

VPA 000008891

- Public Relations
"If Needed" Backups

UFA 000008892

If-Needed Statement

VCM Plant discharge
Lake Charles

Date: 6/8/88

FOR LAKE CHARLES-AREA MEDIA, RESIDENTS ONLY

At approximately 10 p.m. on Sunday, June 5, pressure-relief equipment discharged due to pressure build-up in the oxy-chlorination reaction section of Vista Chemical's VCM (vinyl chloride monomer) Plant in Westlake, La. As a result, approximately one-half pound of VCM, 4.9 pounds of ethyl chloride and 368 pounds of hydrogen chloride were released into the atmosphere.

No one was injured. Plant personnel determined the situation was under control and notified all appropriate local, state and federal authorities.

On Tuesday, June 7, several residents of Mossville, a residential area adjacent to the plant, noticed a speckled, white, powder-like dust on their cars. Residents reported the situation to plant officials, who examined the powder and determined it was likely a catalyst substance used in the manufacturing process. The substance is harmless to residents, and Vista has already taken steps to remove the dust and its effects from the cars.

The plant is currently operating at reduced rates and will remain so until equipment involved in the incident is inspected and repaired as necessary. Pressure-relief equipment is a standard safety measure in most high-pressure manufacturing processes and is automatically activated when potentially dangerous over-pressure conditions occur.

Although the incident is still under investigation, it is believed that feedstock impurities originating from Vista's ethylene unit at its Lake Charles Chemical Plant in Westlake caused the over-pressure condition. Following the investigation, Vista will take whatever steps are necessary to prevent similar occurrences.

Use only in response to specific questions from the media:

Q. What are these chemicals? Are they harmful to people?

A. The substances released into the atmosphere dissipated quickly and did not affect plant personnel or nearby residents. The white powder found on cars within Mossville was a catalyst substance composed primarily of copper and alumina. Copper is an essential element of human metabolism, and in powdered form, is believed to be nothing more than a nuisance. Alumina is similar in nature to sand.

Q. How often does this kind of thing happen?

A. Although pressure-relief equipment is a standard safety practice in high-pressure manufacturing processes, activation of such equipment is seldom required.

Q. What are you going to do to make sure it doesn't happen again?

A. A thorough investigation of the incident is now underway at Vista's VCM and

Guard
senile
headlights
shining into
Mossville
Substance
to it

Conrad
practice

Gambin

The cause of the incident is still under invest.

Laction

gases

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Lake Charles Chemical Plants. Because an exact cause has not yet been identified, it's difficult to say at this time what will be done. However, when the investigation is completed, Vista will do whatever needs to be done to make sure similar conditions do not occur again.

Q. What would the dust do to the cars if it's not removed?

A. Vista is in the process of having the cars cleaned. Copper dust, combined with moisture, could become slightly corrosive to metal or paint if it's not removed.

If-Needed Statement

**VCM Plant shutdown
Lake Charles**

Date: 6/9/88

FOR INDUSTRY ANALYSTS, NATIONAL TRADE MEDIA ONLY

Vista Chemical's VCM (vinyl chloride monomer) Plant in Westlake, La., has been temporarily shut down to replace equipment damaged in a minor operational malfunction that occurred on Sunday, June 5.

The brief shutdown will not affect the company's downstream operations. Vista uses VCM to manufacture PVC (polyvinyl chloride) resins and compounds at its Aberdeen, Miss., and Oklahoma City, Okla., PVC Plants. Anticipated re-start of the VCM Plant is Monday, June 13.

At approximately 10 p.m. on Sunday, pressure-relief equipment activated unexpectedly in the oxy-chlorination reaction section of the plant. No one was injured. Plant personnel corrected the situation quickly and notified all appropriate local, state and federal authorities. Some substances were released into the atmosphere but dissipated quickly.

Pressure-relief equipment is a standard safety measure in most high-pressure manufacturing processes and is automatically activated when potentially dangerous over-pressure conditions occur.

Although the incident is still under investigation, it is believed that feedstock impurities originating from Vista's ethylene unit at its Lake Charles Chemical Plant in Westlake caused the over-pressure condition. Following the investigation, Vista will take whatever steps are necessary to prevent similar occurrences.

Use only in response to specific questions from the media:

Q. What equipment was damaged?

A. Rupture discs, which are one type of pressure-relief equipment.

Q. What if the shutdown continues past June 13?

A. Vista is confident that the plant will be restarted on Monday; however, in the unlikely event that the shutdown does continue for one or two additional days, it should have no effect on Vista's ability to supply VCM to its PVC plants, and to meet the needs of its PVC customers.

