

U.S. CHEMICAL SAFETY AND HAZARD INVESTIGATION BOARD

COMMUNITY MEETING

Conference Room  
Leo C. Butler Community Center  
950 East Washington  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Tuesday,  
March 30, 2004

The above-entitled meeting came to order,  
pursuant to notice, at 7:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

RIXIO MEDINA  
DR. GERALD POJE, Presiding

STAFF PRESENT:

CHRISTOPHER WARNER, General Counsel  
JOHNNIE BANKS  
LISA LONG  
MICHAEL MORRIS

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P R O C E E D I N G S

1  
2 DR. POJE: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen,  
3 I'm Dr. Gerald Poje, a Board Member of the U.S. Chemical  
4 Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, known as the CSB.  
5 You'll hear that referred to throughout the evening.

6 Before we start, let me make a safety  
7 announcement, just in case of any emergency. We don't  
8 anticipate any, but just in case.

9 There are exits to my right from where you just  
10 came in, and immediate to the right you can exit the  
11 building. There's also an exit to my immediate left here.

12 You can see the sign pointed above you. You can exit  
13 through that area.

14 I'm thankful for everybody who has turned out  
15 this evening. I wish to welcome you all here for the  
16 Chemical Safety Board's update on the investigations on  
17 three accidents which occurred within a four-week period  
18 last summer.

19 We'll also hear this evening from Keith  
20 Cranford, who's the deputy director of Homeland Security  
21 and the Office of Emergency Preparedness of the Baton  
22 Rouge Office, on emergency preparedness and on the  
23 response and notification issues concerning the chlorine  
24 leak.

1           The turnout that we have tonight indicates a  
2 high level of community interest and concern over what  
3 happened.

4           And I think it's a tribute to all of you that  
5 you're taking this time on a Tuesday evening when the  
6 weather's so beautiful, and you could be doing other  
7 things.

8           I think this is the hallmark of what it means  
9 to have a good, strong community in this area. So I  
10 salute you all for doing that.

11           I also welcome to the table here tonight my  
12 colleague, Rixio Medina. Rixio is the newest Board Member  
13 to the U.S. Chemical Safety Board. He joined us in  
14 December.

15           Rixio, if you have an opening remarks, we would  
16 certainly welcome them at this time.

17           MR. MEDINA: Thank you, Dr. Poje. As Dr. Poje  
18 mentioned, I was appointed to the Board in December of  
19 last year.

20           I've been working about 25 years in the  
21 petrochemical/petroleum industries, mainly in the fire  
22 protection, safety-engineering work, that took me to  
23 refineries in Illinois; in Lake Charles, Louisiana; Corpus  
24 Christi, Texas; and Tulsa, Oklahoma.

1 I would like to echo Dr. Poje's comments in  
2 welcoming you to this public hearing. We have high  
3 expectations it will be a very productive meeting.

4 DR. POJE: Also joining me to my immediate  
5 right is Chris Warner who is the General Counsel for the  
6 Chemical Safety Board.

7 At this point in time, I'd also like to  
8 recognize that Mr. Malcolm Mier has joined us this evening  
9 from his very busy schedule.

10 Malcolm is the state director for Senator  
11 Rose's office, here in Baton Rouge. We met with him  
12 earlier today to give me a briefing on this. He certainly  
13 is enthused about the Board's work in Baton Rouge this  
14 evening.

15 I'd also like to recognize Senator Kip Holden,  
16 who is the state senator from this area.

17 Kip, would you like to give us some opening  
18 remarks? That would be welcome at this time.

19 He also has a very busy schedule. As many of  
20 you know, the Legislature is in special session right now.

21 SEN. HOLDEN: Good afternoon. It's like I told  
22 them today, I needed skates and a helicopter.

23 But I want to kind of like full disclosure, and  
24 then make my remarks from the legislative hat, because one

1 of the people involved in this incident, Mr. Henry, from  
2 the attorney side, I'm representing Mr. Jared Henry, one  
3 of the relatives of one of those killed.

4 I don't want to talk from the lawyer side. I  
5 want to talk about public policy and some things I think  
6 need to be addressed from the legislative standpoint.

7 I think there are a number of things we need to  
8 give immediate priority to. Number one is coming up with  
9 an emergency evacuation plan that fully takes in routes  
10 for people to leave an area, if there is a release.

11 Number two, businesses and how you'd address  
12 the concerns of businesses.

13 Then how do you address -- especially with this  
14 being the center of government -- evacuating buildings  
15 that now contain about 80 to 90 percent of state workers,  
16 and then buildings downtown that also pertain to housing  
17 city workers.

18 And how do you effectively get them out if  
19 their shelter-in-place is not the appropriate remedy to  
20 deal with the situation at that point in time.

21 And I want to talk about it from two  
22 standpoints.

23 Number one, not only do we have to deal with  
24 this from an accident happening at a facility, but I think

1 realistically, when we have this whole debate about  
2 Homeland Security, that there's another entity out there  
3 that needs to be addressed.

4 And so one of the things that I would urge in  
5 terms of immediate action is that all agencies involved,  
6 in regards to anything dealing with a chemical facility --  
7 for those agencies from HAZMAT to you name it.

8 All of these agencies have to begin to adopt an  
9 orderly plan for evacuation.

10 Let me also talk about schools and children out  
11 of schools. An orderly plan for evacuation that will  
12 cause the minimum impact upon people and services during  
13 the course of a day.

14 I cannot stress enough the urgency of that,  
15 because we talk about this quite a bit. And that talk is  
16 well and good, but at some point we have to move from the  
17 talk to the action stage.

18 I'm not pointing a finger at any institution.  
19 But I think collectively we have enough information; we  
20 have enough resources, and we have enough wisdom to move  
21 this off the drawing board -- if it's on the drawing  
22 board -- to action. And I think it's very critical.

23 The second thing is that when there is a  
24 release at a facility, there has to be some independent

1 verification of what is going on at the facility.

2 I know there's a general question of liability.

3 I tell you again, I'm a lawyer. I know what people are  
4 trying to guard against.

5 But when there is a chemical release. That  
6 statement should not be a PR statement from the plant to  
7 say that there is no release off site, and we kept it to a  
8 minimum, because at best, in spite of everybody's  
9 activities, we're giving a guesstimate as to how much of  
10 whatever chemical was released.

11 So either allow some coordination between  
12 Louisiana State Police and HAZMAT or DEQ, where once that  
13 information is released about what is coming from the  
14 plant, that is pretty much reviewed by somebody, so that  
15 the public can have some comfort zone as to what was  
16 admitted into the air.

17 The next thing. In the public relations issue,  
18 again we hear the comments over and over again, that  
19 nothing got beyond the fence line.

20 In some of these areas, there would have to  
21 be -- instead of people going out with bucket brigades and  
22 everything else -- to monitor.

23 At some strategic points along this line --  
24 not just Baton Rouge, but I think along the whole chemical

1 corridor -- we need to have some independent source of  
2 monitoring, so that we can really determine what went off  
3 site, and then at the same time, try to determine what  
4 needs to be done to address any possible needs of the  
5 people that may be impacted by this.

6 The other point is this. Although we talk  
7 about OSHA, and the responsibilities of OSHA, at the same  
8 time, we have to talk about people who are exposed to  
9 these chemicals, and how these chemicals affect not only  
10 them, but their families.

11 So we have to be more alert about the workers  
12 as well, to make sure we have implemented every possible  
13 safety regulation to prevent harm from happening to those  
14 workers.

15 The next thing with all of us, there has to be  
16 a level of honesty with each other in communicating. What  
17 side you're on doesn't matter. But I should be able to  
18 come to you and say, What happened? What was released?  
19 How will this impact my family?

20 I should be able to ask you, Do I need to take  
21 some further cautions? Do I need to down the line, look  
22 out for something? Because it begins to remove the lines  
23 that are sometimes drawn in the sand, based on who's  
24 choosing up on what side.

1           And I think that's very important, because if  
2 you implement honesty, I believe you also begin to  
3 implement trust.

4           And so if you implement trust, then those  
5 barriers that are perceived between environmentalists and  
6 industry and others -- some of those barriers are  
7 eradicated, because now we have open conversation and open  
8 dialogue, and we're working together to resolve a problem,  
9 or make sure that problem does not occur again.

10           And so as you go through this, let me first  
11 thank all of you for taking out the time to be here. Let  
12 me thank you for the hours that you put in in order to  
13 address this very pressing situation.

14           But I can tell you we don't have a lot of hours  
15 left. We don't have a lot of days left. We don't have a  
16 lot of weeks left.

17           I'm not saying it may be Honeywell; I'm not  
18 saying who it may be. But just by the very nature of  
19 what's being handled, and it may not be in a plant. It  
20 could be a railcar. It could be a barge. It could be on  
21 the highway.

22           By the very nature what's traversing this  
23 corridor, we have to act with all deliberate speed, to  
24 begin to put some safety things into place for the

1 workers, for the companies, for the people outside of the  
2 plants, and let them know that jointly, we are  
3 establishing a public policy, that's for the benefit of  
4 what we've established in our State Constitution.

5 And in that State Constitution, each of us is  
6 charged with the public health and safety of every  
7 resident in this state. And we are also charged with  
8 enacting the laws to make sure the provisions of the  
9 Constitution of this state are carried out.

10 And so that's my plea to you, and I thank you  
11 for taking the time to listen to me. And I wish God  
12 blesses us all, as we deliberate. Thank you.

13 DR. POJE: Mr. Malcolm Mier has a few opening  
14 remarks for us, as well.

15 Thank you, Kip.

16 MR. MIER: I want you to know that I was  
17 introduced first, and I probably should have gone first.  
18 You know, you never give an opportunity to a mayoral  
19 candidate to speak.

20 First I want to say on behalf of U.S. Senator  
21 John Breaux that I'm pleased to be here with you all here  
22 tonight.

23 Pleased that the U.S. Chemical Safety and  
24 Hazard Board has taken this opportunity to work on this

1 investigation.

2 But also more pleased to see them have a public  
3 hearing and public testimony relative to the incidents  
4 that have occurred. Very serious in nature, as Sen.  
5 Holden has spoke about, there are some concerns in our  
6 community.

7 But this is the positive aspect of having these  
8 public hearings to make sure that people are informed and  
9 kept informed of all the issues that concern them.

10 So to our panelists, on behalf of Sen. Breaux,  
11 thank you all for coming to inform our community in  
12 Louisiana, and thank you for our meeting today, and we  
13 will continue to have updates.

14 I also want to say that I'm very pleased that  
15 you all will be discussing emergency response and  
16 community notifications. I think it is quite important,  
17 and hopefully we'll have some great dialogue here tonight.

18 I wish you well, and make sure you ask these  
19 guys all the questions you want to. And hopefully the  
20 panelists will bring you all the information that you  
21 deserve. Thank you.

22 DR. POJE: Thank you, Malcolm.

23 The Chemical Safety Board is an independent  
24 federal agency based in Washington D.C. We investigate

1 chemical accidents, determine the facts and issue  
2 findings.

3 Our mission is to use the results of our  
4 investigations to save the lives of workers and the  
5 public, to prevent property damage and to prevent  
6 environmental damage.

7 We will go beyond determining the facts of what  
8 happened. And we'll determine the root causes of these  
9 accidents, and then we'll issue safety recommendations to  
10 prevent them from happening again.

11 We're not an enforcement agency. These  
12 recommendations will be shared with the entire chemical  
13 industry and, we hope, will result in preventing accidents  
14 and saving lives.

15 More information about what the Board has done  
16 and will be doing is available on our website,  
17 [www.csb.gov](http://www.csb.gov). And you have access to some of our materials  
18 at the table outside.

