

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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ENBRIDGE OIL SPILL
MARSHALL, MICHIGAN

* Docket No.: DCA-10-MP-007

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Telephonic Interview of: CHRIS TREACHUR

Conference Room
Holiday Inn Express
630 East Chicago Street
Coldwater, Michigan

Friday,
July 30, 2010

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice,
at 1:00 p.m.

BEFORE: KARL GUNTHER
Accident Investigator

APPEARANCES:

KARL GUNTHER, Accident Investigator
DANA SANZO, Accident Investigator
CHUCK KOVAL, Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

MATTHEW R. NICHOLSON, Investigator-in-Charge
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Railroad, Pipeline, &
Hazardous Materials Investigations

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

JAMES BUNN, General Engineer
BRIAN PIERZINA, General Engineer
U.S. Department of Transportation
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials
Safety Administration

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

JAY A. JOHNSON, Senior Compliance Specialist
Enbridge Energy Company, Inc.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

TOM TIDWELL
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

[REDACTED]

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I N T E R V I E W

(1:00 p.m.)

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3 MR. GUNTHER: I'm Karl Gunther, National Transportation
4 Safety Board. We are conducting interviews relating to a pipeline
5 accident, and that was an oil spill that occurred on July 26, 2010
6 in Marshall, Michigan.

INTERVIEW OF CHRIS TREACHUR

7
8 BY MR. GUNTHER:

9 Q. All right, sir, can you give your name, address, and
10 phone number for the record?

11 A. Chris Treachur, [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]

13 MR. PIERZINA: Maybe a little slower. What was the
14 street address?

15 MR. TREACHUR: It's [REDACTED]

16 MR. PIERZINA: Okay, and the town?

17 MR. TREACHUR: [REDACTED]

18 MR. PIERZINA: Okay, thanks, Chris. And it is being
19 recorded, so we should be in good shape. Go ahead, Karl.

20 BY MR. GUNTHER:

21 Q. Yeah, can you please give your job title and company
22 affiliation?

23 A. I work for Consumer's Energy, a combination gas line
24 fitter and service fitter.

25 COURT REPORTER: Could he repeat that, please?

1 BY MR. GUNTHER:

2 Q. Could you repeat --

3 MR. PIERZINA: Chris, could you repeat that, please?

4 MR. TREACHUR: I'm a combination worker, so my first
5 title is a gas line fitter, and then my other title, a gas line
6 service fitter. We work on the gas mains, install, you know,
7 replace and the construction element, plus we also do appliance
8 repair, run down gas leaks, pretty much anything related to the
9 gas side of the business we do.

10 MR. PIERZINA: Okay, thank you, Chris.

11 BY MR. GUNTHER:

12 Q. Can you describe what you did in the area of Marshall on
13 say Sunday night or Monday?

14 A. Well, Sunday night I didn't do anything. I started
15 working at 6:00 in the morning on Monday, and the service guy that
16 was working received a couple of gas leak calls. We had gone to
17 do a securement and then we started getting more and more calls in
18 for gas leaks, and so we started doing those. It was getting to
19 be a nuisance, so we thought we'd just try to determine what was
20 wrong. So, me and my partner started driving around because we
21 were already getting the smell more and more, and then finally we
22 ended up on Division. We thought it was the Michigan Gas Utility,
23 and they had already come out there, and they said they didn't
24 have any leaks.

25 So then we just started going through the different

1 driveways along Division Road, and then I walked back -- I can't
2 remember the guy's address, but it's east of Michigan Gas Utility
3 station there, and that's where I found the creek and it looked
4 like it was just black with oil. And so then we came back Old 27
5 to try to find a marker sign with a phone number, and then that's
6 where I called to report it. And then we walked back along their
7 line trying to help find it. And then we got back to the
8 marshland probably, I don't know, a third or a half mile down the
9 west of Old 27, and we were standing in oil then.

10 By the time we had came back out, we had met the crews
11 from their company. They took them back behind Brook Drive so
12 it'd be a shorter walk for them, and then that was pretty much it.

13 BY MR. PIERZINA:

14 Q. All right, Chris, thanks. And just to back up a little
15 bit, you'd mentioned Michigan Gas Utilities has been out to their
16 meter station?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. What time was that?

