

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

ENBRIDGE OIL SPILL
MARSHALL, MICHIGAN

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* Docket No.: DCA-10-MP-007
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Interview of: TOM FRIDEL

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

Friday,
July 30, 2010

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice,
at 4:36 p.m.

BEFORE: KARL GUNTHER
Accident Investigator

APPEARANCES:

KARL GUNTHER, Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

[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]
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TOM TIDWELL
U.S. Fish and Wildlife

[REDACTED]

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I N T E R V I E W

(4:36 p.m.)

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3 MR. GUNTHER: I'm Karl Gunther. We're from the NTSB.
4 We're investigating an accident that occurred on July 26, 2010, in
5 Marshall, Michigan. It was an oil spill.

INTERVIEW OF TOM FRIDEL

6
7 BY MR. GUNTHER:

8 Q. To begin, could you please give your name, address, and
9 phone number for the record?

10 A. Tom Fridel, address is [REDACTED]
11 [REDACTED] My phone number is [REDACTED] -- do you want my home phone
12 number?

13 Q. It doesn't matter, either one.

14 A. [REDACTED]

15 Q. Could you give me your job title and company
16 affiliation?

17 A. General manager, Chicago Region, with Enbridge Energy in
18 Griffith, Indiana.

19 Q. And what kind of formal training do you have?

20 A. Well, I am a professional engineer. I have a degree in
21 civil engineering. I have several courses with Enbridge,
22 including incident commander training.

23 Q. Okay. And could you describe what you did in relation
24 to the accident? Start maybe from Monday and move on.

25 A. Right. I was incident commander, and I received the

1 call from the control center to start that process of emergency
2 response.

3 Q. Okay. And then what were you -- from then on, were you
4 just managing? What were you doing?

5 A. I was incident commander and still am to this point.

6 Q. Okay. Let's see --

7 BY MR. JOHNSON:

8 Q. So, maybe Tom has done some of this before. We've got
9 Vince, and he gave us the timeline, and we've got some timelines
10 from other folks. So, if you can just touch on some of the key
11 things you did in the beginning hours, that's what Karl is looking
12 for.

13 A. Okay, I received a couple of calls from the control
14 center, which then initiated to call out our first responder to
15 the leak site, verified there was a leak, and then initiated all
16 our crews to respond.

17 BY MR. GUNTHER:

18 Q. Do you have any information on whether -- has the leak
19 been contained?

20 A. To date?

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And do you have any idea how much has been -- was
24 spilled and how much has been recovered?

25 A. Our estimate of spill was 19,500 barrels.

1 Q. And do you have any idea how much has been recovered to
2 date?

3 A. We have oil and water mixture of approximately 7,000
4 barrels.

5 Q. Okay, all right.

6 BY MR. BUNN:

7 Q. Tom, who called you from the control center?

8 A. Who called me?

9 Q. Um-hum.

10 A. Kelly.

11 Q. Kelly, okay. Thank you.

12 BY MR. PIERZINA:

13 Q. Time?

14 A. There was two calls, but the critical call that
15 everything pulled the trigger was approximately 10:30.

16 BY MR. GUNTHER:

17 Q. And this was on Monday morning?

18 A. Correct.

19 BY MR. PIERZINA:

20 Q. 10:30 Central -- now, we're really struggling with the
21 Mountain Time.

22 A. Sure, I understand. Central Daylight Time.

23 Q. 10:30 Central Time.

24 A. And then we confirmed the leak at 10:45 Central Daylight
25 Time with our first responder. And then, that's when we put

1 everybody in action.

2 MR. GUNTHER: Okay.

3 BY MR. JOHNSON:

4 Q. What were some of the calls you made, Tom, as far as
5 immediate calls of the PLMs, just kind of --

6 A. Well, we follow our protocol, and my call is to my
7 supervisor. And then that works up, and then I had Vince assigned
8 in the office because we were mobilizing. We knew it was serious
9 enough to mobilize immediately. And so, Vince was making the
10 calls. So, yeah, Vince outlined all of the agencies and everybody
11 called, and he would be the documentation person.

