

The "C-Change" Initiative:

1. Change behaviors.
2. Challenge ourselves to re-think how we work.
3. Certify the results on a daily basis.



Tool Box Talk

Week of December 20, 2010

Project Setup, Material Staging & Public Exposure – Part 3

Previously we reviewed the 2005 BP Texas City Refinery explosion and the causes leading up to that major accident. We then discussed actions that should be taken to help reduce or prevent severity – multiple deaths and injuries - by placing trailers outside the applicable blast zone. This week we'll discuss a local accident using similar safety principles to reduce the severity factor via guarding by distance. This time instead of guarding by "Blast Zones" we'll use the "Controlled Access Zone."

A non JJ White accident that occurred in the Delaware Valley in the 1990's demonstrates the need to carefully plan the location of job trailers and the location of maintenance activities i.e. fabrication areas, in advance. Location planning will eliminate hazardous exposures at refineries and all of our construction work sites. Prior to the incident a contractor's job trailer was set in place. Months later, as the job progressed, a tower approximately 100 feet high was lifted by a crane in close proximity to the job trailer. The vessel was lifted by two ears on the tank portion of the vessel. The rigging chokers were in a basket configuration. The vessel was lifted into an upright position. As it was being set down the bottom of the vessel got hung up on the anchor bolts at the base. As the crane continued lowering the vessel, the rigging on the ears became loose thus slipping off the ears of the vessel. In seconds the 100 foot high vessel fell to the ground. The job trailer with employees inside was within the 100 foot radius of the vessel. Only chance saved the employees inside the job trailer from being killed.

There were several findings in this accident. However, the initial event that occurred was that the trailer location was not properly planned at the jobs onset relative to the position of the vessel that was erected months later. This oversight set the stage for the series of factors that later occurred. It also was the leading factor related to the life threatening "severity" factor of the accident's possible consequences. Fortunately the loss of lives this time was narrowly avoided.

This is a lesson learned for all contractors. Always consider the initial placement of a job trailers and maintenance activities relative to the job, to ensure they will never be located within the Controlled Access Zone, whether it's JJ White's or any other contractor's work. Obtaining all the facts up front and establishing the Controlled Access Zone before locating a trailer or other structures is essential in a refinery or at any of our construction work sites.

Next week we will discuss we'll conclude this topic by examining construction project exposures to the Public.