

March 23, 1988

3/22/88 Outfall PH Problem

Known facts to Derivatives' employees working graveyard:

1. WTU weak acid tank level went low at 5:00 am. They asked EC operators to start sending them weak acid from the RLS tank, which they did.
2. Plant A operator called WTU notifying them that they were not getting enough acid. WTU start sending them acid from their tank at 5:30 am. At this time they notify EC operators of the problem and asked them to check their system.
3. At 5:45 am WTU shuts down their pump to build inventory in their tank. At this time all the acid was being supplied by EC.
4. At 6:00 am the Shift Superintendent notifies Derivatives Shift Supervisor that Plant A is in need of acid for PH control. A phone call was made to EC and WTU control rooms to request from them to double check the acid system.
5. Everything was checked at EC by the lead operator and the operator of that unit. It was also double checked by Derivative S.S. and found to be properly aligned.
6. At 6:10 am WTU tank had gained some level and they started their pump again until 6:30 am. The pump was restarted at 6:50 and was shut down again at 8:10 am.
7. In two different occasions Randy Whitehead asked Mr. Herby if he wanted him to add acid in Derivatives but the response was negative. According to Mr. Herby they had the PH under control.

Contributor Factors

1. High PH from Plant C.
2. Overconfidence at Plant A, we could have send them plenty strong acid.
3. Shift Superintendent tank has been out of service for a good while eliminating the surge capacity available otherwise.
4. A-caustic was draining a tank car.
5. No pressure gauges on the acid system.

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