



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region**

Notice No. 011

October 17, 1974

OCS Operations Safety Alert

Heater-Treater Fire

An operator recently experienced a fire involving a heater-treater system on an offshore production platform.

Oil and gas entered the surge tank of the waste heat recovery system through a leak in the heat exchanger tubes, resulting in excessive pressure on the tank. The surge tank relief valves actuated, venting oil and gas to the atmosphere in the vicinity of the turbine-driven generator and ignition was caused by the turbine exhaust.

The fire was extinguished without injury to personnel and no pollution occurred. Only moderate damage to the facility was sustained.

To prevent a recurrence of this incident the operator has:

1. Replaced the heat exchanger tubes.
2. Piped the surge tank relief valves to a flare scrubber.
3. Installed high-pressure shutdown controls on the surge tank to actuate an inlet shut-in valve.
4. Initiated a monthly pressure test of the heat exchanger tubes.

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Field Operations

Gulf of Mexico Area