19 Let me proceed with introducing our team of CSB  
20 investigators here tonight.

21 Lisa Long joined the CSB as an investigator in  
22 the year 2000. Since then, she's been involved in many  
23 CSB incidents and hazard investigations, including serving  
24 as the lead investigator on the Board's Georgia Pacific

1 investigation and the Catalyst Systems investigation.

2 Prior to joining the CSB, Ms. Long worked for  
3 eleven years for major chemical companies. She has  
4 experience in plant operations and management safety and  
5 process engineering. She holds a degree in chemical  
6 engineering.

7 Mr. Michael Morris also joined the CSB in 2000,  
8 and has since become one of our most experienced on-scene  
9 investigators.

10 Prior to joining the agency, Mr. Morris worked  
11 as a process safety engineer for a major chemical and  
12 pharmaceutical company in their corporate process safety  
13 department.

14 Mr. Morris hold a degree in criminal justice  
15 and has a master's degree in safety and environmental  
16 management.

17 Mr. Johnnie Banks joined the CSB last year, and  
18 he has participated in several CSB investigations and case  
19 studies.

20 Prior to joining the CSB, Mr. Banks worked for  
21 22 years at Chevron-Texaco Corporation in Richmond,  
22 California, as a process control head operator.

23 He has extensive background in the oil-refining  
24 industry, including plant operations, process controls and

1 maintenance. He's a graduate of the University of  
2 California at Berkeley.

3 Also joining us tonight is our chief operating  
4 officer, Charles Jeffress. I don't see Charles  
5 immediately in the room, but he's probably standing  
6 outside helping others. There he is, standing in the  
7 back.

8 Again I wish to welcome you all here. I know  
9 there are concerns in the community about the events we  
10 will be talking about this evening.

11 Following our investigators' presentations, we  
12 will have a public comment period. And we would request  
13 that you sign up on the sign-up sheet outside. Many of  
14 you already have.

15 Please print your names and give us the contact  
16 information, if you wish. It would certainly help us as  
17 we gather additional information about these events.

18 We would also ask those who are going to speak  
19 tonight -- because they are many that wish to speak about  
20 these incidents, to keep your remarks to just a few  
21 minutes.

22 That will allow everybody to talk. And it will  
23 also permit you to give comments us informally at other  
24 times as well, so we're not trying to cut that off, but

1 help facilitate the process this evening.

2 Now I'll turn over the microphones to our lead  
3 investigator, Lisa Long.

4 Lisa?

5 MS. LONG: Thank you and good evening.

6 Tonight we'll be giving an update on the CSB  
7 investigation of three incidents that occurred last summer  
8 at Honeywell's Baton Rouge plant.

9 The CSB has assigned a team to work on these,  
10 and the team includes five investigators, including  
11 myself, Johnnie Banks, Mike Morris, John Murphy, Judy  
12 Joseph and Steve Wallace handling recommendations.

13 Tonight Mike, Johnnie and I will present the  
14 preliminary details of each incident to you. I'll start  
15 with a brief overview of each incident and then describe  
16 the first incident in more detail.

17 Then Mike Morris will cover the second  
18 incident, and Johnnie Banks, the third.

19 The first incident that the CSB is  
20 investigating occurred on July 20, 2003. It was a  
21 chlorine release that resulted in eight employees being  
22 injured and residents within a half-mile radius advised to  
23 shelter-in-place.

24 The second incident occurred on July 29, when

1 an operator was sprayed with spent antimony pentachloride.

2 Unfortunately, the operator died as a result of his  
3 exposure.

4 The third incident occurred on August 13, when  
5 two operators were exposed to hydrofluoric acid or HF, and  
6 both were injured.

7 And now I'm going to describe the details of  
8 the July 20 chlorine release. Before I give you the  
9 incident description, I'd like to give you a little  
10 information on the characteristics and health effects of  
11 chlorine.

12 At normal atmospheric conditions, chlorine is a  
13 greenish-yellowish gas. It has many uses in  
14 manufacturing, but is also commonly used as a  
15 disinfectant, for example in wastewater treatment plants.

16 It has a bleach-like odor that is easily  
17 recognized. And you may be able to smell chlorine at  
18 concentrations as low as two parts per million.

19 Now, because chlorine is a very commonly used  
20 chemical, there is data available on the health effects  
21 that may be helpful to show for this incident, where there  
22 was some off-site impact.

23 As you can see, at low concentrations, chlorine  
24 is an irritant. And at high concentrations, exposure to

1 chlorine can be deadly.

2 Now, at the Baton Rouge plant, Honeywell uses  
3 chlorine to make Genetron 143a refrigerant. The chlorine  
4 release originated from a chlorine cooler in this process.

5 This simplified diagram shows the chlorine cooler and its  
6 connection to the other process equipment.

7 Chlorine is fed from a railcar shown here into  
8 the chlorine cooler. Now, as I mentioned earlier chlorine  
9 is a gas at normal conditions, and for their process  
10 Honeywell needed to use chlorine in its liquid form.

11 So in order to do this, they had to keep it  
12 cool. And the chlorine was routed through this cooler.  
13 The cooler consisted of a bundle of tubes placed inside an  
14 outer shell.

15 Chlorine flowed through the tubes, and  
16 refrigerant flowed through the outside of the tubes on the  
17 shell side.

18 The refrigerant system is shown here. And it  
19 is a continuous flow loop that comes from a refrigerant  
20 tank and then is pumped to various pieces of equipment,  
21 including the chlorine cooler, and then flows back to the  
22 refrigerant tank again.

23 The liquid chlorine flows from the cooler  
24 through an isolation valve shown here to a reactor, where

1 it mixes with other chemicals in the main part of the  
2 process.

3 And now that you've seen how the chlorine  
4 cooler operates, I'll review the sequence of events that  
5 allowed the chlorine to be released to the atmosphere.

6 First the cooler used to cool the chlorine  
7 failed when it developed an internal leak. This allowed  
8 liquid chlorine to enter the refrigerant system.

9 The chlorine in the refrigerant system was not  
10 compatible with the equipment, and refrigerant pumps  
11 failed when they developed a leak as a result of being  
12 contaminated with the chlorine.

13 This allowed the liquid chlorine, which  
14 immediately turned to a gas, to be released into the  
15 atmosphere.

16 These are pictures of the chlorine cooler. The  
17 first picture is an external view taken while the cooler  
18 was still in place. That's shown here in yellow. The  
19 cooler was six inches in diameter by eight feet long.

20 The second picture shows the tube bundle and  
21 the holes in it. You can see the holes right here and  
22 here. And we placed a dime in the picture to give you an  
23 idea of the size of the holes there.

24 Now, again the chlorine traveled inside the

1 tubes and was cooled by refrigerant on the outside of the  
2 tubes. Preliminary results showed that the cooler leaks  
3 originated in the refrigerant-side of the cooler.

4 These pictures show the refrigerant system pump  
5 tubing that developed holes and leaked. Because the  
6 chlorine was not anticipated in the system, the copper  
7 tubing used here was not compatible with chlorine.

8 If you can imagine what a clean piece of copper  
9 tubing looks like, you can see the effects of chlorine on  
10 this tubing. You might notice some holes and corrosion  
11 here, and also the green color caused the exposure of the  
12 copper tubing to the chlorine.

13 And now I'll present the sequent of events  
14 after the release had started.

15 First at about 3:05 a.m., operators noticed a  
16 chlorine odor and quickly discovered the release at the  
17 refrigerant pump.

18 Plant personnel outside the control room  
19 realized that they needed additional protection and help.

20 Before anyone could take any action, the  
21 chlorine had entered the control room through holes in the  
22 ventilation piping. And both inside and outside operators  
23 were forced to evacuate.

24 The chlorine gas entered the control room, even

1     though this was a positive pressure ventilation system,  
2     designed to keep toxic gases out of the control room. The  
3     evacuation occurred prior to the plant being shut down.

4             It is also important to note that the chlorine  
5     in the control room damaged some of the control equipment,  
6     resulting in the need to eventually shut the plant down  
7     manually.

8             By about 3:25 a.m., all the plant personnel  
9     were evacuated to assembly areas, and local authorities  
10    were notified of the release.

11            Now, the plant had emergency response personnel  
12    on shift, but more of the operators trained to operate the  
13    G-143a process had been exposed to chlorine and were  
14    getting medical care. Consequently, additional employees  
15    were called at home to help respond.

16            At about 3:30 a.m., the site water spray or  
17    mitigation towers were turned on. These were used to help  
18    suppress the chlorine gas cloud and contain it on site.

19            And at about 4:00 a.m., the local fire  
20    department activated the shelter-in-place system to  
21    advise residents within a half-mile radius to  
22    shelter-in-place. And I'll talk about that system a  
23    little more later.

24            At about 7:00 a.m., the equipment was secured,

1 and the release stopped. The evidence suggests there are  
2 a few reasons why it took so long to stop the leak.

3 First, as I mentioned earlier, the operators  
4 were affected during the release and additional personnel  
5 had to be called in to help shut the plant down and  
6 isolate the leak.

7 Another reason is the location of the leak.  
8 You might remember the isolation valve shown in this  
9 diagram is after the chlorine cooler. The chlorine is  
10 normally isolated from the rest of the process by this  
11 valve, not at the chlorine railcar.

12 So even after the plant was shut down, chlorine  
13 from the railcar continued to flow from the railcar into  
14 the cooler and then into the refrigerant system and be  
15 released at the pump area.

16 When personnel realized this, the railcar was  
17 isolated, and the release stopped.

18 Now, CSB has also collected evidence regarding  
19 the off-site impact of this release.

20 We found that at about 5:30 a.m., Honeywell  
21 began fence line monitoring. At this time, the chlorine  
22 concentration was 1.2 parts per million at Lupine and  
23 Ontario, which is just outside the plant gate.

24 At 7:13 a.m., Louisiana Department of

1 Environmental Quality, or DEQ, began sampling. At this  
2 time chlorine concentrations were less than 0.35 parts per  
3 million outside the plant fence line.

4 This picture shows the Honeywell site. It's  
5 the red dot in the center of this map, and the green  
6 circle indicating one half-mile radius from the plant, and  
7 the red one indicating a one-mile radius from the plant.

8 This is I-110 right here, the Mississippi River  
9 to the west. Exxon in this area here. The closest  
10 community residential area is right here. And in blue is  
11 Chippewa.

12 Meteorological data shows that at the time of  
13 the event, there was only a very slight wind, and the wind  
14 direction came from the southwest, in this direction here.

15 We have spoken to emergency responders who  
16 noted a strong chlorine odor near Plank and Prescott,  
17 which is shown here in yellow, which is over a mile and a  
18 half away.

19 Responders stated that as they proceeded up  
20 Chippewa toward the site, the odor was much less  
21 prevalent. Others reported that they still noticed a  
22 chlorine odor on the interstate a few hours after the  
23 incident occurred.

24 The East Baton Rouge emergency response system

1 is administered by the Office of Homeland Security and  
2 Emergency Preparedness. Keith Cranford from this office  
3 will be giving a presentation later this evening about the  
4 emergency notification system.

5 So right now, I'm just going to review the July  
6 20 timeline for emergency notification.

7 At 3:29 a.m., Honeywell used the East Baton  
8 Rouge I-Notification system to notify authorities of a  
9 level III incident. A level III incident is defined by  
10 East Baton Rouge as an incident with off-site impact.

11 At 4:00 a.m., the local siren system was used  
12 to alert the community to shelter-in-place. At 4:03 a.m.,  
13 the autodialer system was used to notify residents within  
14 a half-mile to shelter-in-place.