19 A. I'm thinking it was 10:30-ish. Somewhere in there.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Around in there. I know when I found it, I think I
22 called you guys about 10 after 11:00. They record this in our
23 office up in Lansing. That's where our radio room operates. Then
24 called to check our GPS on my van, and it was somewhere -- I think
25 it was 11:10 is when I parked on Old 27 there when I called you

1 guys. It was probably about 11:00 when I found it at the creek.

2 Q. Okay, so 11:10 you called Enbridge Energy to report oil?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. In the creek?

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. All right.

7 MR. JOHNSON: So 11:10 local time. Sorry, this is Jay
8 Johnson with Enbridge, so at 11:10 local time you had left the
9 leak site until you found a pipeline marking sign and then called
10 that 800 number?

11 MR. TREACHUR: Yes.

12 MR. JOHNSON: All right, thank you.

13 BY MR. PIERZINA:

14 Q. Okay. And you said you got on duty at 6:00 a.m. on
15 Monday?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. And another technician had already had two gas leak
18 calls?

19 A. Yes. He was on call over the weekend, and so his first
20 call was around, I don't know, I think he said it was after 5:00
21 in the morning he got called out for a gas leak. I'm not sure
22 that was related, you know, because we get them all the time. But
23 he said before he got home, he had just got home he got another
24 call like at 20 to 8, and that was the one -- I know that one he
25 said it was a smell in the air. It wasn't like an indoor leak or

1 nothing like that.

2 Q. Okay. So --

3 A. There was a smell there.

4 MR. GUNTHER: This was on Monday, right?

5 BY MR. PIERZINA:

6 Q. Monday morning?

7 A. That'd be Monday morning, yes.

8 MR. JOHNSON: So the first call came in about 5:00 a.m.
9 You got home and then you got another one around 8:00?

10 MR. TREACHUR: Yeah, I think it was 20 to 8.

11 BY MR. PIERZINA:

12 Q. And what was this technician's name?

13 A. It would be John Smith.

14 Q. John Smith.

15 A. Pretty generic.

16 Q. Yeah. All right.

17 MR. GUNTHER: How extensive was the spill when you got
18 there? Did it look like a huge spill or, you know?

19 MR. TREACHUR: Out in the creek it was almost like
20 black; thick, black. All the weeds on the edges were black, but
21 that's, I couldn't say, I didn't see nothing like splotched all
22 over the side or nothing like that, you know what I mean?

23 BY MR. PIERZINA:

24 Q. And, Chris, just to make sure we're clear, the creek was
25 black. Is that where the creek crosses Division?

1 A. No, sir. It was on Division behind, it was like two
2 houses. I can't remember what the address was. The radio room
3 would know because I reported it, but it was like two farm houses
4 and then there's like a grass driveway, and you walk back there,
5 it was a culvert where you may have gone out to the field or
6 something like that.

7 Q. Okay. So back --

8 A. Back in that culvert area right there.

9 Q. All right, back --

10 A. I don't know what that is, about a third of a mile to a
11 half a mile west of 27.

12 Q. Did you happen to see where Talmadge Creek crosses
13 Division, did you see any oil there?

14 A. No. No.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. I think it was melted then. You could get a little up
17 in the air but it was real pungent. That's what made me go up
18 that guy's driveway.

19 MR. PIERZINA: Okay. Go ahead, Karl.

20 MR. GUNTHER: I don't have any more questions.

21 MR. JOHNSON: Did you -- this is Jay from Enbridge.

22 BY MR. JOHNSON:

23 Q. When you go out on these calls do you have gas monitors
24 or whatever else? I'm just -- I have no idea.

25 A. I didn't quite understand that.

1 MR. PIERZINA: Do you go out -- when you respond to gas
2 leak calls do you have a gas detector?

3 MR. TREACHUR: Oh, yes, I have two of them.

4 MR. PIERZINA: And did you take readings?

5 MR. TREACHUR: Yes. At the homes we take readings
6 wherever a gas call has been called in, and we weren't getting
7 nothing, zero; nothing for natural gas.

8 MR. GUNTHER: What kind of detectors do you have?

9 MR. TREACHUR: I forget what the name of it is. It just
10 picks up gas, and if it's not, it'll give like an NFR reading and
11 then it picks up carbon monoxide.

