

March 26, 2019

Member companies of East Harris County Manufacturers Association were impacted by the regrettable tank fire at the ITC facility in Deer Park. Our member companies, through the mutual aid agreement of Channel Industries Mutual Aid (CIMA), immediately responded to assist ITC. Many nearby facilities sheltered-in-place and egress to nearby member facilities was disrupted.

Additionally, the disruption to ITC storage and distribution operations impacted operations at many EHCMA member companies which use ITC to store and deliver product.

ITC used an EHCMA Best Practice notification system, **e-Notify**, to immediately notify local, state and federal authorities. Through years of “lessons learned” and our active participation with our communities through Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC’s), the e-Notify process was established to ensure an immediate notification and response to all events. E-notify provides a quick process for an impacted facility to distribute immediate notification to all local Emergency Operations Managers in impacted cities, as well as to Texas emergency operations and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

The EHCMA CAER App (CAER Online) is another available resource. EHCMA members use the CAER Online app to post courtesy messages for the public. The app can be downloaded by searching “EHCMA CAER Online” in the Apple App store and the Google Play store.

This process worked in both delivering notifications and securing support from industry resources to respond to the fire. During any incident, our member companies’ priority is the health and safety of our neighbors, our workers and emergency personnel.

Our member sites actively participate in Local Emergency Planning Committees that include local, Harris County, state, and federal emergency management personnel to ensure the timely notification and response to any event. They also play an active role in mutual aid organizations that provide fire-fighting, rescue, hazardous material handling and emergency medical capabilities to the refining and petrochemical industry. Channel Industries Mutual Aid, the mutual aid organization that responded to ITC, is the largest mutual aid organization in the world and is comprised of over 100 companies from industry and government agencies.

EHCMA considers the emergency responders of CIMA who helped suppress the ITC fire to be local heroes. Their professional actions resulted in no injuries or loss of life because of the fire. We also appreciate the outstanding response by local city officials, Harris County, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the U. S. Coast Guard.

Many EHCMA member companies also provided air monitoring support and data analysis to help regulators assess the air quality at the site and in the surrounding communities to ensure the health and safety of the public, as well as workers at neighboring facilities. EHCMA member companies will continue working to assist local, state and federal regulators to address environmental concerns and assist in any way with expertise and resources to help facilitate clean-up efforts where needed.

EHCMA members will take all learnings from the ITC incident to enhance existing best practices for our facilities. These best practices are used to improve the design, build, and operation of facilities and equipment at facilities, and to improve emergency response.

Please know that East Harris County is not only the home to our member operations, it is the home of our employees. A majority of employees live here, their children go to schools here and play in our neighborhood parks. We care about what happens in our backyards and have a vested interest in being good stewards of safety and the environment. If you have any questions about EHCMA or our members' response, please contact me, to arrange a meeting with our board members.

**About EHCMA:**

The East Harris County Manufacturers Association (EHCMA) is dedicated to promoting the health, safety, security, environmental, and economic well-being of the petrochemical, refining, and manufacturing industry in East Harris County. Our 132-member facilities produce vital products for our way of life and provide employment and career opportunities for approximately 25,000 residents in Harris and surrounding counties.

Best regards,



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