15 Through interviews with some local residents,  
16 CSB learned that residents outside the half-mile radius  
17 could hear the siren and were confused by what it meant  
18 for them, because they had very little information.

19 And finally at 7:09 a.m., the all clear was  
20 given, and the shelter-in-place advisory was lifted.

21 That concludes my presentation on the first  
22 incident. Mike Morris will now talk about the July 29  
23 antimony pentachloride incident.

24 MR. MORRIS: Thank you, Lisa.

1           On July 29, nine days after the chlorine  
2 release, approximately 1:30 p.m., a worker at the  
3 Honeywell facility was engulfed by liquid spray and vapor  
4 of spent antimony pentachloride, which was released from a  
5 ton cylinder.

6           The worker died from this exposure the next day  
7 at East Baton Rouge General Hospital.

8           I'll give you a little bit about the  
9 characteristics of spent antimony pentachloride and talk  
10 about the uses at the Honeywell facility.

11           They use antimony pentachloride in their  
12 processes to make refrigerants. In these processes, the  
13 antimony pentachloride becomes contaminated or spent and  
14 must be collected and sent off site to a special facility  
15 to be regenerated.

16           During shipment the antimony is placed into ton  
17 cylinders marked, antimony pentachloride. And once  
18 regenerated, the now fresh antimony pentachloride is sent  
19 back to the site and used again.

20           Now, some information on the characteristics of  
21 spent antimony pentachloride. It's a yellow to brown,  
22 oily, fuming liquid that has a very offensive odor.

23           It is highly toxic, reacts violently with water  
24 or moisture in the air, and may be fatal if inhaled,

1 swallowed or absorbed through the skin. Antimony  
2 pentachloride is extremely destructive to human tissue.

3 This picture is an example of what I've been  
4 referring to as a ton cylinder. This is a rack of ten ton  
5 cylinders.

6 The main part of Honeywell's business here in  
7 Baton Rouge is the production and sale of refrigerants.  
8 Refrigerant is produced on site and loaded into ton  
9 cylinders such as these. The cylinders are then sent off  
10 site to their customers.

11 Customers use the refrigerant and then send the  
12 empty cylinders back to Honeywell -- similar to how you  
13 might use and exchange your propane tank for your gas  
14 grill.

15 So on a fairly consistent schedule, Honeywell  
16 sends out full refrigerant cylinders and gets back empty  
17 ones. These cylinders are required to be tested and  
18 certified every five years. This is a Department of  
19 Transportation requirement.

20 So when refrigerant cylinders come into the  
21 plant, they are separated into two piles -- one which can  
22 be used right away -- the other pile, ones that must be  
23 prepped, prepared and set out for off-site testing.

24 On the day of the incident, the operator was

1 working in this area shown here. This area handles only  
2 refrigerant cylinders.

3 More specifically, the area shown in the  
4 picture is where ton cylinders that used to contain  
5 refrigerant are prepared for this off-site testing I  
6 discussed earlier.

7 This is the cylinder that was involved in the  
8 incident. This is a view of the front ground level of the  
9 refrigerant cylinders on the rack on the day of the  
10 incident.

11 The normal operation would be here that the  
12 operator would bring ten cylinders from the pile that  
13 required testing and place them on this rack. Next, hoses  
14 such as these would be attached to the ton cylinders.

15 Any residual or small amount of the refrigerant  
16 gas that was left remaining in the cylinders would be  
17 drained or sent to a stack.

18 Next, the operator will fill the cylinders with  
19 an inert gas called nitrogen and then empty it again, and  
20 this will evacuate any refrigerant vapors that may be left  
21 inside the cylinder.

22 Once this is completed, the operator will then  
23 open the cylinder up by removing all the valves, plugs and  
24 pressure-relief devices. Then the empty cylinders are now

1 ready to be sent off site for the testing.

2 All of the cylinders on the rack the day of the  
3 incident were labeled as refrigerant cylinders, such as  
4 was this cylinder, the one involved in the incident, as  
5 you can see here, chlorodifluoromethane. This a  
6 refrigerant gas.

7 The operator involved had worked at Honeywell  
8 for approximately four years. He had been working in this  
9 particular area only a few weeks and had just recently  
10 completed his on-the-job training in this new area.

11 Bank to the picture from ground level, front  
12 side of the cylinders. Keep in mind these pictures were  
13 taken prior to anything being moved in this area. So this  
14 is what the scene looked like the day of the incident.

15 Notice all of the other cylinders are hooked up  
16 to the drain hoses, except this cylinder. This is the  
17 cylinder involved in the incident.

18 The evidence shows that the operator drained  
19 the other cylinders, but did not drain this cylinder, due  
20 to the valves on this cylinder being stuck closed.

21 We cannot yet explain why the operator did what  
22 he did next. Witnesses state that they saw the operator  
23 approaching the back of the cylinder with this impact  
24 wrench.

1           This is a common tool used at the plant to  
2 remove plugs, nuts and bolts -- that type of thing. You  
3 might see it when they change the tires on your car. It's  
4 the same type of tool they use then.

5           This is a picture of the back of the ton  
6 cylinder involved in the incident. Notice the three  
7 plugs.

8           The operator approached this specific cylinder  
9 shown here. Then the operator with the impact wrench  
10 removed the plug from the cylinder, that he was unable to  
11 drain or verify as empty.

12           Upon removing the plug, the operator was  
13 engulfed in a liquid spray that shot back several feet and  
14 formed a large cloud in the area.

15           This cloud was visible for a short time from  
16 off site, though it dissipated prior to having any major  
17 off-site impact.

18           The operator, visibly disoriented by this  
19 high-pressure spray, stumbled out of the vapor cloud and  
20 was helped to a safety shower.

21           After several minutes under the safety shower,  
22 he was taken to the plant first aid station, then  
23 transported to East Baton Rouge General Hospital, where  
24 the operator died the next day as a result of this

1 exposure.

2           The cylinder involved in this incident again  
3 was labeled as a refrigerant. Analysis of the contents of  
4 this cylinder has determined it contained a large  
5 quantity, not of refrigerant, but of spent antimony  
6 pentachloride.

7           The CSB has been able to trace this cylinder  
8 back to 1998, to El Segundo, California, to a Honeywell  
9 facility, similar to the operations at Baton Rouge,  
10 Louisiana.

11           However, the El Segundo, California facility is  
12 now closed. It was in the process of closing down at this  
13 time.

14           Now, this cylinder -- the one involved in the  
15 incident -- along with ten other cylinders left El  
16 Segundo, labeled as spent antimony pentachloride, on its  
17 way to a regenerator, which is called CNMI, in Denver,  
18 Colorado.

19           When this company, CNMI, received the eleven  
20 cylinders, they could not verify the contents of four of  
21 them. They couldn't determine whether it was spent  
22 antimony pentachloride or not.

23           After discussions with Honeywell personnel, the  
24 company labeled these four cylinders that it could not

1 identify, as refrigerant cylinders --  
2 chlorodifluoromethane, as you saw in the picture, and on  
3 December 10, 1998, shipped these four cylinders to  
4 Honeywell in Baton Rouge, where they sat in the pile,  
5 labeled as refrigerant cylinders until July 29, 2003.

6 The other three cylinders, which had the  
7 stenciling changed, were isolated at the plant and have  
8 been determined to contain refrigerant gas.

9 In this case, the CSB is focusing on and is  
10 interested in the following: ton cylinder operating  
11 training, standard operating procedures, and the changing  
12 of the labeling on the ton cylinder.

13 Now Mr. Banks will discuss the August 13  
14 hydrofluoric acid incident.

15 MR. BANKS: Thank you, Mike. Good evening.

16 For the next portion of my presentation, I will  
17 be presenting the preliminary findings of our  
18 investigative hydrofluoric acid incident, which occurred  
19 on August 13, 2003. In this incident, two employees were  
20 exposed.

21 Before starting, however, just as Lisa and  
22 Mike, I'll give you some of the characteristics and health  
23 effects of HF, as it's called in the industry, HF acid or  
24 hydrofluoric acid.

1 HF is a colorless, fuming liquid or gas with a  
2 strong, irritating odor. It can produce serious health  
3 effects by any route of exposure.

4 These effects are due to the fluoride ions'  
5 aggressive, destructive penetration of tissues and exceeds  
6 beyond scarring and burns, to where extensive exposure  
7 leads to lower levels of potassium, calcium, magnesium in  
8 the body.

9 HF is irritating to the skin, eyes and mucus  
10 membranes. Inhalation may cause respiratory irritation  
11 and/or hemorrhage. The routes of exposure can be through  
12 inhalation, skin or eye contact or ingestion.

13 This incident occurred on August 13, 2003, at  
14 approximately 9:30 a.m. In this incident, two employees  
15 were exposed and transported to Baton Rouge General  
16 Hospital.

17 The first employee, an operator, received an HF  
18 exposure on his arm. The second employee, a maintenance  
19 supervisor, experienced breathing problems after assisting  
20 the operator.

21 While a visible cloud was observed, no off-site  
22 impact has been reported. From interviews and  
23 observations, there's no obvious equipment damage  
24 associated with this incident.

1           After the initial chlorine release on July 20,  
2 the entire plant was shut down. After the event on July  
3 29 with the antimony pentachloride, the CEO ordered the  
4 entire plant to remain shut down, until assurances could  
5 be obtained that the plant could be operated safely.

6           These assurances were to be directed to the  
7 operating plant, personnel and the community. Procedure  
8 checks were in the process of being conducted, in addition  
9 to inspection of equipment.

10           Through this process, it was determined that  
11 the rapid shutdown that was required after the July 20  
12 incident, left liquid HF in the plant that needed to be  
13 removed.

14           At this point, the decision was made to remove  
15 the liquid HF from the plant. A decision was made to use  
16 a Venturi stick. As I prepared this presentation, I've  
17 been asked many times, what a Venturi stick is.

18           If you've ever had occasion to use a garden  
19 spray to fertilize your lawn or flowers, the container  
20 that you attach to the garden hose that has the tube going  
21 down is using the Venturi principle.

22           The water going across that orifice creates a  
23 siphon and draws the liquid with the water to the desired  
24 spot. I'll show you a picture of the Venturi stick

1 shortly.

2           There was a system for removing HF in a gaseous  
3 state, but it didn't allow for the removal of liquid. The  
4 operators commenced with the removal of HF over a  
5 two-shift period that began the previous night.

6           The first shift went smoothly without incident.

7           Three hours into the next shift, an incident occurred.

8           Now, here's a picture of the Venturi stick that  
9 was involved in this incident. It's merely a one-inch  
10 pipe that's connected to copper tubing, that's connected  
11 to a vessel that's involved with the HF system.

12           Water is routed through this pipe to the sewer.

13           And, just like the garden sprayer, it draws a vacuum on  
14 this system and routes that to the sewer.

15           In addition to this vacuuming effect, there's  
16 200 pounds of nitrogen pressure applied at the top end of  
17 the system to add some push.

18           You'll note that this Venturi stick is secured  
19 with a rope. It's also important to note that this  
20 bracing that we see here was added after the fact. It was  
21 not secured prior to this incident.

22           These pipe stubs are routed to the sewer, that  
23 could be used for any of these Venturi sticks.

24           Now, this is the opposite end of that

1 connection I mentioned earlier, the copper tubing going to  
2 the vaporizer. You'll notice there's a block valve  
3 directly above that. The operator will close this valve  
4 after the incident occurred.

5 In the simplified diagram of the process, all  
6 of the areas that are denoted in yellow are a part of that  
7 liquid HF system. We have a surge drum, two pumps, piping  
8 and a vaporizer.