12 MR. GUNTHER: Okay. Sounds like a Ranger.

13 MR. PIERZINA: What type of reading did you say?

14 MR. TREACHUR: It was zero. It didn't have any --
15 nothing. It wasn't even giving me a tick reading, no numbers at
16 all.

17 COURT REPORTER: A what? A tick reading did he say?

18 BY MR. PIERZINA:

19 Q. No tick reading? Is that what you said?

20 A. Yeah, either a tick reading or they're getting close to
21 a tick reading.

22 Q. Tick reading. Okay.

23 A. And then it might get Spree (ph.) reading you'll start
24 getting numbers or percentage rate.

25 Q. Okay, so that's a very sensitive instrument?

1 A. Yeah.

2 MR. GUNTHER: Like a GasTrac or a TIF? You know, like a
3 Geiger counter, it ticks and then it gets louder; it increases?

4 MR. TREACHUR: Yeah, it gets more and more loud and then
5 for the constant noise, I guess you could put it, it will make an
6 alarm, and then you'll have three light changes as it gets greater
7 to the four percent.

8 MR. GUNTHER: A GasTrac.

9 MR. PIERZINA: Okay.

10 MR. TREACHUR: The lower explosive limit is four
11 percent. That will be like a Mash (ph.) reading on LEL level.

12 MR. PIERZINA: Yeah.

13 MR. TREACHUR: Then it can switch over to natural which
14 is on the 100 percent scale.

15 MR. GUNTHER: All right.

16 MR. TREACHUR: But like I said, all of that was zero.

17 MR. PIERZINA: Got you.

18 BY MR. PIERZINA:

19 Q. So what did you do after contacting Enbridge?

20 A. So we walked down, tried following your line down west
21 because there ain't no way that creek was -- and it was already
22 swelling that way, so we tried to go upstream to see if there was
23 a break blowing or something, you know, I don't know what, to help
24 you guys. And so we got to the marshland part there and we were
25 standing in oil, so I just said, "That's it." I said, "Get out of

1 here." Because I don't know if it was harmful or not, so we just
2 came back, and by then your crews had already arrived.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. The first team I guess you'd call it. And then that's
5 where I drove them back around to behind Brook Drive, which is off
6 of Division, because it's closer to walk for them.

7 Q. Right. Okay.

8 MR. GUNTHER: When you're referring, you're talking
9 Enbridge crews, correct?

10 MR. TREACHUR: That was, yes.

11 COURT REPORTER: It's a what?

12 MR. JOHNSON: Enbridge crew.

13 MR. GUNTHER: They were Enbridge crews. He said your
14 crew. I wanted to make sure.

15 MR. PIERZINA: This is Brian, Chris, just so you know.
16 I'm not with Enbridge. I'm with the pipeline safety guys, folks,
17 whatever.

18 MR. TREACHUR: Okay.

19 BY MR. PIERZINA:

20 Q. So you assisted the Enbridge first responders to show
21 what you knew as far as where the leak site was?

22 A. Correct.

23 MR. JOHNSON: This is Jay with Enbridge. Do you
24 remember the name of the person you worked with?

25 MR. TREACHUR: No, I didn't ask, I'm not very good with

1 names anyway so I don't even ask people, but it was at least four
2 of them. Then the ones that had the hardhats and their masks,
3 they walked up and told us to stay back away, because we'd already
4 been out there; our boots had all that stuff on it. But we didn't
5 go back out with them and there was one gentleman still there. He
6 was on the phone, and then I had told him about the creek crossing
7 further down Division.

8 MR. JOHNSON: Okay.

9 MR. TREACHUR: And then we were still getting hit with a
10 lot of gas leaks, so then I had to leave and go respond to those.

11 MR. JOHNSON: Right, because you can't assume that
12 they're not natural gas leaks that you need to --

13 MR. TREACHUR: Right. We still have to, right, we still
14 try to keep our response time under a half hour, so.

15 MR. JOHNSON: So, and I don't want to put words in your
16 mouth or have you make assumptions, but you made the 1-800 call,
17 and how long after that were the Enbridge, did you see the
18 Enbridge people?

19 MR. TREACHUR: I would say it seemed; they were there by
20 15 minutes. It was really pretty quick.

21 BY MR. PIERZINA:

22 Q. Okay, so when you dialed that 1-800 number --

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. -- did you get an operator?

