



U. S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

2175 K Street, NW Suite 400 Washington, D.C. 20037-1809

Phone 202-261-7600 Fax 202-261-7650

www.chemsafety.gov

Gerald V. Poje, Ph.D.
Board Member

Irv Rosenthal, Ph.D.
Board Member

Andrea Kidd Taylor, Dr. P.H.
Board Member

May 7, 2002

Board Action Report

Notation No.: 176

Voting Period: Urgent Notation Item: May 6, 2002 – May 10, 2002

Subject: Investigation of Kaltech Incident

The CSB staff recommends that the board conduct a full investigation of the April 25 incident at Kaltech, a sign company in New York City. More than 40 people were injured, 12 critically. Preliminary findings by CSB investigators have identified the following facts:

1. Various waste chemicals were being consolidated into a 55 gallon drum. The drum made loud noises and a powerful explosion took place. It is likely that this was a reactive hazard incident. The CSB is conducting a hazard investigation on this problem.
2. The workers involved are primarily immigrants who have limited understanding of English. This issue was also examined in the Sierra report.
3. The location of the hazardous material in a mixed occupancy building contributed to the severity of the injuries and property damage. This topic was examined in the CSI investigation.

The staff believes that current projects can remain on schedule for completion with remaining available human resources.

Approval Date: 5/6/02

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Not Participating</u>	<u>Withhold</u>
Isadore Rosenthal	x			
Gerald Poje	x			
Andrea Taylor	x			