9 The copper tubing is represented here. Here's  
10 that block belt I showed you earlier. And the water's  
11 routed through this Venturi stick. And it in turn is  
12 routed to the sewer, which is represented by this pipe  
13 there.

14 As mentioned earlier, nitrogen is unregulated  
15 at 200 per square inch and is routed through the surge  
16 drum through one of two pumps to the HF vaporizer and  
17 pushed and pulled by the Venturi stick.

18 Now, in the process of removing this liquid HF,  
19 the operator felt that there was some sort of blockage in  
20 the system. In an attempt to clear that blockage, he  
21 blocked in or closed the valves on the suction side of the  
22 pumps.

23 And when he reopened them, there was a surge of  
24 pressure, which forced HF to the sewer and overwhelmed

1 that system and caused the backsplash of the material that  
2 was being routed to the sewer, where he noticed the red  
3 mark on this arm, felt that he had been exposed to HF and  
4 immediately went to the safety shower.

5 Two maintenance supervisors were in the area,  
6 saw the operator under the safety shower, went to offer  
7 assistance. One of these maintenance supervisors went to  
8 get assistance from the first aid department, the other  
9 assisted the operator as he was in the shower.

10 Here we have a picture of the safety shower  
11 that the operator used. That's contained in this yellow  
12 box. In this yellow box here is where that valve is  
13 that's connecting that copper tubing to this vaporizer.

14 So he closed the valve there and went directly  
15 to the safety shower. And approximately 25 to 30 feet to  
16 the left of this gentlemen is where that Venturi stick  
17 operation was ongoing.

18 So the proximity of this safety shower to where  
19 he was exposed probably helped to minimize the amount of  
20 burn that he received from this exposure.

21 Both employees proceeded to first aid. The HF  
22 burn victim, the victim that got the splash of HF on his  
23 arm, was treated with calcium gluconate, which a treatment  
24 medium for hydrofluoric acid to minimize the effects of

1 it.

2 The maintenance supervisor initially went to  
3 the staging area for a head count. And it was there that  
4 he started to experience a coughing spell. At that point  
5 he went to the first aid department himself, and both  
6 employees were transported to the hospital.

7 The employee that received the splash on the  
8 arm was treated and released. The maintenance supervisor  
9 that experienced breathing difficulties was held  
10 overnight, treated with oxygen and observed. And the next  
11 day he was released.

12 Neither employee reports any adverse  
13 aftereffects after leaving the hospital that next day.

14 One thing that the team would like you to take  
15 away from this particular incident is that HF is very  
16 unforgiving. In most of the case studies that we have the  
17 occasion to examine, there's very severe burns, scarring,  
18 severe health effects from being exposed to HF.

19 The use of the rope for the Venturi stick  
20 contributed mightily to this incident, in that the stick  
21 was unsecured and allowed for backflow of material.

22 In spite of the fact that these two employees  
23 were able to go home and not have any aftereffects, the  
24 consequence could have been much worse, had the

1 circumstances changed ever so slightly.

2 This concludes my portion of the presentation,  
3 and I'll turn the proceedings back over to Ms. Long.  
4 Thank you for your attention.

5 MS. LONG: That concludes our presentation of  
6 the preliminary findings.

7 At this point in our investigation, we are  
8 continuing to collect evidence for each incident, such as  
9 cooler failure mode analysis for the first incident,  
10 information regarding the mislabeling for the second  
11 incident, and information regarding industry best  
12 practices for HF handling in the third incident.

13 Once we have all of this information, we will  
14 complete our analysis. This analysis will allow us to  
15 determine underlying or root and contributing causes for  
16 each of the incidents, as well as determine any causes  
17 that we find in common for all three of the incidents.

18 Based on the evidence we've collected so far,  
19 we're particularly interested in hazard evaluation,  
20 equipment maintenance, plant procedures versus industry  
21 best practices, control room integrity, community  
22 notification and overriding safety management systems.

23 Now, once we have determined root and  
24 contributing causes, we will develop recommendations

1 addressed to Honeywell and other relevant agencies and  
2 organizations.

3 And when this work is complete, the staff will  
4 present its report to the Board in a public meeting, and  
5 the Board will vote on whether or not to accept the  
6 staff's analysis and recommendations.

7 Assuming that the Board accepts it, we will  
8 then work to ensure the implementation of our  
9 recommendations to prevent future incidents throughout the  
10 entire industry.

11 DR. POJE: Thank you, Lisa. Thank you, all the  
12 team, for that presentation.

13 We also believe that it would be important for  
14 this Board to consider the issues of emergency response  
15 and emergency preparedness and emergency notification.

16 So we've also invited Mr. Keith Cranford who,  
17 as I stated earlier, is the deputy director to the Office  
18 of Homeland Security and the Office of Emergency  
19 Preparedness in the State of Louisiana.

20 Keith, thank you for appearing before us  
21 tonight. And you have a short presentation to also share  
22 with us.

23 MR. CRANFORD: Good evening. First of all I  
24 want to thank you all for coming.

1           We're the agency in East Baton Rouge Parish  
2 that's responsible for working to ensure that the response  
3 effort is coordinated.

4           We work with all the different agencies, both  
5 public, private and volunteer, throughout East Baton Rouge  
6 Parish to plan for these events when they do happen, to  
7 give the best response.

8           But an important piece of that response is the  
9 folks out there, because no matter how good a plan we  
10 make, if you don't know what your role is and how to  
11 respond to an event, then it lessens our ability to handle  
12 that event, or it lessens the success that we'll have in  
13 handling that event.

14           So I want to thank you for coming out tonight.

15           I also want to thank the Chemical Safety Board for coming  
16 down to evaluate this incident, because we're always  
17 trying to build a better mousetrap.

18           So if they can provide us with input that will  
19 help us to help you better, then we definitely encourage  
20 their input, and we want to thank them for coming down.

21           With that, East Baton Rouge Parish houses an  
22 all hazards emergency operation plan. This plan you can  
23 find on the internet. There's a link on there that you  
24 can pull up to view this plan.

1           We publish this plan. It's also out at the  
2 libraries.

3           The plan includes an all hazards approach.  
4 That's both natural and man-made disasters, which includes  
5 hazardous materials all the way through to terrorism and  
6 weapons of mass destruction.

7           This plan also includes what the different  
8 response agencies, both public and private, through East  
9 Baton Rouge Parish do in times of emergency operations and  
10 how we'll respond to that event.

11           It includes evacuations, sheltering,  
12 radiological operations, HAZMAT -- it goes through a whole  
13 list of the things that the plan covers.

14           First, how will you be notified in the event of  
15 an emergency. We have redundant notification systems in  
16 East Baton Rouge Parish. That's both on the end coming in  
17 to us and on the end going out to the public.

18           The I-Notification system, which was mentioned  
19 earlier, is a computer-based internet system, which the  
20 plants along the industrial corridor have that system  
21 within their plants, so they can notify us and each other  
22 of an event when it occurs.

23           The I-Notification computer that we have is  
24 housed in East Baton Rouge Parish emergency center out on

1 Harding Blvd, and is manned 24 hours a day by the Baton  
2 Rouge fire department communications division. They get  
3 the info in there.

4 The redundancy to that is the backup 911  
5 system. They can pick up the telephone and call us. This  
6 computer system just gives us a little bit better  
7 information for the fire department to assess what they're  
8 rolling into when they head out to a chemical emergency.

9 On the outgoing end from us out to the parish,  
10 we have the community alert system. This system is  
11 composed of three parts -- 19 sirens that are along the  
12 river along the industrial corridor.

13 There is an autodialer system, which has the  
14 capability of calling every resident in East Baton Rouge  
15 Parish. The system can be tailored to do radiuses, street  
16 addresses.

17 We can basically tailor how we want to notify  
18 and who we want to notify and deliver a prerecorded  
19 message through the autodialer system.

20 And then we also have school monitors. And  
21 those are school and hospital monitors, and there's 41 of  
22 those throughout East Baton Rouge Parish.

23 We also contact the media. We have a media fax  
24 blast that we send out to the media. We can use the CAL

1 system to notify the media. We can also call them direct  
2 to let them know.

3 We have the Emergalert system that interrupts  
4 TV broadcasts, and you can have the crawl that's along the  
5 bottom of the TV set, and the emergency alert system which  
6 has a broader reach out into all the media outlets in East  
7 Baton Rouge Parish.

8 And this goes outside of East Baton Rouge  
9 Parish as radio signals and TV signals don't stop at the  
10 borders.

11 We also have the mobile sirens and the PA  
12 systems located on the police cars and the fire engines  
13 that are in those areas. And then we can go door to door,  
14 if we have to.

15 And just some of the information that we  
16 provide, as far as what to do in response to a hazardous  
17 material spill -- if you hear those sirens, that's when we  
18 want you to go inside, tune to your local radio and TV  
19 stations, because we send in the information as we get it.

20 Avoid the incident, know the meanings of what  
21 the protective active measures are, as far as  
22 shelter-in-place and protecting your breathing, and if you  
23 think you've been contaminated, contact your local  
24 authorities, 911, in East Baton Rouge Parish.

1           What all the protective action recommendations  
2           or what do they mean -- basically there's the steps for  
3           shelter-in-place. And I won't insult your intelligence by  
4           going through every one of them. And also in the back,  
5           what you want to do in case of an evacuation.

6           And again we provide this information on  
7           numerous public information materials that we send out to  
8           the public and that we give out in community meetings, and  
9           things of this nature.

10          And again this is to protect your breathing and  
11          the all clear. Once the all clear is given, that means  
12          the emergency is over, and you can resume normal  
13          activities.

14          This is your part that you play when the  
15          incident occurs. And it is very important that when we  
16          give out these protective active recommendations that you  
17          follow these. Again, it's for your safety, and it's  
18          precautionary.

19          You should also have a disaster plan and meet  
20          with your family and discuss that plan, so that you know  
21          what to do when events happen that could affect you.

22          Know what the emergencies are in your area, and  
23          what could happen in your area. Identify meeting places  
24          if you get separated, and contact numbers to contact

1 folks. And then practice it, so your kinds know what to  
2 do.

3 And then here's the recommendation for a  
4 disaster supply kit. And again we provide all this  
5 information on our website and through numerous  
6 publications. And then an emergency car kit for your car.

7 And if you have any questions, you can contact  
8 us at the 389-2100 number, which is the emergency  
9 operations center, which is located again on Harding Blvd.

10 And you can access our website to get more  
11 information, and follow up on the information that I've  
12 provided here tonight.

13 Thank you.

14 DR. POJE: Thank you very much, Keith. We  
15 appreciate that information. And for those of you who  
16 need to get additional information, he's here right now,  
17 and he also gave you that information in his slide  
18 presentation.

19 Let me at this moment in time on behalf of the  
20 U.S. Chemical Safety Board also express our condolences to  
21 the family of Delvin S. Henry and to his friends, his  
22 colleagues and co-workers, who was fatally killed in the  
23 antimony pentachloride event.

24 We also send our condolences to all those who

1 have received an enormous amount of worry and concern over  
2 the chlorine event and the event involving hydrofluoric  
3 acid. These are matters will leave an indelible mark in  
4 this community.

5 And the best honor that we can think of as the  
6 Chemical Safety Board is to continue with our work,  
7 hopefully to learn the lessons that are best learned from  
8 these three events, and to teach them in ways that will be  
9 preventative in the future.

10 We're thankful that so many of you turned out,  
11 as I said earlier. We also have nine people who have  
12 asked to have the opportunity to speak to us this evening,  
13 and I'll call you in the order that you signed up with our  
14 staff person, Tasha Ballard, outside.

