



U.S. Chemical Safety and
Hazard Investigation Board

CSB News Release

November 13, 2009

**Statement of U.S. Chemical Safety Board Chairman John Bresland
Friday November 13, 2009
6 p.m. Eastern time (4 p.m. Mountain time)**

The CSB investigative team has been continuing its investigation of the hydrogen gas explosion at the Silver Eagle refinery in Woods Cross on November 4. Our preliminary findings indicate that the explosion occurred when a 10-inch pipe failed catastrophically. Although the failure mechanism has yet to be determined, the pipe showed evidence of significant thinning which had not been detected by the refinery's mechanical integrity program. Over the past several days, the CSB team has developed a number of serious concerns about the integrity of the piping and equipment at various locations in the plant. These concerns include a lack of required documentation and a lack of needed calculations of the fitness for service of various pieces of equipment.

Over the last 24 hours, we discussed these serious concerns with Utah OSHA, the Utah Labor Commission, federal OSHA, and Silver Eagle executives. This afternoon, I told the chairman of the board and the president of Silver Eagle that in my view the best course of action for the refinery would be to stand down as quickly and safely as possible. The refinery units should remain shut down until the integrity and fitness for service of all the equipment can be documented and verified. After there's been a comprehensive examination and any needed repairs have been made, the plant could be restarted in close coordination with the appropriate regulatory agencies.

Silver Eagle's management responded positively to this suggestion and told me they would begin an orderly process to stand down the refinery until these steps are accomplished. I thank Silver Eagle for their action and for their stated commitment to safety. I believe this represents a positive outcome for the company, the workforce, and the community near the plant.

Utah OSHA director Louis Silva was present at the meeting and concurred with our position. We appreciate the excellent relationship between the CSB team and the team from Utah OSHA that has helped us reach a rapid resolution.

For more information, please contact Director of Public Affairs Daniel Horowitz at (202) 441-6074 (cell) or Sandy Gilmour (202) 251-5496 (cell).