

From: [BC03A](#)
To: [Gunaratnam Rachael](#)
Cc: [Johnson, Lauren](#)
Subject: FW: See attachments please
Date: Monday, March 30, 2020 11:12:52 AM

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Good morning Rachael,

I apologize for the delay. I just confirmed the information this morning.

Scott Clumpner responded to the fire at 3527 Durango on the morning of 2/21/2018 at 5:50am. He was the second arriving Battalion Chief at this fire which would have made him the safety officer. Battalion Chief Horacio Garcia was the incident commander at this fire.

Captain Timothy Baker was riding up as acting Battalion Chief 7 and was the incident commander for the fire at 3515 Durango. This fire came in at 10:22 am on 2/22/2018.

Please let me know if I can help you with anything else. Thank you. Also, please feel free to call me if you need anything.

Justin Hood
Battalion Chief
Dallas Fire-Rescue
[REDACTED]

From: Hood, Justin P.
Sent: Monday, March 30, 2020 9:26 AM
To: BC03A <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Fwd: See attachments please

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From: Gunaratnam Rachael [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 30, 2020 8:41:08 AM
To: Johnson, Lauren [REDACTED] Hood, Justin P.
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: See attachments please

External Email!

Hi Chief Hood,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

NATURAL GAS-FUELED EXPLOSION OF *
RESIDENCE, DALLAS, TEXAS *
FEBRUARY 23, 2018 *

* Accident No.: PLD18FR002

* * * * *

Interview of: SCOTT CLUMPNER

Dallas Fire-Rescue Station 35
3839 Walnut Hill Lane
Dallas, Texas

Monday,
February 26, 2018

APPEARANCES:

STEPHEN JENNER, Ph.D., Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

RACHAEL GUNARATNAM, Hazardous Materials Accident
Investigator
Emergency Response Group
National Transportation Safety Board

ALEX COLLETTI, Accident Investigator
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
(PHMSA)

JIM COLLINS, Regional Manager
Railroad Commission of Texas

TED PADGETT, Chief of Staff
Dallas Fire-Rescue

PHILLIP MURDOCK, Director of Engineering and Compliance
Atmos Energy

I N D E X

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Scott Clumpner:	
By Dr. Jenner	5
By Ms. Gunaratnam	13
By Mr. Murdock	18
By Dr. Jenner	18
By Ms. Gunaratnam	30
By Mr. Padgett	35
By Ms. Colletti	36
By Ms. Gunaratnam	41
By Dr. Jenner	46

I N T E R V I E W

(3:10 p.m.)

1
2
3 DR. JENNER: Good afternoon. My name is Stephen Jenner. I'm
4 an investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board in
5 Washington, D.C. Today is February 26, 2018. The time is 3:10
6 p.m. Central Time. We are currently at the Dallas Fire and Rescue
7 Station 35. The address is 3839 Walnut Hill Lane in Dallas. We
8 are here in response to the house explosion on Espanola Drive in
9 Dallas that occurred on February 23rd, 2018.

10 We'll be talking with Mr. Scott Clumpner. But before that,
11 we'll go around the room, introduce ourselves and tell you who we
12 are and who we're with. Again, my name is Stephen Jenner,
13 S-T-E-P-H-E-N, J-E-N-N-E-R, with the NTSB. To my right --

14 MS. GUNARATNAM: Rachael Gunaratnam, R-A-C-H-A-E-L,
15 G-U-N-A-R-A-T-N-A-M, NTSB.

16 MR. PADGETT: Ted Padgett, Chief of Staff, Dallas Fire-
17 Rescue. T-E-D, Papa-Alpha-Delta-Golf-Echo-Tango-Tango.

18 MR. COLLINS: Jim Collins, Railroad Commission of Texas.
19 J-I-M, C-O-L-L-I-N-S.

20 MR. MURDOCK: Phillip Murdock, Atmos Energy. P-H-I-L-L-I-P,
21 M-U-R-D-O-C-K.

22 MS. COLLETTI: Alex Colletti. Hi. A-L-E-X, C-O-L-L-E-T-T-I,
23 PHMSA, Accident Investigation.

24 MR. CLUMPNER: Scott Clumpner, C-L-U-M-P-N-E-R, Dallas Fire-
25 Rescue, battalion chief.

INTERVIEW OF SCOTT CLUMPNER

1
2 4 BY DR. JENNER:

3 Q. Okay. And your current title is?

4 A. Battalion chief.

5 Q. Oh, okay. If you would -- again, thank you for being here.

6 And we understand you were involved in two of the three incidents
7 that we're interested in learning more about. But why don't we
8 start off, if you could just give me some background about your --
9 how you got into the fire and rescue area, and talk your way up
10 through your current position.

11 A. Okay. Originally from the Chicagoland area, grew up in a
12 Chicago suburb behind a fire station, piqued my interest in the
13 fire service, and began getting involved at about 16. Decided to
14 enroll at Oklahoma State -- University, in the fire protection
15 engineering program. So I have a undergrad in fire protection
16 engineering and safety technology from Oklahoma State.