25 A. I got, no, I got a human, and the emergency number, and

1 I gave all the information, and then he said he'd take care of me,
2 could he get my phone number, and he said he'd have them contact
3 me. I told him where my vehicle was parked at. They didn't call
4 me back, but they were pulling in just as I was coming out of the
5 field, so it was no big deal there.

6 Q. Great. Chris, is there anything -- you know, we're just
7 trying to gather as much information concerning, you know, the
8 accident response as we can. So, I guess can you -- now it
9 doesn't sound like you spent much time trying to survey the extent
10 of oil in the marsh that you saw and determined that it probably
11 wasn't a good place to be, is that right?

12 A. Yeah, that's correct.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. It was more time trying to find it, you know what I
15 mean, two -- I think it's two more times and actually -- after I
16 found it.

17 Q. Right.

18 A. I'm trying to narrow it down because I think there were
19 five or six pipelines running through right by there.

20 Q. There's a few. I don't know how many either. Is there
21 anything else that you can think of to add to help, you know, help
22 in our investigation?

23 A. No, sir. I would be speculating on anything else, so --

24 Q. Yeah, and I'm not -- you know, and I wasn't referring to
25 like the cause of the accident or anything else. Yeah, how about,

1 you know, that prior to, you know, the pipeline release, is there
2 gas odors, you know, in and around, say, that Michigan Gas
3 Utility's meter station?

4 A. No, there was no odor there at all. What the other --
5 what I had heard was natural gas feeding through the line and he
6 just heard this, it was a loud noise, so he assumed that's where
7 the leak was at.

8 Q. Okay, so you --

9 A. But after those technicians came out, of course,
10 verified it's just the line making a noise.

11 Q. All right. And just to be clear, Michigan Gas
12 Utilities, that's a natural gas pipeline company?

13 A. Yes. Yes.

14 Q. Are they a natural gas transmission or natural gas
15 distribution or both?

16 A. I don't know if that's a transmission or a distribution.
17 I'm not sure.

18 Q. Okay. And Consumers Energy, are you guys natural gas
19 transmissions, distribution, or both?

20 A. We used to -- yeah, we have both kind of lines in our
21 system, yes.

22 Q. Okay. In the area of the failure, what kinds of
23 facilities do you have?

24 A. We actually don't have any -- we used to have to have an
25 eastern pipe handle but they sold that. So we actually don't have

1 anything right just there. We're north of that probably three-
2 quarters of a mile we have a line.

3 Q. Okay. And do you have distribution lines in the area?

4 A. Yeah. In Brook Drive there, yeah, we service them with
5 a distribution line. And then we have a line on Old 27 and we
6 feed the industrial park east of that. And, of course, all of
7 Marshall, of course.

8 Q. So the -- now, and you were there responding to an odor
9 complaint, correct?

10 A. I was responding to an assumed gas leak at a residence
11 prior to running this down. I just can see where, you know, once
12 in a while something will happen in Marshall and you'll get a rash
13 of leaks, so then we try to pinpoint and then solve the problems
14 so we don't have to keep -- you know, if we just spend all day
15 just running leaks, you'll never catch up to them because you
16 never solved the problem.

17 MR. GUNTHER: Yeah.

18 BY MR. PIERZINA:

19 Q. I hear you. Yeah.

20 A. So usually we get one or two guys hopping on the leaks,
21 and then one or two of us will try to determine what's wrong and
22 get it fixed. That'll tell you'll how much we were doing, there's
23 two other guys working and they were getting their leaks in and I
24 had time to go look for it with the first other guy.

25 MR. PIERZINA: All right. Any questions anyone else?

1 All right. Thank you, Chris. We're done.

2 MR. TREACHUR: All right.

3 MR. PIERZINA: Appreciate your help.

4 MR. TREACHUR: Have a good day, then.

5 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thanks for making yourself
6 available.

7 MR. TREACHUR: Sure. No problem. All right, bye.

8 (Whereupon, at 1:15 p.m., the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: ENBRIDGE OIL SPILL
 MARSHALL, MICHIGAN

Interview of Chris Treachur

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-10-MP-007

PLACE: Coldwater, Michigan

DATE: July 30, 2010

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been compared to
the recording accomplished at the hearing.

Amy Shankleton-Novess
Certified Electronic Reporter

Kristen Shankleton
Transcriber