12 Q. Yeah, and we got that from him. I'm just curious then
13 is I know you notified Bill and --

14 A. All our team.

15 Q. Mick was out right away, and I'm just kind of --

16 A. To tell you the truth, other than my boss and -- both
17 bosses, if you will, his boss; and I brought my decision process
18 because of our safety. We just had directive no one shall operate
19 a vehicle and go on the phone at the same time, even though I have
20 hands free. I had Bill come with me, sit down, and he was making
21 calls to all the responders to get there. And we started to gear
22 up as we were going down the highway to Marshall.

23 Q. Okay. Then for the record, that was?

24 A. I-94.

25 Q. That was Bill Burdeau?

1 A. He's talking about Bill, and that's Bill Burdeau. He's
2 the manager at Pipeline Services.

3 A. Right.

4 Q. Who would have then made the calls to all of the various
5 PLM foremen and everyone?

6 A. Correct. Correct, and he was on the phone constantly.

7 BY MR. GUNTHER:

8 Q. All right, and what groups report to you?

9 A. What groups?

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. I'm responsible for the entire region, safety operations
12 of the region.

13 Q. Yeah, so we're talking environmental, the electrical,
14 the plant people, everybody?

15 A. We're field operations. So, they funnel up to me. I
16 have two managers that report to me, clerical staff, safety
17 reports to me, and some area supervisors report to me.

18 MR. JOHNSON: Maybe just one correction for you, Karl,
19 Bob Steede's group, that's operations support, so they support Tom
20 in the Chicago region.

21 MR. GUNTHER: Okay.

22 MR. JOHNSON: So, they don't report through to Tom, but
23 they fully support him.

24 MR. GUNTHER: All right.

25 MR. FRIDEL: So, if you can imagine field operations

1 being the guys with the boots on the ground, so to speak.

2 MR. GUNTHER: Right, right.

3 BY MR. PIERZINA:

4 Q. I don't know that in any prior interview we've actually
5 described the Chicago region, so, if you could, can you give us,
6 you know, an area? What encompasses the Chicago region?

7 A. Sure, no problem. We have -- I'm responsible for six
8 states: most of Wisconsin; the northern part of Illinois;
9 Indiana, which we're only in the northern part; the southern part
10 of Michigan; a little bit in Ohio -- we deliver into Toledo -- and
11 a small part in Buffalo, in New York near Buffalo. And we have
12 approximately 140 employees. They consist of electricians,
13 mechanics, PLM, which is pipeline maintenance, and with them they
14 have several equipment operators as well. You're familiar with
15 that. And then we have the support staff in the office, the
16 professional staff.

17 Q. And maybe you'll go into it, but what lines actually run
18 through there, and maybe some of the key --

19 A. Whew.

20 Q. We've got line five coming over the top.

21 A. Yeah, there's -- yeah, if you work from the west going
22 east, we'll get to line 5, but we have line 6A that goes from
23 Superior to Griffith, Indiana. And then we have lines 14, a
24 similar path; and then we have the new line, the southern access
25 that comes down a similar path, but it goes to Flanagan, Illinois,

1 so it doesn't go into Griffith. We also are the initiating
2 station for the new southern lights project that carries
3 condensate from Chicago to Edmonton. So, that's in the west part.

4 And then you want to go -- we are also responsible for
5 field operations for Vector Pipeline. It's a large express, high
6 volumes of natural gas. It's a 42-inch. And then we've got line
7 6B, which is in this issue here. And then we have lines 5 that
8 come from the UP down through the southern part of Michigan across
9 Canada. We have line 17 that goes to Toledo. And then we have
10 line 10 that goes to Buffalo.

11 Q. So, a little bit of --

12 A. So, generally, Esperia is not active right now.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. And generally speaking, we provide feed stock for the
15 Chicago, Detroit, and Sarnia area refineries.

16 Q. That feeds stock in crude?

17 A. Correct, crude feed stock for the refineries and natural
18 gas with several delivery points on Vector Pipeline. It's 42-inch
19 high pressure.

