



Cooling water tower damaged in Complex fire

Although any fire at an oil refinery is bad news, most of the people who battled last week's blaze atop the Lubricant plant's cooling water tower agreed the fire couldn't have picked a better place to start.

The fire, which broke out about 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 4th, had a built-in safety catch. The blaze burned until it reached the water-soaked parts of the tower, when it was drowned with the help of DPMC fire crews and an aerial truck from the Deer Park Volunteer Fire Department.

The ugly cloud of black smoke, visible for miles, seemed to go as quickly as it came. The dense smoke was caused primarily by the burning plastic components which are a part of the air and water distribution system for the tower.

The major flames were out within an hour, although the all-clear was not sounded until 5:25 p.m. There were no injuries, despite the intense heat and smoke generated from the blazing redwood timbers and plastic in the tower.

Although the fire affected the operations of the Lubricants plant, Bob Awe, Superintendent of Operations, LPA, said there was never any danger of the fire spreading to other equipment. "The cooling water tower was fairly isolated from other units and from people," he said.

Cause investigated

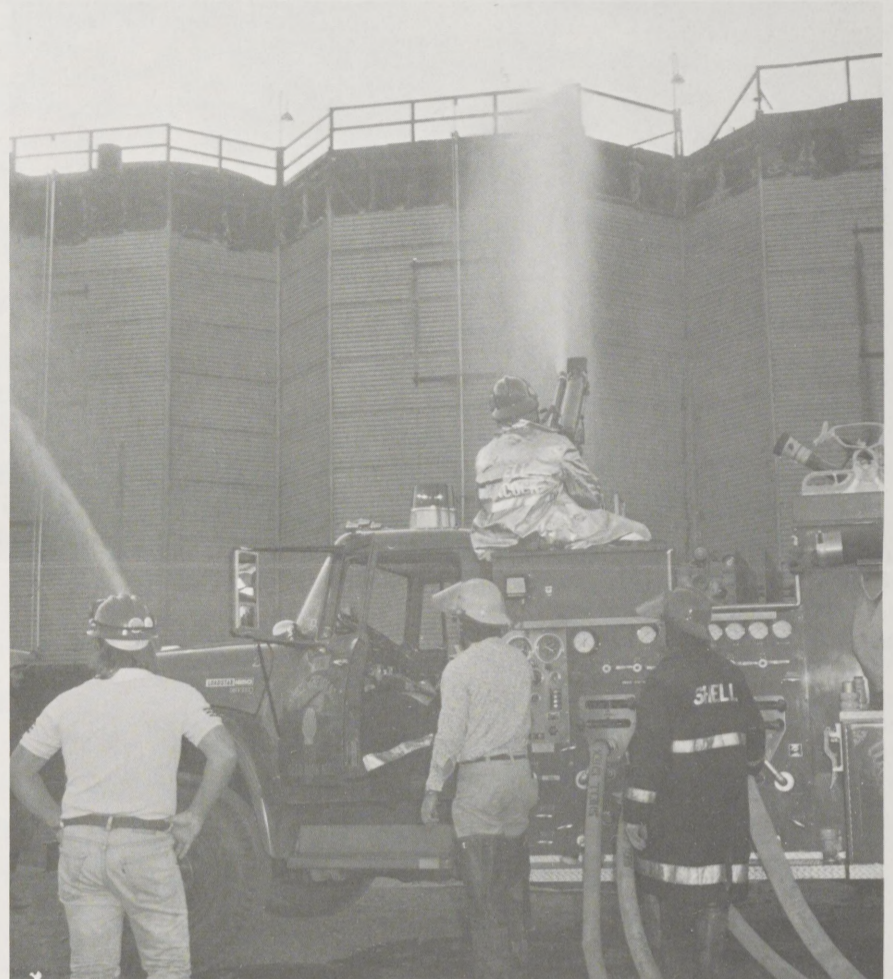
A team of representatives from safety, operations and engineering is currently investigating the possible causes of the fire. The estimated cost of damages is in excess of a half-million dollars.

Rebuilding the damaged portion of the cooling water tower has already begun. Bob Bowen, Technical Manager, Plant Engineering, who is leading the rebuilding team, said the tower would be back in full operation in about six weeks.