Q. How often does this kind of thing happen?

A. Although pressure-relief equipment is a standard safety practice in high-pressure manufacturing processes, activation of such equipment is a rare occurrence.

Q. What are you going to do to make sure it doesn't happen again?

A. A thorough investigation of the incident is now underway at Vista's VCM and Lake Charles Chemical Plants. Because an exact cause has not yet been identified,

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it's difficult to say at this time what will be done. However, when the investigation is completed, Vista will do whatever needs to be done to make sure similar conditions do not occur.

If-Needed Statement

VCM Plant shutdown
Lake Charles

Date: 6/17/88

FOR INDUSTRY ANALYSTS, NATIONAL TRADE MEDIA ONLY

Vista Chemical's VCM (vinyl chloride monomer) Plant in Westlake, La., was shut down on Tuesday, June 14, so that clean-up procedures could be performed in a hydrochloric acid column. Vista uses VCM to manufacture PVC (polyvinyl chloride) resins and compounds at its Aberdeen, Miss., and Oklahoma City, Okla., PVC Plants. As a result of the VCM Plant shutdown, the company's PVC customers have been placed on ninety percent allocation through July. Anticipated restart of the plant is Wednesday, June 22. *"FORCED" SUPPLY REDUCTION PROGRAM FOR JUNE AND JULY*

The plant had been operating at thirty percent capacity for seven days prior to June 14, so that equipment damaged in a minor operational malfunction that occurred on Sunday, June 5, could be repaired. The hydrochloric acid column was plugged as a result of the reduced operating capacity.

Use only in response to specific questions from the media:

Q. What effect will the shutdown and the ninety-percent allocation have on your PVC business, and ultimately, on your financial results for the quarter?

A. The incident is a significant factor in our ethylene-VCM-PVC product chain, and although it will, unfortunately, affect our PVC customers through July, it will not affect the very strong financial results we expect for Vista's third fiscal quarter.

Q. What happened on June 5?

A. At approximately 10 p.m. on Sunday, June 5, pressure-relief equipment activated unexpectedly in the oxy-chlorination reaction section of the plant.

Q. Was anyone hurt?

A. No one was injured. Plant personnel corrected the situation quickly and notified all appropriate local, state and federal authorities.

Q. Were any chemicals released?

A. Some gases were released into the atmosphere but dissipated quickly.

Q. What caused it to activate?

A. Feedstock impurities originating from Vista's ethylene unit at its Lake Charles Chemical Plant in Westlake caused the over-pressure condition.

Q. What equipment was damaged?

A. Rupture discs, which are one type of pressure-relief equipment.

Q. How often does this kind of thing happen?

A. Although it is rarely needed, pressure-relief equipment is a standard safety measure in most high-pressure manufacturing processes and is automatically activated when potentially dangerous over-pressure conditions occur.

Q. What are you going to do to make sure it doesn't happen again?

A. A thorough investigation of the incident is now underway at Vista's VCM and Lake Charles Chemical Plants. Because an exact cause has not yet been identified, it's difficult to say at this time what will be done. However, when the investigation is completed, Vista will do whatever needs to be done to make sure similar conditions do not occur.

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* Not mech. now
Did have

VCM is down

90%

HCl
Column fouled

Hydro-
Acid

bec. running at lower
rates

normal
cleanup

Down 2 days

mid next wk. 6-8 days

Not prod. any VCM

PVC costs.

90% alloc.

months June & July

Can't give exact # - but will affect business

1-2 wks worth prod
on VCM & PVC

upset & hyl.
upset VCM
forced to run
at reduced
rates

doesn't
always
happen
but it did
this
time

signif.
out we're
"OK"

At 11 a.m. on October 12, three railroad tank cars belonging to PPG Corp. derailed and overturned near Strong, Mississippi, approximately three miles south of the company's Aberdeen PVC plant. The cars contained vinyl chloride monomer or VCM, a flammable colorless gas at normal temperatures, used in making polyvinyl chloride or PVC plastic resins. They were on their way from PPG's plant in Westlake, Louisiana to the Aberdeen plant.

Aberdeen safety personnel visited the site and found that none of the cars were leaking. Plans call for the railroad, SouthRail, to right the cars after first light October 13, put them back on the track and then take the cars to Vista's Aberdeen plant for emptying.

No one was injured, and the environment was not damaged by the accident. The accident presented no immediate danger to residents of Strong and no evaluation was made.

Tom Grumbles
Bill McClain
Malcolm McMullen