15 We ask you to keep your remarks brief to allow  
16 everybody the time to talk.

17 The first person who signed up is Charnell  
18 Young.

19 Ms. Young, please come to the microphone so  
20 that we can all hear you clearly. And we do have your  
21 contact information as you signed in. And thank you for  
22 taking the opportunity to share your remarks with the  
23 audience this evening.

24 MS. YOUNG: First of all I was involved in the

1 July 20 chlorine leak. And I'm understanding tonight that  
2 they said the spill happened at 3:05 a.m. I also work for  
3 Homeland Security at Baton Rouge airport.

4 I had to be at work at 4:00 a.m. that morning.

5 The last time I looked at my clock, it was 3:45. That's  
6 the last thing that I can remember.

7 I called 911. My first response to them -- the  
8 reason why I'm so upset is that today is my first time  
9 hearing my 911 tape.

10 My first response to them was that Exxon had a  
11 spill, because the smell had taken me over. I couldn't  
12 even catch my breath. I didn't even know who I was. I  
13 didn't even know where I was going. I have a copy of this  
14 tape.

15 This is a list of medications that I have been  
16 on since July 20. The first person that got to me that  
17 morning was the fire department, because I could not tell  
18 them exactly where I was.

19 The fire department was the first one to get to  
20 me. The 911 guys stayed on the phone with me. He said,  
21 No, ma'am. There's no chemicals in the air. No one has  
22 reported a chemical spill. Do you have a health problem?

23 The only health problem I had at this time is  
24 hypertension. I have never been on Valium, Prozac, Paxil,

1 Xanax, Ambient.

2 I'm working to secure the public as well as  
3 what Mr. Keith is doing. I'm on my way to work. I had to  
4 be at work at 4:00 a.m. This is a copy of my medical  
5 records. This is the things that I have been through.

6 I have had a heart test done. I have had other  
7 surgeries done. I have anxiety attacks. I have  
8 depression attacks. I have a nine-year-old and a 16-year-  
9 old that I can't even take care of.

10 On that morning, when I got to Baton Rouge  
11 General, I was the first one there. Baton Rouge General  
12 had no idea what I was there or what had happened. They  
13 were working on me for about 15 or 20 minutes before any  
14 of Honeywell employees got there.

15 Until 12:30 that morning, my fiance was sitting  
16 on beside the bed. They came him and told me, Ms. Young,  
17 you need to take a drug test, because your job is  
18 requesting it.

19 I work for the federal government. Why are  
20 they requesting it? My fiance told them, She don't work  
21 for Honeywell. This is about 12:30. You don't work for  
22 Honeywell?

23 At this time, I know everything. If I'm not  
24 mistaken, my memory is very bad. My short term memory is

1 shot. You tell me that it was chlorine that was in the  
2 air. I've never had a nervous problem.

3 It was a Chrissy or Missy that was on the side  
4 of me. She was having heart problems, which she had had  
5 before. She also worked for Honeywell. They rushed her  
6 to Lane Memorial, because her doctor would not see her at  
7 Baton Rouge General.

8 Timothy or Timmy, whatever his name was, they  
9 took him to ICU. These people got to the hospital after  
10 me. I'm looking at my medical records right now. I did  
11 not get to Baton Rouge General until 4:45. This is the  
12 time they started treating me.

13 You're going to tell me that this spill  
14 happened at 3:05? And at 3:47, the 911 people did not  
15 know about it? No one knew about it. The fire department  
16 got to me first. The state police got to me second. EMS  
17 got to me third.

18 When I got to Baton Rouge General, they did not  
19 wash me down. Right now I have a bag of medication I use.

20 I use three creams on my skin daily, one steroid and two  
21 that I had to keep the burning sensation out of my face.

22 When Honeywell employees got to the hospital,  
23 they washed them down. But they thought I was having a  
24 heart attack. They didn't know what was wrong with me

1 until Honeywell got their people to the hospital.

2           So what I want to know, Keith, is how long has  
3 this alarm system been in effect? -- because if I'm not  
4 mistaken, it was either me getting into the fire truck or  
5 into EMS ambulance when I heard the sirens. And this is  
6 way after four o'clock.

7           So what time did the alarm go off? What time  
8 did they report it? And another thing, I know that the  
9 chlorine took over the control center, because all of this  
10 time, the plant managers is walking through the emergency  
11 room not knowing that I wasn't an employee.

12           They discussed everything. I know that the  
13 Honeywell employees had to kick down a steel door that was  
14 at the medical or first aid center and block this steel  
15 door up in order so that they could survive.

16           I know all of this. So don't tell nobody else  
17 that the public was not affected. I have co-workers that  
18 was on their way to Baton Rouge airport, that went through  
19 the same thing, that have worked in a plant and told me,  
20 His windows was down also.

21           But when he smelled it, he hit the accelerator,  
22 and put his windows up, because he knew what he was going  
23 through.

24           I have lived six blocks from Dow Chemical for

1 38 years of my life, and I have never in my life smelled  
2 anything like I smelled that morning. Never in my life.

3 So don't tell me that this was reported on  
4 time. I have a 911 tape. It was not reported on time.  
5 And I'm going to share all of my information with you all.

6 You can make copies. You can pass it around, whatever  
7 you would like to do with it.

8 DR. POJE: We welcome the receipt of your  
9 information. Thank you very much.

10 MS. YOUNG: This is all of my doctor bills.  
11 There are pictures of my face, because after Baton Rouge  
12 General found out I wasn't a Honeywell employee, I was  
13 released, sent home, started burning, called back to Baton  
14 Rouge General, called River West Medical Center, called  
15 Poison Control.

16 They told me to go and be treated because of my  
17 skin. These are the pictures that I have, and you can  
18 have copies of them also.

19 DR. POJE: We will make copies of your  
20 materials and return these to you, but thank you for  
21 sharing that information.

22 The next speaker is Matthew Bowman. Will  
23 Matthew please come to the microphone?

24 And for the sake of everybody, could you please

1 stand close to the microphone so that we can all hear you.

2 MR. BOWMAN: I have a couple of quick  
3 questions. The first question I have is, is there a  
4 buffer zone between the chemical plant and the  
5 subdivision? Is there one required.

6 DR. POJE: Is there a --

7 MR. BOWMAN: A buffer zone.

8 DR. POJE: A buffer zone. Again, I would turn  
9 it over to my investigator, but our purpose here is to  
10 gather information. So if we don't have the answer to  
11 that question, we will be using the questions raised here  
12 to help us further our investigative efforts.

13 MS. LONG: I showed the map earlier, and I  
14 think it showed that the plant is close to the nearest  
15 residential area here. And I don't believe that there is  
16 any buffer zone in place, any zoning coordinates that  
17 would be --

18 MR. BOWMAN: Okay. So when they have a spill,  
19 there's no way of protecting the people in the subdivision  
20 there? We live right upon the plant. And when there's a  
21 release, we gets it, but at the same time you said we  
22 hadn't gotten anything at the fence. It stops at the  
23 fence.

24 MS. LONG: No. Just showing the picture --

1 your question about a buffer zone. The community is quite  
2 close to the plant.

3 MR. BOWMAN: Okay. Are there any guarantees  
4 that they can protect the safety of the people living in  
5 that subdivision?

6 DR. POJE: I understand the point you're  
7 raising. The Board is not capable of going to any  
8 industrial facility and determining whether there can be a  
9 guarantee of safety at that facility to its workforce, to  
10 its surrounding community.

11 We're trying to find out why these three events  
12 happened, and make that known to as many people as  
13 possible.

14 So we will seek to understand all the matters  
15 that were raised today by this audience and by our staff.

16 But we're not finished the investigation yet.

17 We will welcome your questions, though. And  
18 we'll entertain them as we complete our work.

19 MR. BOWMAN: Okay. One last question. On July  
20 20, they said that the siren went off and they called  
21 people at home. I didn't know nothing about it until I  
22 woke up that morning.

23 DR. POJE: We will certainly seek to understand  
24 further from you where you live within the zone.

1 MR. BOWMAN: Within two-tenths of a mile.

2 DR. POJE: Two-tenths of a mile.

3 MR. BOWMAN: Less than that, really.

4 DR. POJE: Those are very important points.

5 We're interested knowing how the system of emergency  
6 notification is.

7 We welcome your standing in front of us today  
8 and giving us your assessment to what happened that  
9 evening and how you responded to the notification system  
10 as described to. So thank you for sharing that with us.

11 MR. BOWMAN: Okay. That's it.

12 DR. POJE: The next person I have is Mr.  
13 Shirley Bowman.

14 MS. BOWMAN: I'm thinking about this  
15 shelter-in-place thing. We are poor people in that  
16 neighborhood. Some of the house you might as well shove  
17 up under a tree. Some of the houses have holes.

18 I mean, we shelter-in-place for what? To die?  
19 It's not safe sometime in some of the houses to  
20 shelter-in-place. This is a poor neighborhood. It's old  
21 houses.

22 I'm only saying that the shelter-in-place for  
23 some people is like saying, Stay there and die. The  
24 houses is very old. It's a poor, poor neighborhood.

1                   Could you do better than just shelter-in-place?  
2                   What about sticking some boards up there or something.  
3                   We're poor.

4                   DR. POJE: Thank you very much. Clearly the  
5                   shelter-in-place concept is contingent upon the ability to  
6                   maintain an isolated environment for people.

7                   The next person we have on our list is Mr.  
8                   Wilson Turner.

9                   Mr. Turner, do you still wish to speak?

10                   (No response.)

11                   DR. POJE: Okay. I'll call him again later.  
12                   The next person is Ms. Ann Rolfus.

13                   MS. ROLFUS: Hello and thanks for coming. My  
14                   name is Ann Rolfus, and I direct a group called the  
15                   Louisiana Bucket Brigade.

16                   We give these buckets, which are right here, to  
17                   people who live next to oil refineries and chemical plants  
18                   for just this kind of situation, so that people can test  
19                   the air after an accident.

20                   While Honeywell began sampling the air,  
21                   according to what you all have said, at 5:30 in the  
22                   morning.

23                   And the State seemed to have slept in a couple  
24                   of hours until 7:13 a.m., Sonya Thomas here was up at 3:45

1 taking an air sample within the walls of her home and  
2 showed that there was exposure in her home.

3 I'd like to make five points, and I won't take  
4 too much time. But there are two overriding themes. One  
5 is -- I'm going to touch on this issue of monitoring,  
6 because if you don't know what's in the air, how in the  
7 world can you possible evacuate anyone?

8 I'm sure that part of the problem that there  
9 was with the emergency evacuation system and the sirens is  
10 this long lapse between the release and the monitoring  
11 that was done.

12 And the other is that these accidents really  
13 highlight for us the systemic problems with Louisiana.

14 So while we're all talking about  
15 shelter-in-place and issues of buffer zones, specific to  
16 these accidents, you can go up and down these rivers and  
17 over to Lake Charles, and these same situations play out  
18 again and again.

19 So I would hope that some of your  
20 recommendations applied specifically to Honeywell might  
21 also be applied to some of the general problems that we  
22 have here.

23 My first comment that I want to make is that  
24 Honeywell released contradictory statements, regarding

1 what they released that night.

2 They claimed to the media, to some of the  
3 reporters here, that Honeywell began testing the air of  
4 the surrounding neighborhoods about 5:00 a.m. and found  
5 now chemical exposure.

6 And yet tonight we learned from you that in  
7 fact they did take an air sample, and in fact they did  
8 find chlorine in the air at the level of parts per  
9 million.