All the DPMC process units use a circulating cooling water system to remove heat generated in their processes. After circulating through a unit, the hot water is pumped to the top of a cooling water tower. As the water falls from the top of the tower, some is evaporated with the help of air sucked in by large fans. Most of the water is collected in a basin at the bottom and pumped back for use at other units, following an endless recycling pattern.

Top deck damaged

The fire roared through the top deck of the tower, feeding on the dry redwood timbers. Awe said the fans and gear boxes are located on this deck of the tower, above the water level.



Geary Hancock, Safety South, rides shotgun during last week's fire at the Lube cooling water tower. Hancock manned the hose atop Truck No. 2 that rushed to the scene from DPMC South. Hancock's crew, along with the rest of the fire fighters at the Lube plant managed to control the blaze within an hour, despite the heat and smoke rolling from the top deck of the cooling water tower.



The fire on the top deck of the Lube cooling water tower posed special problems for DPMC fire fighting crews. The height of the tower prevented fire fighters from directly spraying the flames that fed on the redwood timbers atop the tower. Here, Harold Herrod, carpenter, DPMC South, uses a "firefly" to battle the flames. These special hoses are portable, and can be carried in the back of a truck. Herrod, a veteran with many years experience on the DPMC South safety crew, trained his "firefly" on the flames that burned the water tower's top deck several stories above him.

"Six of the seven separate cells in the tower were damaged," Awe said. He added that all the fans in the tower were shut down, but water circulation continued.

Although there was little danger the fire would spread, Awe said parts of the Lube plant had to be shut down. "Some of our units are down, and others are on standby," he said. "We've been able to run some of the units at lower rates using the cooled water that is still circulating through the tower."

"Our lubes and waxes business has been very good lately," Awe said. "We have to work hard so the lost production won't be felt. Within 12 to 14 hours of the fire we had begun the rebuilding effort."

Even though the fire was limited to the tower's top deck, it still posed a major problem for fire fighting crews because it was so high.

Within moments of the first sparks, the Red and Yellow fire crews from DPMC North arrived, along with one fire crew from DPMC South. Minutes later, an aerial truck from the Deer Park Volunteer Fire Department arrived.

H. M. Hancock, Jr., Safety Supervisor North, said about 50 fire fighters responded to the initial call.

A team effort

"It was a super effort by all involved," Hancock said. "There were operators, craftsmen and other bystanders who all helped out in the early stages. It can get pretty hectic when you start grabbing hose and throwing water, but everybody gave us a hand," he added.

Four trucks were on the scene, including the aerial truck. Hancock said the aerial truck was very helpful, since it could raise its ladders above the level of the tower deck and spray the fire directly.

The fire fighters controlled the flames within an hour, then waited like sentries to ensure they were gone. At one point, the fire burned through the back side of the tower, but fire fighters rushed to their hoses and quickly doused the flames.

The tower was watched closely all night. It was hosed down every half-hour to ensure the wood didn't begin smoldering.

Water keeps "old oil" flowing

Although water and oil don't mix, the oil industry is using the clear liquid to help produce more oil from old wells that were thought to be drying up.

Enhanced oil recovery, a process in which water, steam or chemicals are injected into underground oil formations to increase production, is allowing Shell to extract more and more oil from older wells. And the future looks even brighter.

"The potential for enhanced recovery is some 30 billion barrels of additional oil," said Charles Blackburn, Shell's executive vice-president for Exploration and Production. "A recovery of this magnitude would be equivalent to an 80-year energy supply for current agricultural needs," he added.

Agriculture, which uses

about 80 percent of water supplies, also uses the equivalent of about one million barrels of oil per day. "More importantly," Blackburn added, "agriculture needs liquid fuels, and enhanced recovery is one of our best sources."

Blackburn said the oil industry's enhanced recovery processes use about one percent of the nation's water supply, but that small amount can mean a great deal in terms of recovered oil.

Shell alone produces 114,000 barrels of oil a day by waterflooding, about equal to all the energy used by agriculture for irrigation, he said.

More than 80 percent of the water used in waterflooding is salt water that is produced with the oil. The salt water,

which can't be used for irrigation, is separated and reinjected. In only a few special cases is fresh water ever used.