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

21 BY MR. PIERZINA:

22 Q. Oh, all right. Tom, what time did you arrive in
23 Marshall?

24 A. Oh, I don't know the exact time, but it was 3, 4-ish.

25 Q. All right, so mid-afternoon.

1 MR. JOHNSON: Is that the local time now we're talking?

2 MR. FRIDEL: Yes, now, we're local.

3 BY MR. PIERZINA:

4 Q. What -- I guess, well, let me ask you this. While you
5 and Bill Burdeau were traveling from Griffith to here, were you
6 getting regular updates from your field personnel?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay, were you --

9 A. Well, I don't know your definition of regular, but we
10 were informed enough to make the appropriate decisions. We knew
11 it was large enough and serious enough that we were pulling out
12 all of the stops to get there.

13 Q. Right, and I just -- and I didn't mean like any
14 scheduled type of thing, but I suspect that as you were traveling,
15 and perhaps your folks that are implementing, you know, things,
16 they're probably calling you and providing updates, you know, when
17 possible? Like maybe when they accomplish a --

18 A. Yeah, very limited on the way there.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. I mean, even to, you know -- we have minutes, and our
21 first meeting with everybody was 6:00 p.m. local, and even at that
22 point, we were still deploying. We were still assessing. It was
23 very limited. But our focus point was response at that time.

24 Q. Absolutely. So, okay, then, that brings up to about
25 6:00 p.m.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And can you maybe just give us a broader overview, as
3 incident commander, how, you know, the types of information, you
4 know, and activities that you're involved with, you know, through
5 the incident?

6 A. Well, my main objective other than the response is the
7 safety of the public and our employees. That is high priority,
8 and that's what I started to communicate to everybody through
9 media and so forth. So, reports coming in, of course, everything
10 continued. You know, the oil is here and here, and then it was
11 discovered, and we got those reports, and just everything is
12 ramping up. To be blunt with you, Brian, it was a very foggy time
13 in my mind. I mean, there was people pulling me in every
14 direction, phones ringing, and so forth, from our management, from
15 regulators, and public officials and everything.

16 Q. I can understand that, and certainly, a dynamic type of
17 situation that's constantly changing.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And at the same time, decisions are being made, you
20 know, probably constantly also about, you know, who, whats,
21 wheres, when. Can you describe how, you know, how that process
22 goes about in a situation like this where, you know, I guess
23 you're starting out with probably limited resources on the ground,
24 and, you know, but still people have to make decisions. And as
25 the, you know, response starts to ramp up, and you get more and

1 more resources, how the decision making process maybe changed, you
2 know, through the progression of the accident?

3 A. Okay, as it's very hectic at that point in time, we rely
4 on the incident command system. So, we start that flow. So, we
5 start putting people in the box. We pull the chart out. We look
6 at our protocol and our emergency response manual, and we start
7 that process. Then we ensure we have regular updates and meetings
8 will all the parties involved.

9 Of course, it continues to grow. And that's the first
10 6:00 meeting. The second one was 9:00. And so, we would get
11 information fed back to us. I'm not going to the site itself.
12 I'm sitting at the command center, and I get reports back from our
13 different chiefs that we assign, and they get filled in as we
14 speak.

15 Q. Okay, that helps. And plus, now you've got, as you've
16 said, local agencies, you know, state, local, federal agencies
17 arriving on site as well. And so, those initial meetings --

18 A. Public -- I'm sorry.

19 Q. Go ahead.

20 A. Public safety is very important, and we knew the cameras
21 and the media started showing up immediately. I mean, it hit
22 fast. And so, we knew we had to get some sort of communication
23 out to the public. So, I jointly worked with the sheriff's
24 department emergency management, Derrick, and we put out a joint
25 press release in conjunction with our public relations people and

1 approvals from management.

2 Q. All right, and then that is where we -- you had your
3 own, you know, additional resources coming in for all the --

4 A. I have to rely on -- you bet. It just continues to ramp
5 up to this date.

6 Q. Yep, yep.

7 BY MR. JOHNSON:

8 Q. I know, Tom, because I got there I'll say 8-ish, and at
9 9:00 we had a meeting, when did EPA come onsite, and provide
10 initial interaction? Not -- I don't -- not for the first time
11 we're talking about. Were they there at your 6:00 meeting,
12 because I can remember when they came in at 9:00.

