

Refinery Events

December 7, 2012—December 13, 2012

The following events were obtained from the Department of Energy (DOE) website:

Update: Motiva's 325,000 b/d CDU at Its 600,000 b/d Port Arthur, Texas Refinery On Track for Full Production by Early 2013

Motiva Enterprises has repaired a 325,000 b/d crude distillation unit (CDU) at its Port Arthur refinery and is in the process of restarting it, according to a company executive, who also said the unit was expected to be in full production by early 2013. Operators on Monday reported the unit was in the early stages of restarting, but a small leak on the unit slowed the restart early on Thursday morning, according to sources familiar with refinery operations. But the delay was expected to be minor, lasting only a couple of hours. A Motiva spokeswoman confirmed that the crude unit has been turned over to operations and was on track to re-start in early 2013, as planned.

Reuters, 20:55 December 6, 2012. Posted to DOE website 12-7-12.

Phillips 66 Shuts FCCU at Its 146,000 b/d Borger, Texas Refinery for Unspecified Maintenance December 7

Phillips 66 on Friday reported it was shutting down the Unit 29 FCCU to conduct unspecified maintenance and that emissions related to the maintenance could continue until December 14, according to a filing with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Sources familiar with refinery operations on Thursday said that operators were struggling to maintain a recently restarted FCCU in production, and that they may have to shut the unit to repair problems that have developed in recent days. Phillips 66 had recently extended a planned overhaul at the refinery because maintenance was taking longer than expected. Operators began restarting units the weekend of November 24–25. On November 30, the company said it would shut its Unit 29 FCCU to conduct work on the unit after finishing work on FCCU No. 40, which is now believed to be back online.

Reuters, 16:47 December 6, 2012

<http://www11.tceq.state.tx.us/oc/eer/index.cfm?fuseaction=main.getDetails&target=176712>

Posted to DOE website 12-7-12.

Valero Starts Up New Boiler Equipment at Its 142,000 b/d Corpus Christi, Texas Refinery December 6

Valero Energy Corp was starting up new boiler equipment at its Corpus Christi refinery on Thursday, according to a filing with the Corpus Christi/Nueces County Local Emergency Planning Committee. Production was not affected by the activity, a spokesman said.

Reuters, 20:22 December 6, 2012. Posted to DOE website 12-7-12.

Equipment Failure Causes Hydrogen Sulfide Release at HollyFrontier's 130,000 b/d El Dorado, Kansas Refinery December 5

HollyFrontier Corp. reported an unspecified equipment failure caused a release of hydrogen sulfide at its El Dorado refinery Wednesday afternoon, according to a filing with the U.S. National Response Center. Operators had not secured the release by the time of the filing.

http://www.nrc.uscg.mil/reports/rwservlet?standard_web+inc_seq=1032450 Posted to DOE website 12-7-12.

Update: CVR Energy Says Human Error, Procedural Inconsistencies Caused Boiler Explosion at Its 70,000 b/d Wynnewood, Oklahoma Refinery in September

CVR Energy, Inc. on Thursday confirmed it has completed its internal incident investigation on the September 28 boiler explosion at the Wynnewood refinery, which resulted in the death of two employees. The full report was provided to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and other regulatory agencies. The company's investigation identified the cause of the explosion as a combination of human error and inconsistencies in standard operating procedures and operator training. The investigation confirmed the boiler had no mechanical issues. CVR said it was in the process of implementing the report's recommended corrective actions, which include reviewing

and modifying operating procedures for boiler startup operations; modifying the operator training curriculum to support new and existing standard operating procedures; and incorporating leadership expectations into operator training.

<http://cvrenergy.com/NewsRoom/2012-12-06> Posted to DOE website 12-10-12.

Seal Failure on Cracking Unit Triggers Flaring at Phillips 66's 362,000 b/d Wood River, Illinois Refinery December 8

Phillips 66 reported a seal failure on a cracking unit at its Wood River refinery triggered flaring on Saturday, according to filings with the U.S. National Response Center and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency. The filings did not specify what type of cracking unit sustained the seal failure, which caused a compressor to fail on the unit. Hydrogen sulfide was released in the incident.

http://www.nrc.uscg.mil/reports/rwservlet?standard_web+inc_seq=1032676

Reuters, 16:54 December 9, 2012. Posted to DOE website 12-10-12.

