



SAFETY ALERT

Sour Gas Leak from Casing Line Failure

Safety Alert: #13 - 2010	Release Date: May 28, 2010
Incident Type: Equipment failure	Country of Origin: Western Canada

Description of Incident:

- Two contractors were in the process of obtaining pressure readings from the production casing tubing annulus, when a ¼ inch line off the casing failed and sour gas began leaking to the atmosphere. The break occurred between the valve and the connection to the casing, causing an uncontrolled flow of sour gas, until pumping equipment and kill fluid stopped the flow.
- Kill fluid was pumped down the tubing and the well was brought under control. The Operator and the ERCB deemed the release to be a Level 2 emergency because the well was in close proximity to the Queen Elizabeth Highway 2, as well as some residential and commercial properties.
- Activation of Emergency Operations Centers in response to the incident was required. Notifications and updates were provided to all affected residents, commercial operators, regulatory and government officials.

What Caused It:

The company involved found the incident was not a direct result of any deficiency in maintenance and operating program.

- No site-specific written procedures for obtaining well pressures and no drawings of the wellhead piping and configuration were available. No operations personnel with knowledge of well configuration were present and directing work.
- Failure to stop work when there was an initial indication of flow
- Failure of previous operator to isolate tubing pressure and flow from control line after removing surface controlled subsurface safety valve from tubing.

Corrective Actions:

- Operations personnel to identify wellheads with piping configurations that are similar or confusing and have Production Engineering update P&ID's and other process control documentation and accessible.
- Communicate known hazards and control of work tasks with orientation and procedures.

Contact:

For more information of event, please contact safety@enform.ca

DISCLAIMER:

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