10 I would ask that you include in you all's  
11 analysis, an analysis of these public statements that  
12 Honeywell did make on that day, because they are  
13 misleading the public in the best scenario and lying to  
14 the public in the worst scenario.

15 Not only does Honeywell need to be addressed,  
16 but also some of the state representatives. This is from  
17 an Associated Press report the day of the July 20  
18 accident, "State police trooper Johnny Brown says that air  
19 monitor showed no hazardous chemicals by 9:00 a.m."

20 Well, he wasn't exactly lying because he says  
21 by 9 a.m. But again, this is a very misleading statement,  
22 and it certainly looks like collusion with the industry.

23 And then the final statement that's made in  
24 regard to this monitoring is by the fire department

1 spokesman, Howard Ward. This is from The Advocate, when  
2 he says that "Monitors found no evidence of exposure  
3 outside the facility."

4 And we learned tonight that that's actually not  
5 at all true. So that's number one. Please include that  
6 in your analysis. This is a terrible problem where you  
7 have PR people and state officials coming out and lying to  
8 the public.

9 Number two is just a simple fact. Residents  
10 were exposed. The woman who started proved that. Sonya is  
11 going to talk in a second about the air sample. We have  
12 not only anecdotal information, but we have two air  
13 samples taken that night.

14 Number is three was already expressed.  
15 Shelter-in-place does not work. Even a wonderfully  
16 constructed home, it doesn't work. And I'm sure you all  
17 are aware of the facilities.

18 And I would encourage you, sir, who is in  
19 charge of the Emergency Preparedness -- really, maybe we  
20 can work together to rethink that strategy. One of Ms.  
21 Thomas' samples was taken inside her home that night.

22 Chemist Wilma Suber, who's highly respected  
23 around the country -- I'll just give you one paragraph  
24 from her analysis of these samples -- says they didn't

1 test for chlorine but they did find chemicals that could  
2 have been released in conjunction with the chlorine  
3 release, "The health impacts of the chlorine and  
4 fluorocarbons are similar and correspond to the health  
5 effects recorded by community members during the event."

6 So community members were exposed.

7 Number four, I have a list of nine questions  
8 which I won't read. But about this air monitoring that  
9 happened, I hope that again, in your analysis of this  
10 accident, you will do an analysis of their monitoring.

11 We'd like to know things like what are the  
12 detection limits of their equipment? What chemicals were  
13 tested for? How many samples were taken, etc.

14 Again, we ask those questions right after this  
15 accident, and we were given no information.

16 My last point is about hydrofluoric acid. I'm  
17 sure you all know very well that there are safer  
18 alternatives to hydrofluoric acid.

19 We've actually had a campaign now for about  
20 nine months in the town of Chalmette, Louisiana, not to  
21 far from here, asking Exxon-Mobil to phase out the  
22 hydrofluoric acid. They get their HF from Honeywell.  
23 There's no reason to use this deadly substance any more.

24 So we ask you to look into that as part of your

1 analysis also. Why not encourage and force these  
2 facilities to use alternatives that they're using in other  
3 states?

4 That's all. Thanks a lot for all of your work,  
5 and we'll be submitting some things in writing.

6 DR. POJE: Thank you for your comments, in  
7 addition to these materials.

8 Ms. Sonya Thomas?

9 MS. THOMAS: Not to just reiterate what Ann has  
10 said, my biggest concern which hurt me the most was the  
11 right-out lying that Honeywell was saying there was  
12 nothing wrong and ignoring the community that I live in.

13 We were affected. I proved that, and I showed  
14 that. During the press release, we handed out a copy of  
15 all the chemicals that were found in the air samples that  
16 I took inside of my home and outside of my home.

17 So that's, like I said, the biggest problem  
18 that I do have is the flat-out lying. And I don't know  
19 what they feel to gain by that. But they're hurting, and  
20 we are hurting. My community is hurting. And we're  
21 scared.

22 That is the biggest thing. We're scared. We  
23 almost sleep with our clothes on, dressed, because we  
24 don't know what's going to happen. I have a child in that

1 house.

2 I'm old enough. I'm exposed. But I'm trying  
3 to get her out of there. If I can get away, that's my  
4 biggest thing right now. But I cannot afford to get away  
5 from there.

6 It's just the lying that has me more upset than  
7 anything else.

8 DR. POJE: Thank you so much for your comments.

9 Mr. George Gibbons? Okay. I'll call him  
10 again.

11 Melanie Heck?

12 MS. HECK: Again we thank you for holding the  
13 meeting, but I have some extra concerns regarding the  
14 emergency alert entire program that was supposed to have  
15 happened on any of those three events.

16 We, the residents, straight across from  
17 Honeywell challenge the statement that a siren was  
18 sounded, the CAL notified.

19 We have police that barricade Chippewa so that  
20 no one can go and come, but no police come in the  
21 neighborhood. No megaphones. No one even said shelter in  
22 place.

23 You had to smell it. You had to throw up like  
24 I did, like my kids did, before we knew to shelter in

1 place. Nobody told us to shelter in place.

2 Mr. Keith, give us a timeline of your emergency  
3 alert system on any of the three events.

4 DR. POJE: Thank you.

5 Ms. Florence Robinson?

6 MS. ROBINSON: I don't live anywhere near  
7 Honeywell. Thank God. But I've had plenty of experience  
8 with what the people in that neighborhood are  
9 experiencing, because I lived in Alsen.

10 So many of the comments you've heard already  
11 are just so applicable to things we have experienced in  
12 Alsen and that have been experienced by communities all up  
13 and down the river in these industrial areas.

14 I visited the Honeywell community in the week  
15 following the July 20 spill. I went along with a group of  
16 members of the Students Environment Coalition door to  
17 door, talking to people.

18 We asked people what they had experienced.  
19 After they told us what they had experienced, we gave them  
20 information and urged them to seek medical help if they  
21 had experienced any of the symptoms, because I know  
22 personally from experience, that when you have these kind  
23 of exposures, it's not over.

24 This is something you're going to carry with

1 you for the rest of your life.

2 A few things I'd like to know. First, the  
3 timelines. I just want to go back and reemphasize these  
4 timelines. The spill began at approximately 3:00 a.m.  
5 Honeywell did not begin taking measurements until around  
6 5:00 a.m.

7 DEQ -- and this was reported in the  
8 newspaper -- began taking measurements at 6:00 a.m.  
9 Honeywell's measurements initially at the gates of their  
10 plant were 1.2 parts per million. DEQ reports its  
11 off-site readings at less than 0.35 parts per million.

12 When I talked with people in the area within a  
13 half-mile radius, and some beyond the half-mile radius, I  
14 found people who said, yes, they woke up to the smell of  
15 something like bleach. Yes, they experienced burning of  
16 their nose and their eyes and their throats.

17 That's one to three parts per million. Other  
18 people talked about strong burning of their eyes, their  
19 nose and their throats. That's five to 15 parts per  
20 million.

21 And quite a few people that we talked to spoke  
22 of themselves getting nauseous and vomiting violently, or  
23 other members of their family vomiting violently. That's  
24 30 parts per million. But DEQ and Honeywell say there was

1 no off-site contamination.

2           Incidentally, with the second spill, the  
3 antimony spill, as soon as it happened, I called DEQ, and  
4 I urged them to take more timely readings.

5           So we see a wide variety of symptoms of people  
6 who live off site, some of them beyond the half-mile  
7 radius, and some of the incidentally, what you would call  
8 upwind, because most of the people we talked to lived on  
9 the south side of Chippewa.

10           And these people were experiencing these severe  
11 symptoms.

12           We might note that antimony chloride is  
13 mutagenic and teratogenic. In other words it causes gene  
14 changes, and it harms unborn children. What provision for  
15 the long-term monitoring and care of the people in the  
16 area surrounding Honeywell?

17           I think there's some very special  
18 considerations here. Many of the people in the area don't  
19 have transportation. Again we are looking at a group of  
20 mostly homeowners.

21           These are people, who in the quest of trying to  
22 follow the great American dream of owning your own home,  
23 got a home in the only place they could afford.

24           Many of these people do not have

1 transportation. So that when things happen, they can't go  
2 anywhere. And even after it happens -- we're talking to  
3 people that don't have a way to get to the doctor.

4 You have to consider these kinds of things in  
5 your Chemical Safety Board. You have to consider what  
6 your communities are like around industries, before you  
7 can go around issuing permits. You've got to see what is  
8 real.

9 We talk about shelter-in-place, which is the  
10 biggest, cruelest joke ever perpetuated. We've been  
11 talking about emergency response. We've been talking to  
12 emergency response. I know I have been making comments on  
13 record for better than 13 years about emergency response.

14 Shelter-in-place in south Louisiana is simply  
15 not an option. Number one, the homes, as someone has  
16 clearly pointed out, are oftentimes poorly insulated.

17 You're talking about -- I don't know how much  
18 the control facility costs at Honeywell with its positive  
19 system to prevent toxics from coming in, and guess what,  
20 they came in.

21 Now, what about these people in ordinary homes?  
22 What do you expect? Of course that stuff's going to come  
23 in.

24 Not only does it enter their homes, but then it

1 gets trapped in their homes. So they sit there breathing  
2 this same concentrated stuff over and over again, while  
3 supposedly they're supposedly sheltering-in-place.

4 You're telling them to cut off their fans, cut  
5 off their air conditioners, cut off all this kind of  
6 stuff, shut up their doors and windows, and it's July?  
7 Come on, folks, be real.

8 Shelter-in-place is just not an option. We're  
9 talking about people who because they've lived in this  
10 community for years, have received numerous exposures.  
11 They're suffering from cumulative effects, and they are  
12 more sensitive.

13 When I went to that community, one of the  
14 reasons I had the students with me was because I knew I  
15 personally could not walk the streets. I've had chronic  
16 exposures, and I'm very sensitive.

17 So I sat in my air-conditioned car with my  
18 windows rolled up. Every now and then I would get out of  
19 the car and go and talk to somebody who was having real  
20 effects.

21 Just from being in that community -- and this  
22 is just an ordinary day. This is not in the aftermath of  
23 a spill; this is just an ordinary day -- I could feel the  
24 chemicals. I could feel them on my skin. I could feel

1 them in my nose. I could feel my sinuses swelling.

2 So what were the levels of the chemicals just  
3 on an ordinary day. And again I say to both DEQ and  
4 Honeywell, either your monitoring system is  
5 malfunctioning, or it's not sensitive enough, or you're  
6 just outright lying.

7 What is needed in all of these communities is  
8 continuous online, realtime monitoring systems with wind  
9 direction and speed.

10 And there's a great, great fallacy with  
11 emergency response. And I know I reported this at least  
12 13 years ago. It requires a human being -- usually a  
13 plant manager -- to make a decision that a spill is  
14 serious enough that it needs to be reported.

15 And they're always trying to cover their  
16 tracks. So they're not going to make that decision until  
17 they're absolutely forced to. In the meantime people in  
18 the community are getting exposed.

19 So that emergency response system has got to be  
20 tied in directly to these realtime, online continuous  
21 emission systems. And until we get serious about things  
22 like that, we're going to keep having these kinds of  
23 problems.

24 Mr. Holden made a comment about having

1 monitors, and he expressed concern about the seat of  
2 government being so close to industry -- the governor's  
3 mansion and the legislative house.

4 Well, I don't share these concerns with Mr.  
5 Holden. I would hope that an angel of the Lord would go  
6 into these buildings and would guide out the extremely few  
7 rare, caring, honest people and let the rest of them get  
8 their behinds gassed to death.