Valero Says New HCU Is Operational at Its 310,000 b/d Port Arthur, Texas Refinery

Valero Energy Corp. said a new hydrocracking unit (HCU) has become operational at its Port Arthur refinery and will gradually ramp up to planned rates, according to a spokesman. The refinery also reported it restarted an amine treating unit on Saturday, according to a filing with state pollution regulators.

Reuters, 16:10 December 9, 2012

Reuters, 10:36 December 10, 2012. Posted to DOE website 12-10-12.

BP Reports HCU Compressor Upset at Its 225,000 b/d Cherry Point, Washington Refinery November 29

BP Plc reported a hydrocracking unit (HCU) compressor upset at its Cherry Point refinery in a filing with Northwest Clean Air Agency on November 29.

Reuters, 12:50 December 7, 2012. Posted to DOE website 12-10-12.

Valero Reports Compressor Failure at Its 135,000 b/d Wilmington, California Refinery December 9

Valero Energy Corp. reported a compressor failure at its Wilmington refinery Sunday afternoon caused sulfur dioxide to release to the flare, according to a filing with the U.S. National Response Center.

http://www.nrc.uscg.mil/reports/rwservlet?standard_web+inc_seq=1032795 Posted to DOE website 12-10-12.

Process Upset Causes FCCU Emissions at Phillips 66's 146,000 b/d Borger, Texas Refinery December 10

Phillips 66 reported a process upset at its Borger refinery Monday morning led to emissions from the Unit 40 fluid catalytic cracking unit (FCCU) and FCCU stack, according to a filing with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Trade sources on Monday reported maintenance at the Borger refinery had been completed. Operators had recently extended a planned overhaul at the refinery because maintenance was taking longer than expected.

Operators began restarting units the weekend of November 24–25. On November 30, the company said it would shut its Unit 29 FCCU to conduct work on the unit after finishing work on FCCU No. 40.

<http://www11.tceq.state.tx.us/oc/eer/index.cfm?fuseaction=main.getDetails&target=177008>

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-10/heavy-alberta-oil-gains-as-imperials-says-kearl-likely-delayed.html>

Posted to DOE website 12-11-12.

SCOT Unit Inline Heater Trip Causes SRU Emissions at Valero's 310,000 b/d Port Arthur, Texas Refinery December 9

Valero Energy Corp. reported the shell claus off-gas treating (SCOT) unit inline heater at its Port Arthur refinery tripped Sunday afternoon, according to a filing with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. The filing lists the sulfur recovery unit (SRU) as a source of emissions.

<http://www11.tceq.state.tx.us/oc/eer/index.cfm?fuseaction=main.getDetails&target=177006>

Posted to DOE website 12-11-12.

FCCU Snag Causes Emissions at Alon's 67,000 b/d Big Spring, Texas Refinery December 9

Alon USA Holdings reported emissions at its Big Spring refinery Sunday night were the result of surge problems with the No. 3 blower in the fluid catalytic cracking unit (FCCU) due to instrument air issues on the governor turbine, according to a filing with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Operators routed emissions to the carbon monoxide boiler bypass stack and reduced charge to the FCCU stack.

<http://www11.tceq.state.tx.us/oc/eer/index.cfm?fuseaction=main.getDetails&target=177018>

Posted to DOE website 12-11-12.

Motiva Shuts 325,000 b/d CDU after Fractured Pipe Starts Small Fire at Its 600,000 b/d Port Arthur, Texas Refinery December 11; Repairs Seen in Days – Sources

Motiva Enterprises on Tuesday night again shut down the new 325,000 b/d crude distillation unit (CDU) at its Port Arthur refinery after a stress fracture on a pipe caused a small fire, according to sources familiar with operations. The pipe is expected to be repaired in a few days, the sources said. Operators were in the process of restarting the unit after an unplanned six-month outage. A spokesperson for Motiva was not immediately available.

Reuters, 10:32 December 12, 2012. Posted to DOE website 12-12-12.