"One acre-foot of fresh water used in this way would produce 3,100 barrels of oil," Blackburn said.

Shell is also the major user of steamflooding, which injects steam to produce heavy oil. The company produces about 100,000 barrels of oil a day by steamflooding.

"A major steamflood such as the one we operate at Kernridge in California usually would require large amounts of fresh water," Blackburn said. "But we have developed the technology to use brackish water in our field steam generators."

Blood drive goal reached

Thanks to the big hearts of Complex employees and their willingness to help others, DPMC reached its 1981 blood drive goal. All those who donated should be congratulated, for their donations will benefit the entire Complex.

During the recent blood drive — Oct. 27th to Nov. 5th, 1981 — nearly 470 Complex employees gave the "gift of life." This brought the total number of donors for the year to 921, making it possible for us to reach our goal of 25 percent employee participation in the blood program. You are to be commended for your continued support of the blood drive throughout the years.

Because the goal was reached, all Complex em-

ployees are entitled to receive benefits from the Blood Center when they or their families need blood.

Donors receive credit on their hospital bill for the processing fee and the recruitment fee they and their families use. Because we reached our goal, non-donors are credited for the recruitment fee but must still pay the processing fee.

For those who gave blood, and especially for those who couldn't, keep in mind that it's not too early to start thinking about giving the "gift of life" next year. Details about the Spring '82 blood drive will be available later.

Once more, thanks for making the 1981 blood drive a super success!

CPS Open House shines despite rainy skies



Ed Cashat, left, and L. O. Jackson, center, point out the water supply and return pipes that serve the turbo generator oil coolers at the Central Power Station (CPS). The two CPS crew members conducted one of the many tours held throughout the day as part of CPS's open house activities. This group had just left the turbo generator deck, and was standing near the lube reservoir for the turbo generator. This deck is about 20 feet high. The visitors managed to shrug off the rain during the tour, although vans were available for those who wished to ride rather than walk.

Classifieds

FOR SALE

1977 Porsche 924 Championship model. New factory air conditioning. Sun roof. AM-FM cassette, cruise custom cover, front brakes. \$9,000 or best offer. Call 947-9220.

1971 VW Fastback. Two-door. Good work car. \$500. Call 488-8449 after 5 p.m.

1977 Lincoln Continental Mark V. Designer's edition. Loaded. New tires. Dove gray. Excellent condition. Call 680-3523.

1979 Datsun 510. Hatchback. Fully-equipped. Automatic transmission. 25,000 miles. \$5,995. Call 471-1458 after 5 p.m.

1977 Honda CVCC Station Wagon. Super clean. Paint 1-yr. old, motor 1-yr. old. 35 miles to the gallon. Good tires. Four-speed. Air conditioning. \$2,100. Call 941-5900 after 5 p.m.

1975 International Travelall. Four-wheel drive. 53,000 miles. Air conditioning. Power steering and brakes. Radio. Hitch and auxiliary tanks. \$2,200 or make me an offer. Call 476-4828.

1980 Tejas 8½ cab-over-camper. Sleeps five. Electric or gas refrigerator. Gas stove and oven. Toilet. \$3,000. Call 487-0419 after 5 p.m.

Hodaka off-road motorcycle. 125 cc Wombat. Good condition. Less than 300 miles on chain, sprockets, piston. \$300. Call 334-6403 after 5 p.m.

55 gallon aquarium with stand. Nine fish and all accessories. \$200. Call 643-6675.

Atari home video computer. One month old. Three games. \$125. Call 328-6472.

Ladies rabbit jacket. Patchwork design. Size medium, 10-12. \$40. Call 479-8714.

8mm movie camera. Complete with projector and screen. Never used. \$100. Call 643-0015.

WANTED

Good used sofa bed. \$100 or less. Call 471-0176.

Roommate wanted. Male or female. Call 487-0419 after 5 p.m.

Central Power Station (CPS), DPMC's newest and largest power plant, opened its doors to the families and friends of all Utilities employees Oct. 31, giving visitors a tour of the CPS facilities.