9 Maybe if they experienced the kind of exposures  
10 that we have had, maybe they would be a little bit more  
11 intelligent in some of the decisions they make in that  
12 legislative body.

13 Thank you very much.

14 DR. POJE: Ms. Laurie Virgis?

15 MS. VIRGIS: That was a tough act to follow,  
16 Ms. Florence. Good afternoon. My name is Laurie Virgis.

17 I serve as the metropolitan councilperson for Council  
18 District 10, where the Honeywell plant is located.

19 And I just wanted to stand this afternoon to  
20 say, I really do care. I understand the seats of  
21 government, but what it boils down is the people, just  
22 like you and me.

23 And when you're investing your homes and you're  
24 investing your community, you expect to have a certain

1 quality of life, regardless whether it's a poor  
2 neighborhood or rich neighborhood; nevertheless, homes  
3 should always be homes.

4 I listened to some of the comments. I do  
5 apologize that I did walk into the meeting late. But I  
6 understand the concerns with the timelines, the response  
7 from our Homeland Security.

8 I just want to publicly stand and pledge to you  
9 today that whatever we need to do as a government to  
10 improve the system, the CAL system -- Ms. Florence, I  
11 don't mind if we have to stand on the seats, stand on the  
12 state capitol, and go visit our friend Mr. Bush -- to  
13 figure out what we need to do, because this is serious.  
14 The bottom line is -- people always say that we got to be  
15 crazy to serve on the city council, because we're the  
16 closest to the people, meaning that we're the ones you see  
17 every day. We're the ones you see in the grocery store.

18 But, nevertheless, public service is about  
19 people and their quality of life. I don't understand.  
20 I'm not a chemist. I don't understand the different  
21 chemicals.

22 I do appreciate the lady being here with the  
23 bucket. In fact, I wish we had buckets all over East  
24 Baton Rouge Parish, because like Ms. Florence said, it's

1 not just in our area.

2 North Baton Rouge has been experiencing many  
3 horror studies for years, and she's been fighting that  
4 fight for a long time.

5 I just want to say to you, that if you call me,  
6 we'll give you an answer. Hopefully it's an answer you're  
7 looking for. If it's not, we'll push it to the very end.

8 I just want to say on behalf of the council --  
9 well, this councilwoman -- that if we're not doing what  
10 we're supposed to do, I'm willing to do my homework to  
11 find out what we need to do to make it better, because you  
12 do need to have the response.

13 I don't know what is the community outreach  
14 program that you all have, if there's any mechanism to  
15 expand or to help in some areas. I know there's some  
16 plants that go into communities and help fix up homes and  
17 things of that nature.

18 I don't know if that is an arm that your  
19 company has at this point, but if so, I think for those  
20 people who can't afford the siding and the proper  
21 whatever, I would like for you all to consider offering  
22 that to the community.

23 We can't change what happened on those days.  
24 But hopefully, we won't let it happen again. And my heart

1 goes out to those people who have experienced medical  
2 concerns. And I hope and pray God that it's just for the  
3 season, it's not for your lifetime.

4 I want to thank you all for coming, to at least  
5 give our community a chance to express their comments.  
6 Hopefully the comments that they're taking that you'll go  
7 back and come back with some positive directives, so that  
8 we can improve our relationship both ways.

9 We understand that you're here as a business.  
10 But, like I said, this is where these people live.

11 They're raising their children. They're going to school.

12 Everything that you and I want for our family -- a good  
13 quality of life.

14 So I ask for your favorable consideration and  
15 whatever you can do for our community. Thank you. And I  
16 really do care.

17 DR. POJE: Thank you very much. I do have two  
18 people who signed up, who did not come when I called them.

19 Let me just call again.

20 Is Mr. Wilson Turner interested in speaking to  
21 us this evening? How about Mr. George Gibbons?

22 (No response.)

23 DR. POJE: For those of you who may know these  
24 individuals, we certainly would be happy to get their

1 input at a future date.

2 Is there anyone else in the audience who would  
3 like to speak?

4 Please, if you could, for the sake of our  
5 information, state your name, and also spell your name.  
6 That would just be very helpful to us.

7 MS. PATIN: Good afternoon. My name is Lilly  
8 Mae Patin. I live at 2006 Madison Avenue.

9 On the first incident that happened, I am very,  
10 very upset. I called Channel 2. I called Channel 9.  
11 Nobody knew nothing. When I asked them what was going on,  
12 What do you mean? I say, What do you think I mean?

13 They didn't nothing what's going on. I called  
14 them at least 20 times. It should be on somebody's tape.

15 Then the fire marshal is going to tell me -- it wasn't  
16 the two and a half-mile radius. He was a liar.

17 And I'm here to tell him tonight, he's a liar,  
18 because in my home, when I woke up, I couldn't even  
19 breathe. I drunk coffee. It tasted so bad, I thought I  
20 was losing my mind.

21 I got an uncle behind me, 72 years old, still  
22 living with sores from the top of his head to the bottoms  
23 of his feet. We had to rush him to the hospital. Don't  
24 tell me none of that.

1 I'm tired of being tired. And when it come to  
2 that part, and I'm a mother of three with five grandkids,  
3 with asthma and everything else.

4 Something's got to be done. It's time for a  
5 change.

6 DR. POJE: Thank you very much.

7 Somebody else I was on this side. Please  
8 approach the microphone. And please again, for the sake  
9 of our ability to record your information, if you could  
10 state your name clearly, but also spell your last name,  
11 please.

12 MR. GRIMES: My name is Sammy Grimes. I live  
13 at 1921 General Beauregard, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70180.

14 I'm a community activist in this area. I'm  
15 with Advocates for Change and a variety of other  
16 organizations. One of the things we're trying to do is  
17 revitalize the community and revitalize the neighborhood.

18 Before I go into that I'd like to thank you  
19 guys for being so candid and straightforward. I  
20 understand these guys are here for information and  
21 fact-finding and unbeknowing damage control, too.

22 But at the same time, what I'd like to present  
23 to you is the same thing that Laurie Virgis presented to  
24 you.

1           You have a variety of homes. You could develop  
2 a community outreach. If you look around, none of those  
3 people in that community work at your plant. If you look  
4 around, your plant does not do anything for that  
5 community.

6           There is nothing that comes from your plant to  
7 that community but catastrophes and disasters, misuse,  
8 abuse. That's all.

9           On the brighter side, you can't change what has  
10 happened. You can filter it out. You can all get  
11 together, try to work out whatever you want, cover up  
12 whatever you want, do whatever you want.

13           But you can't change what happened. But you  
14 can prevent, because sooner or later it's going to happen,  
15 and you're ain't going to be able to cover it up.

16           But you can prevent. So here's an opportunity  
17 for you guys to at least reach out to this community, and  
18 like she said, we got a lot.

19           Every Saturday, one a month, we come through  
20 here and we paint houses, anywhere from 12 to one to two.

21           And we come back and redo again. We do repairs. All of  
22 this is for free.

23           There are a variety of organizations that work  
24 with us and try to get this here done in this area. You

1 guys could be a spearhead up there to that community.

2 You all have abused them, not intentionally,  
3 but it has happened. But the intentional part is  
4 accepted, because of the fact that you have not accepted  
5 your responsibility for it.

6 Here is your first step. And I think this is  
7 beautiful. And again, it's ushered in by the candidness  
8 of these individuals here.

9 That is the thing that is here. You haven't  
10 done anything for these people. It's time for you all to  
11 start doing something for them. Reach out. Try to help  
12 them repair their homes and everything else. You know the  
13 condition of their community.

14 If something drastic happens at your plant,  
15 they're as good as dead. Shelter-in-place, it's not going  
16 to happen. These guys coming to get them, it's not going  
17 to happen. That's a black community, mixed, affluent,  
18 diverse, whatever -- they don't care; they really don't.

19 It's all about covering up whatever you all  
20 have. So here's a chance for everybody to come together.

21 I believe in the three P's -- no permanent enemies, no  
22 permanent friends, only a permanent issue.

23 And the issue here is these people and their  
24 community. They're homeowners.

1 DR. POJE: Thank you. One more over here, I  
2 believe, raised their hand. If not, then this gentlemen  
3 here.

4 MR. WILLMER: I'm Modell Willmer, a concerned  
5 citizen of the East Baton Rouge Parish.

6 One of my concerns is that I'd like to ask  
7 Homeland Security office, they do have a safe program that  
8 was instituted in the East Baton Rouge Parish -- the  
9 community emergency response team.

10 This means that in every community, I hope that  
11 they would set this program up, so that the people in that  
12 community could know about any type of issue that occurs.

13 It's a very good program. And it's been  
14 instituted in East Baton Rouge Parish, but it's not have  
15 been focused on enough. And I think we need to look at  
16 that issue, because all the people in the community,  
17 because as we talk about shelter-in-place, that's just  
18 out. It's not going to work, because you have to look at  
19 the wind direction, upwind, downwind, crosswind, whatever  
20 occurs.

21 If a chemical is coming from that direction,  
22 it's going to be there. And like the lady said, once it  
23 gets inside your home, there some many entrances to your  
24 home where chemicals can get in.

1           So you need to look at that issue that's  
2 occurring now, so we can look out for the safety of this  
3 community, because any type of chemical spill that occurs,  
4 the issue is there's nothing we can do about it.

5           And we have to look at the barges. They have  
6 to look at the transportation system that you have on the  
7 highways.

8           You have to look at the rail system, all them  
9 are carrying hazardous chemicals. Ninety-eight percent of  
10 the chemicals in the South pass through Baton Rouge,  
11 Louisiana, either on the river, on the highway or on the  
12 rail system.

13           So we need to look out protecting East Baton  
14 Rouge Parish.

15           DR. POJE: Thank you very much. Is there  
16 anyone who would like to speak. One additional comment?

17           MS. ROBINSON: If you'll forgive me, I forgot a  
18 very important thing.

19           On July 29, I was sitting in my house, and the  
20 phone rang. It was the afternoon of July 29. A man was  
21 on the other line. He said, What in the world is going  
22 on? I asked him, What do you mean?

23           He said, My children just ran in the house and  
24 said, Daddy come see. He said I went outside, and it was

1 a cloud. It smelled like roach spray, and it was so  
2 thick. And I came in the house, I was burning.

3 So I told him I was going to try to get some  
4 information as soon as I could. Before I could even call  
5 DEQ, the phone rang again.

6 This time it was a woman, saying essentially  
7 the same thing. A cloud had enveloped her house, and it  
8 was like mosquito spray, that's how she described it.  
9 This was the day of the antimony chloride.

10 The point to be made is, number one, there was  
11 off-site contamination, and what's most important here is  
12 that these reports came to my house before the information  
13 got on the news, because while I was talking to the second  
14 person, she said, Oh, here it comes on the news now. And  
15 I flipped on the TV, and there it was just coming on as a  
16 special announcement, that there had been a spill at  
17 Honeywell.

18 DR. POJE: Thank you very much.

19 One more person? Please approach the  
20 microphone, and please, again, for the clarity of our  
21 record, could you state your name clearly and also spell  
22 your last name, if you would.

23 MS. ANTHONY: My name is Stephanie Anthony. I  
24 live at 4070 Fairwoods Avenue.

1 I'd like to say that I have had an opportunity  
2 to attend some of the emergency preparedness meetings.  
3 They meet monthly.

4 One thing I would like to suggest is, since  
5 there are representatives from every area -- the plants,  
6 the hospitals, government -- there only seems to be two  
7 slots for community people.

8 I would think that there should be a chair for  
9 each area, community people that live around plants. Many  
10 times when I go to meetings and begin to explain the  
11 community situation, I get these blank stares.

