in the control room. I put on a Scott Air Pack and went outside. Stokes put on a Scott Air Pack and helped with the MSA system and fire monitors.

The pressure recorder showed a peak pressure of 170# had been reached. The charge counters showed 408 counts (4080 gallons) of VCM and 264 counts (2640 gallons) had been charged to the reactor. Examination of the gasket showed that it had ruptured about half around. A reactor outage was taken when the reactor was opened. The outage was 124 inches to the top of the water.

David Hollis
David Hollis

cjt

c: ELK, AHS