Despite the rainy Halloween weather that lasted all day, a crowd of about 150 attended the open house. Open house chairman Tony Mirenda, operations foreman, CPS, called the day a success even with the wet weather.

A volunteer committee from the power station began planning the open house last July. All groups associated with CPS — operators, engineers, management and maintenance — helped plan the fall open house.

The planning committee was determined to make the open house a meaningful experience for those who attended. The committee's goal was to show the guests where CPS employees work and what they do on the job.

Along with Utilities South and Power Plants 1 and 2, CPS must provide the power other Complex operations use. Tom Roberts, CPS Process Manager, said CPS must work closely with its fellow power stations to maintain the balance necessary to keep the Complex running at peak efficiency.

As visitors arrived, they were greeted at the North Cafeteria by Marie Meguess, Purchasing and General Services. The visitors were given souvenir pamphlets and enjoyed refreshments until the tours began.

The first stop on the tour as the Executive Dining Room in the cafeteria where Betty Swartz, operator, CPS, and Don Weaver, technical support

to operations, CPS, showed the guests a short slide-tape presentation. The presentation gave visitors an idea of the role CPS plays at DPMC, and the importance of each job performed by its employees.

Following the slide show, guests were transported to the CPS boiler and turbo generator control room. There they were greeted by Mirenda or Ed Cashat, Complex utility safety training coordinator, who presented a short demonstration of the safety equipment used at CPS.

Because of the rainy skies, visitors were offered two types of tours — brave the rain and walk, or ride in a dry, comfortable van. L. O. Jackson, CPS operator, who directed several of the tours, said he couldn't believe the number of people who chose to walk in the rain. "It kinda' turned me on," he said.

The tours, led by members of the operating team familiar with the units in each area, included a visit to the water treater control room, where CPS operators Artie Garcia and G. J. Ranft gave a brief explanation of its operation.

The CPS tour also made stops at the cooling water tower, the air compressors, the 67,000-horsepower turbo generators and a boiler burner deck on the Complex's largest boiler, some 75 feet above ground level.

The guests returned by van to the North Cafeteria. Roberts said he was amazed at the attitudes of some of the people returning from the tours. "Even though some of them were dripping wet, they had excitement and enjoyment written on their faces," he said.

BABYSITTING

Adult will do babysitting in own home in Fairmont Park West. Call 471-0176.

Christian mother will keep any age child in my home. Will take or pick up after school. Plenty of TLC. Licensed. Call 930-1290.

PERSONAL

I would like to thank all of my co-workers and friends at Shell for my retirement gifts and scroll. We have moved to our retirement home at 840 Marlin, Hitchcock, Texas, 77563. We would like to invite our friends to visit us.

Hood L. Turner

Thanksgiving Pay Checks

Pay checks for employees for whom Friday, Nov. 27th, is pay day, will be delivered to the main Houston Post Office Tuesday, Nov. 24th, in order to insure delivery by pay day. There will be home delivery of mail as normal except for Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 26th. If you have any questions, please call the payroll and scheduling section in your half of the Complex.



A pair of chili gourmet teams from DPMC swept two of the top three honors at a recent chili cook-off in the metro area. Team Hydrocarbon Chili, pictured above, placed third in the competition held last month. Team members include, from left to right, Bill Hamilton, Process Control Electrical, Glen Dodson, foreman, Maintenance North, and Rick Heiberg, Process Control Electrical. The team's fourth member, Ken Bon, Process Control Electrical, is not pictured. Each member of Hydrocarbon Chili won a combination safety-first aid kit for the car. Team Chile Cascabel (Rattler Chile), also from DPMC, won the cook-off. Team members included Victor Carbajal, Sonny Norris, Larry Cole and John Cedillo. They each won a \$250 shotgun as grand prize. About 28 teams entered the event, preparing their secret chili recipes on the spot. The chili was judged on its color, aroma, taste and aftertaste.

Shellegram

Deer Park Manufacturing Complex

Published weekly by Shell's Deer Park Manufacturing Complex for its employees and pensioners. All inquiries should be addressed to Shellegram, Shell Oil Company, P. O. 100, Deer Park, Texas 77536.

John P. Abbott-Editor
Extension 6301
Room 151
N. Admin. Building