



CITY OF HOUSTON LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Mayor's Office of Government Relations, January 28th, 20

2019 Chemical Accidents

❖ March 16, a leak in a tube caused a fire at Exxon Mobil's Baytown facility sent thick clouds of dark smoke into the sky. Reports of sulfur dioxide, hydrogen sulfide, and benzene releases for more than a week after the blaze was put out

❖ March 17, an equipment failure at Intercontinental Terminals Company's chemical tank farm in Deer Park, Texas caused a fire that burned for three days. The fire shut down the Houston Ship Channel, released large amounts of pollutants into the air, water, and led to multiple shelter-in-place orders for the surrounding communities

❖ April 2, an explosion transfer line carrying isobutylene ignited at the KMCO chemical facility in Crosby resulting one worker killed and injured more than 30 others. The explosion reduced the building at the epicenter of the blast to shrapnel.

❖ July 31, Exxon Mobil had a second fire, this time at its Baytown Olefins plant. The City of Baytown issued a shelter-in-place order for hours. Two workers were severely burned and sued the company, each seeking more than a \$1 million in damages.

❖ November 27, an enormous explosion at TPC Group's facility in Port Neches injured workers and damaged several residential homes. Subsequent fires burned for a week and led to evacuations of thousands of residents with one fatality.





**HOUSTON PUBLIC
MEDIA
MARCH 20, 2020**

**“I Spent A Month Trying To Find
Out What Chemicals Are Stored
Near My Home.
I Still Don’t Know”**

**THREE NEWS STORIES
THAT TELL THE STORY**

**TEXAS TRIBUNE
JANUARY 5, 2021**

**“TEXAS LEGISLATORS EYE TOUGHER
RULES ON CHEMICAL TANKS TO
PREVENT EXPLOSIONS, SPILLS DURING
STORMS.”“**





FIRE TRIANGLE

PODCAST BY TEXAS PUBLIC MEDIA

JANUARY 24, 2021

TIER II UNIFORM REPORTING



The Houston area is proud to house more than 2,500 chemical facilities. However, a 2015 Houston Chronicle investigation found there is a major chemical incident in the greater Houston area every six weeks. The investigation found many facilities posed serious threats to the public but were unknown to most neighbors and largely unpoliced by government at all levels.

The City of Houston is looking to better serve the public by clarifying when reports can be made available to the public by uniformly reporting to the TCEQ, local emergency management committees, and local governments.



SAFE STORAGE REGULATION

Recent events—including the 2015 Trinity River flood, the 2017 floods, and high winds that resulted from Hurricane Harvey—revealed current safeguards do not protect resources, or the public, during these weather events.

As made clear during the interim reports by the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Economic Development, during Harvey some 15 major above-ground storage tanks failed, leading to air emissions, spills, and causing danger to local water resources and the public

Currently, storage tanks are not capable of withstanding a Category 4 or 5 Hurricane and associated storm surge. This leaves populations, industry, and the greater Houston region's economy in danger.

Facilities should be required to report count, type, and safety measures being taken to protect the lives of nearby residents, as well as the environmental health of Galveston Bay. Standard safety design measures should be implemented to account for increasing size and intensity of storms, including how storage tanks are secured. TCEQ should provide performance standards for above ground tanks including specific standards for those in areas prone to flood, storm surges, and hurricanes.



CITY OF HOUSTON 2021 LEGISLATIVE TEAM

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QUESTIONS?