Alon Reports Benzene Leak on Aromex Unit at Its 67,000 b/d Big Spring, Texas Refinery December 11

Alon USA Holdings reported approximately 15 pounds of benzene leaked out of a pump in the aromex unit at its Big Spring refinery Tuesday afternoon, according to a filing with the U.S. National Response Center. Operators immediately took action to isolate the leak and minimize emissions, the filing said.

http://www.nrc.uscg.mil/reports/rwservlet?standard_web+inc_seq=1032953 Posted to DOE website 12-12-12.

Chevron Says Flaring Is No Cause for Concern at Its 245,271 b/d Richmond, California Refinery December 11 – Local Media

Chevron Corp. said flaring at its Richmond refinery Tuesday evening was nothing to be alarmed about, according to a report from the Contra Costa Times. The flaring was conducted as a precaution, the report said.

Reuters, 23:21 December 11, 2012. Posted to DOE website 12-12-12.

Cracked Pipe Causes Exchanger Leak at Shell's 329,800 b/d Deer Park, Texas Refinery December 11

Royal Dutch Shell Plc reported a cracked weld on a two-inch pipe caused a leak on Exchanger 1831 (re-boiler) on the gas fractionation unit at its Deer Park refinery Tuesday night, according to a filing with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Operators immediately took steps to isolate the leaking exchanger and began removing leaked material from the area. The event was still under investigation at the time of the TCEQ filing. In a filing with the U.S. National Response Center, the refinery said an equipment malfunction late on Tuesday led to the discharge of heavy cat cracked gasoline from a process unit.

<http://www11.tceq.state.tx.us/oc/eer/index.cfm?fuseaction=main.getDetails&target=177100>

http://www.nrc.uscg.mil/reports/rwservlet?standard_web+inc_seq=1032976 Posted to DOE website 12-13-12.

Update: Alon Reports Minor Setback Repairing Leak on Aromex Unit at Its 67,000 b/d Big Spring, Texas Refinery December 11

Alon USA Holdings reported that while operators were installing a clamp to stop a previously reported leak on the aromex unit at its Big Spring refinery Tuesday afternoon, some scale fell off the pipe and the leak grew, according to a filing with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Installing the clamp stopped the leak, and a vacuum truck removed the material from the containment. The refinery had reported approximately 15 pounds of benzene leaked out of the pipe.

<http://www11.tceq.state.tx.us/oc/eer/index.cfm?fuseaction=main.getDetails&target=177095>

Posted to DOE website 12-13-12.

Valero Reports Hydrocracker Flaring at Its 93,000 b/d Three Rivers, Texas Refinery December 12

Valero Energy Corp. reported flaring from the hydrocracker at the Complex Area 2 of its Three Rivers refinery Wednesday morning, according to a filing with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. The incident was not expected to have a material impact on production, a spokesman said.

Reuters, 13:06 December 13, 2012

<http://www11.tceq.state.tx.us/oc/eer/index.cfm?fuseaction=main.getDetails&target=177135>

Posted to DOE website 12-13-12.

Wet Gas Compressor Malfunction Causes Sulfur Dioxide Release Phillips 66's 362,000 b/d Wood River, Illinois Refinery December 12

Phillips 66 reported the loss of a wet gas compressor caused a sulfur dioxide release Wednesday at its Wood River refinery, according to a filing with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency.

DJN, 11:50 December 13, 2012. Posted to DOE website 12-13-12.

Unspecified Unit Shutdown Leads to Flaring at Chevron's 245,271 b/d Richmond, California Refinery December 11

Chevron Corp. reported the shutdown of a unit at its Richmond refinery on Tuesday led to flaring, according to a filing with the Contra Costa Health Department Hazardous Materials Program. Operators didn't anticipate any offsite impact from the flaring, the filing said.

Reuters, 17:42 December 12, 2012. Posted to DOE website 12-13-12.

Phillips 66 Running 20,000 b/d of Railed-In Bakken Crude at Its 100,000 b/d Ferndale, Washington Refinery, Aims to Double That – Executive

Phillips 66 is using third-party logistics to run about 20,000 b/d of Bakken crude oil at its Ferndale refinery and aims to double that, a company executive told analysts on Thursday. The company plans to build a new offloading facility to increase those runs to 40,000 b/d, the executive said.

Reuters, 10:27 December 13, 2012. Posted to DOE website 12-13-12.