12 They really don't believe that  
13 sheltering-in-place is not an effective way of trying to  
14 address an emergency situation. They actually did not,  
15 for a good while, believe that the CAL system does not  
16 call people.

17 I've lived in the area for at least six years,  
18 and I've never been called, even with the practice. They  
19 really didn't believe that you can't distinguish what the  
20 announcements are, it's just blah, blah, blah.

21 And you say, okay, it'll be every Tuesday, or  
22 every Wednesday. It seems like every day, there's  
23 loudspeakers saying something indistinguishable and  
24 causing people even more distress.

1           Of course when there is a spill, then you hear  
2 nothing. So it's very ironic. I have a little nonprofit  
3 organization called Louisiana Democracy Project. And we  
4 have a program called, Pray for our Air.

5           For those people who live within two miles of  
6 these industries, there's always something happening, but  
7 rarely is there a situation when there's an honest, open  
8 dialogue of what has actually occurred.

9           This is very unfortunate, because a great  
10 portion of the population is under the age of ten years  
11 old. If you have an uninformed adult population next to  
12 industry -- we believe the largest business is day-care  
13 centers, within a two-mile area of Honeywell.

14           We really have to get accurate, pertinent,  
15 timely information, because it affects the generation to  
16 come. I ask that you consider what I've said so far and  
17 expand upon on it, especially locally, the emergency  
18 preparedness.

19           We can really do better. We can do a lot  
20 better. Thank you.

21           DR. POJE: Thank you very much. Is there  
22 anyone else who would like to say something at the  
23 microphone this evening?

24           Yes, please approach the microphone, and again,

1 just to reiterate -- I sound like a broken record  
2 sometimes -- please give us your full name, and if you  
3 could spell your last name.

4 MR. HARTIN: My name is Keith Hartin. I'm with  
5 the Teamster's union here in Baton Rouge. These people  
6 came here and spent their time tonight. One thing that is  
7 real, this plant has been here awhile, and this community  
8 has been here awhile.

9 You've heard the lady speak about being poor  
10 and the conditions of their houses. Those people hearts  
11 beat just like this side, mine, anybody else in this room.  
12 These people should be taken care of.

13 My question is, when are you going to meet on  
14 this again?

15 DR. POJE: We'll describe some of the further  
16 processes of the Board, but this is an interim meeting.  
17 You've heard from our staff about some of the additional  
18 testing and analysis to be done.

19 We anticipate being back in this community  
20 later on in the year. I can't give you an exact date at  
21 this time, because we're uncertain about the further  
22 testing and analysis. But it's likely to be later on this  
23 year.

24 When we return, it's likely to be that our

1 staff will be presenting to a fuller board of four members  
2 sitting independently as each of us would be, to hear what  
3 they have to say, to deliberate on the matters that  
4 they're raising for us, and then to vote likely in public  
5 as the whether to accept or amend the findings,  
6 conclusions, causations, recommendations regarding these  
7 three events.

8           Your input from this evening is very valuable  
9 to us. And we will be doing further analysis on the  
10 points that you've raised. You'll also be all invited to  
11 come to that meeting and see this deliberation and have  
12 additional input for us.

13           The reason for holding a meeting right now is  
14 so that we don't come to the end of what we would presume  
15 to be our work, having missed some of the issues that are  
16 most important and germane to this community.

17           So we're thankful for that. I can't give you  
18 an exact date, though, other than to promise that the  
19 Board will be back here in Baton Rouge.

20           MR. HARTIN: Is this proceeding being recorded?

21           DR. POJE: We recorded this for the purposes of  
22 us and to have as an analysis for our staff, and we record  
23 it also on videotape. So all of your comments are noted.

24           We've asked specifically for those who didn't

1 sign in to give us their name and spelling so that we can  
2 get back in touch with you, if our investigators wanted to  
3 get further clarification from you.

4 MR. HARTIN: So if you don't mind me asking.  
5 If I'm out of place, just tell me. If this community is  
6 having questions like the lady said, they can't seal their  
7 homes up, that needs to be addressed, that needs to be  
8 answered by you all.

9 Some of the ladies said that people don't have  
10 transportation. That needs to be addressed and  
11 transportation given to them. Is there a time that the  
12 community would be able to ask you all direct questions  
13 and get answers how to solve this problem.

14 We've all got to work together here. These  
15 people can't move. This chemical plant can't move. But  
16 instead of these people telling you their concerns, they  
17 need to ask and get their questions answered and a  
18 solution.

19 Is that what's going to take place at the next  
20 meeting?

21 DR. POJE: It's highly unlikely that this small  
22 Chemical Safety Board -- we're an independent federal  
23 agency. We're funded at the tune of \$8.2 million per  
24 year. We have the reach of the entire country to

1 investigate incidents of chemical accidents.

2 I'm sorry to tell you, but it's not only in the  
3 community of Baton Rouge that chemical accidents have  
4 occurred. We have ongoing investigative work that  
5 involves our staff of less than 40 people.

6 Solving all of the issues that have been raised  
7 here tonight is not a possibility -- just speaking from my  
8 heart as a Board member -- it's not a possibility for our  
9 agency to tackle.

10 We are part of the federal government, but we  
11 are not the entirety of the federal government.

12 MR. HARTIN: Fair enough. The man, Keith? Is  
13 that his name which shelter-in-place. Is that you.

14 I'll tell you what. I'll make an agreement  
15 with you. Us, the local union, the committee, the safety  
16 committee we have, we're fixing to put into place of our  
17 own, in-house union committee.

18 Let us meet with you. Then we'll get with the  
19 company here and see what we could do, the company could  
20 financially do to help this community.

21 MR. CRANFORD: First of all, I would be glad to  
22 meet with you. And secondly we do care. I take issue  
23 with one thing that was said, and that is that we don't  
24 care. We do care. We work for you.

1           We don't work for the chemical companies. We  
2 don't work for the Chemical Safety Board. We work for  
3 you. We work for the citizens of East Baton Rouge Parish.

4           And as I said at the very beginning of my  
5 presentation, we're always out to build a better  
6 mousetrap. So what I've done throughout this entire  
7 discussion is to take notes of everything that was said,  
8 so that we can go back and relook what we do and how we do  
9 it and build a better mousetrap.

10           And the second thing I said was that you out  
11 there are a very important part of what we do and the  
12 services we provide to you. So we do welcome your input.

13           And as Ms. Anthony said, we can do it better,  
14 but we need your help to do it better, and we welcome your  
15 input. That's why we urge you to contact us. We urge you  
16 to get in touch with us, so that we can help you and help  
17 provide better services to you.

18           We urge you to get involved, like Mr. Willmer  
19 said, in our community emergency response teams that we're  
20 forming throughout East Baton Rouge Parish. Those are  
21 teams designed to work within the communities.

22           Work with yourselves, so you can build a better  
23 program within your neighborhood and help each other,  
24 until that first help gets there, until those first folks

1 arrive to help you.

2 I do have information as far as the CAL system,  
3 so you can fill out the postcards that I have as a first  
4 step. Get those to us so that we can verify that your  
5 number is in the CAL system, to make sure that we do have  
6 access to you through that system.

7 We're continually updating the phone numbers in  
8 that system. We do have information as to what phone  
9 numbers we called and how many phone calls were called in  
10 a certain percentage of time. The system is tested quite  
11 often.

12 So we do want to work with you. Again we work  
13 for you. We would be glad to work with your groups.

14 The television set, the monitoring, the sirens.  
15 Turn your television on. Turn your radio on. Listen to  
16 the information. If it becomes necessary to evacuate,  
17 then we have police and fire who can go door to door, and  
18 knock on doors.

19 MR. HARTIN: Excuse me, ma'am. The man's  
20 sitting there telling you all he's going to address your  
21 concerns. I and this union committee that works at  
22 Honeywell, they want to protect this plant. They want  
23 their jobs, just like you want your community safe.

24 I'd be glad to work with Keith. One more thing

1 I would like to say, before I leave here. That last  
2 incident on August 13 was not a release outside of that  
3 gate. Could you all stipulate to that?

4 DR. POJE: We have the ongoing investigation.  
5 The facts we brought today are the ones that we understand  
6 as of this moment in time. We'll be gathering any  
7 additional information from --

8 MR. HARTIN: I looked at the incident. It was  
9 a small release. It didn't even go out the gate.

10 VOICE: [inaudible].

11 MR. HARTIN: That's fine, and we'll bring that  
12 to the plant manager's attention, and get somebody from  
13 the community to sit in or address your concerns.

14 DR. POJE: I want to thank everybody who was  
15 here this evening. One more person wants to make a  
16 comment?

17 MS. KASTER: I'd like to make a comment. My  
18 name is Pam Kaster.

19 I'm very encouraged about the interest in  
20 helping with community response. I'm encouraged with the  
21 unions. I'm encouraged with the community.

22 I am a citizen activist. I have been serving  
23 on the East Baton Rouge Parish LAPC since it was formed  
24 15-some-odd years ago. It meets the third Thursday of

1 every month. That date has not changed in 15 years.

2 The meetings are open to the public. They're  
3 announced in the newspaper. So please come, attend those  
4 meetings. It was a result of those meetings that the CAL  
5 system was developed.

6 Now, maybe it's not the best mousetrap, but it  
7 was the best mousetrap that was available at the time the  
8 East Baton Rouge Parish decided to put in. Our community  
9 system will only be as good as we make it.

10 We all have a responsibility for that. The  
11 meetings are open to the public, and I hope I see a whole  
12 bunch of you all there in a couple weeks.

13 DR. POJE: Thank you very much. Once again,  
14 I'd like to thank everybody who came to the meeting this  
15 evening.

16 One of the gratifying aspects of serving on  
17 this Chemical Safety Board is to be in an arena like this,  
18 where this is such an important, honest expression of what  
19 has happened.

20 It's revealing to us to about the importance of  
21 our work and the issues that are of greatest concern to  
22 people, which sometimes don't come to our attention right  
23 away.

24 I think you've had wonderful openness from

1 people who are working in governmental agencies, who have  
2 different functions in the plant community and different  
3 sensitivities and risks in living in the communities.

4 We Board members and investigators here will  
5 take the information that you -- and a very young activist  
6 still raising their voices in this hearing. It's in  
7 training. Thank you so much for bringing your child this  
8 evening as well.

9 I hope what I'm saying isn't the cause of his  
10 concern at the moment.

11 We Board members and investigators here will  
12 take the information back to Washington. And it will be  
13 considered as the investigation progresses.

14 As stated earlier, we expect the final written  
15 report to be completed later this year, and we will  
16 present it to the public and vote on it in public at a  
17 meeting of the Chemical Safety Board back here in Baton  
18 Rouge.

19 These incidents, three in a row in a period of  
20 less than four weeks in the summer last year, shows the  
21 need for continuing safety vigilance at chemical plants  
22 and other facilities where potentially dangerous chemicals  
23 are processed.

24 While the investigation is not complete and

1 will continue until all the answers and root causes are  
2 determined, I emphasize the need for all chemical  
3 companies to constantly review their processes and safety  
4 programs to ensure the safety of their workers and their  
5 surrounding neighbors.

6 In addition, I would urge chemical facilities,  
7 local authorities and neighborhood groups to work together  
8 to ensure that notification, emergency response and plans  
9 are in order.

10 As another reminder, as I stated earlier, you  
11 can keep up to date on the work of the Chemical Safety  
12 Board investigation by going to our website, [www.csb.gov](http://www.csb.gov).

13 We thank you all for attending. This community  
14 meeting is adjourned.

15 (Whereupon, at 9:07 p.m., the meeting was  
16 adjourned.)

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