13 A. No, they were not at the 6:00, I don't believe. But we
14 got minutes of that.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And they're just high bullet points, but we do have
17 details of that, and we started sign-in sheets, so I'm sure we
18 can.

19 BY MR. PIERZINA:

20 Q. Yeah, I think the timeline and event log kind of shows
21 contacts with various agencies. First Birgley (phonetic), and you
22 know, I know sometimes when things might not be so crazy, there
23 would be documentation of when PHMSA arrives onsite and when, you
24 know, EPA arrives onsite. I don't -- I haven't had a chance to
25 look at it, and I don't know that we've gotten all of that

1 information.

2 A. There's a lot of information.

3 Q. Somebody does, and yeah, there's a lot of information.
4 I'm just trying to think of bigger picture items brought from your
5 perspective. I guess, Tom, maybe if you could, just, you know,
6 offer any thoughts that you have related to, you know, Enbridge's
7 response to the incident, you know, good or bad or things that
8 maybe we, you know, as a team or various agencies could take away
9 to, you know, learn, you know, any initial learnings that we could
10 take away and, you know, kind of ensure that, you know, people in
11 the same position could, you know, benefit from. If there's
12 anything that comes to mind. That's a really tough question. I
13 understand.

14 A. I think I understand where you're going to, Brian, and,
15 you know, it's very dynamic. And you just cannot underestimate
16 what resources you need. You need to, you know, because
17 obviously, it's better to overestimate until you mobilize more
18 than is required, because it just appears you will need them. And
19 the other thing is, you know, Enbridge will make it right, and
20 that's the mentality you have to go to. We also have to go to a
21 definite structure that all agencies -- because I know the public,
22 you can't always bring them into the system right away, but all
23 agencies and companies involved have to follow, because I'm
24 getting -- it's so dynamic. I'm getting yanked this way and this
25 way, and you're not getting really what you want to accomplish

1 done. And that is safety to the public and our employees.

2 Q. Yep, I can --

3 A. And we're -- I wouldn't say spinning your wheels, but
4 you're not as effective as you should be, unless there's a
5 structure. It has to go to, if I can use the analogy, a military
6 style structure. Incident command, we understand that's what it
7 is, but it has to -- everybody has to be very disciplined with
8 that.

9 Q. Okay, so, and maybe this is important for, you know, at
10 some point in the future, you know, a formal evaluation of this
11 incident, you know, and response is going to be conducted,
12 correct?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And that will involve who would you expect?

15 A. Well, we always conduct post mortems on all our
16 incidents. So, this one is very large and unprecedented, and I'm
17 sure it will be quite intense and quite detailed.

18 Q. Okay, and allow for opportunity for all agencies, all
19 affected agencies or involved agencies to evaluate and comment
20 and, you know, kind of brainstorm for, you know, what went right,
21 what went wrong, what did we learn, that kind of stuff?

22 A. The integral part, I mean, they were part of me at the
23 time of all this occurring, if you will. And you bet, we have to
24 work as a unified team and have a set goal that we're all going
25 for. And again, that's the safety of the public and our

1 employees. Enbridge will make it right.

2 Q. All right.

3 MR. JOHNSON: And, Brian, you know that from -- you
4 know, it's sad to say I remember we had some other ones, you know,
5 responses to 912 where we did bring in all of the outside agencies
6 to participate in that. So, I mean, that's just not a -- that's
7 just not a statement. That's a fact of how we do things.

8 MR. GUNTHER: Okay.

9 MR. FRIDEL: I think it is what it is, and Enbridge is
10 going to make it right, and we've all got to learn and get better.

11 MR. PIERZINA: All right.

12 MR. GUNTHER: Okay.

13 MR. PIERZINA: Thank you everybody.

14 MR. GUNTHER: Thank you.

15 MR. JOHNSON: Thanks, Tom. We appreciate your coming
16 down.

17 MR. FRIDEL: Hopefully, I helped out.

18 (Whereupon, at 4:52 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 Tom Fridel

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

Debbie Mizell
Transcriber