17 Met a girl, and she didn't like the cold, so we started
18 shopping around for big city apartment, and ended up here in
19 Dallas. So I was hired in February of '04, and worked my way up
20 through the ranks. Was promoted to battalion chief just under a
21 year ago. I've held all the ranks coming up through the
22 department, both on the fire and EMS side. And that's it in a
23 nutshell. I don't -- I'm sure you don't want to know too much
24 about my --

25 Q. That's fine. Thank you for that. Okay.

1 So we'll talk one, one at a time about the incidents that you
2 responded to. But let's start with the one on February 22nd.

3 A. The one on Durango?

4 Q. Yes. If you would, just tell me about your day, when you on
5 duty, when you got notified, and what you did.

6 A. All right. The Durango one, I'm thinking, because that was
7 right at shift change, I was getting ready to get off duty. What
8 did we do? That was when we started to see the storms come in
9 pretty heavily. We were -- our part of town has a lot of low-
10 lying areas, and people drive into them. And so, in Dallas,
11 battalion chiefs are dispatched on water rescues, so we did
12 several water rescues that day, all the way up -- we were 00 for a
13 battalion chief to do six, seven, eight runs in a shift is a
14 little out of the norm. So we were pretty steady all day.

15 I want to say we got to sleep from midnight, 1:00, where we
16 kind of settled in and caught one more water rescue in the middle
17 of the night, and then came back from that and was doing some
18 paperwork in the office when we were dispatched to the fire. And
19 so, that would have been right around 5:30 in the morning, give or
20 take.

21 So we were dispatched to the fire. We could hear the radio
22 traffic. We had had a IT issue the day before, so they changed
23 all the passwords to the computers and the new person -- so my
24 driver, his relief person, she came in, and every morning part of
25 the standard practice is to reboot the computers. She rebooted

1 the computer and couldn't log in, so we weren't able to see our
2 dispatcher put all the comments. At the time I was not aware that
3 there was a possible explosion. We were just getting reports of a
4 fire, and I could hear the radio traffic that the initial
5 companies had reported out with smoke in the rear of the address.

6 That was probably 3 to 5 minutes before I -- we arrived on
7 scene. I never was able to get the computer up to see all the
8 information on the call sheet. But when we pulled up, from a
9 block away, there was fire 20-feet in the air out of the back of
10 the house. It had already -- a term we use is coming through the
11 roof. So --

12 Walked up. As the second arriving chief, typically that's a
13 safety officer role. So I checked-in with Chief Garcia, who had
14 initiated command. Told -- we have a typical working relationship
15 where I say, hey, I'm going to go around and give you a 360 and
16 then I will be on the back side of the structure. So he's in
17 charge, but he'll have a second set of eyes back there. But I
18 have the authority to, if I see something that needs to be
19 addressed, immediately address it.

20 Went around back, noticed the bowing of the wall on the Bravo
21 side of the building, pretty significantly. I'll be honest with
22 you, I didn't relate it to an explosion because I had nothing in
23 the comments present that to me. I thought honestly it was shoddy
24 construction and it could have potentially been like that prior to
25 us arriving. So didn't -- I made a mental note of it, but didn't

1 think much more of it. Walked around to the back of the
2 structure, saw that there was a large volume of fire.

3 One thing that was unusual is there was fire under the floor,
4 subfloor, which is not typical. To the point where towards the
5 end of it, we actually had to pull a board off the back and stick
6 a nozzle under. So these are pier and beam style houses, and for
7 them to have fire under the floor is outside the norm.

8 So, I mean, typically an accelerant would burn through the
9 floor causing it or, you know -- honestly, I've only had it a
10 couple times, and most the time it's been something unusual, like
11 an arson or an electrical fire that started under there, but
12 there's really not much to burn under there.

13 So there was a significant amount of fire in the rear of the
14 structure, as well as to the point where I looked at the roof
15 rafters from the outside, the tails of them, and saw in. I called
16 the incident commander and told him I didn't think we needed to
17 have guys in that room. Well, turns out when I got a better look
18 with my thermal imager, there was no roof on it to collapse on
19 them anyway; it had already fallen in.

20 That's when -- so from the time they reported with the smoke
21 showing on their initial arrival, to the time I got there, that
22 roof had completely fallen in. Which, I mean, that's pretty quick
23 into a fire for that to happen. So they hadn't even had the
24 opportunity to make it through the house to the fire before the
25 roof collapsed on it.

1 Yeah, I -- other than that, he agreed, they didn't initially
2 send everybody in. Then once I realized the roof was already off,
3 gone, he said that's fine. They started getting to the back room,
4 extinguishing the predominant fire in there, in that.

5 And there was low hanging wire that we made note of, and one
6 of the -- the captain who actually was -- I believe you guys
7 interviewed this morning, he was teaching a class that day. And
8 once we had the initial fire knocked down, he asked if I could get
9 him back to the station so he could get back to teach a class at
10 our academy. So we cleared up earlier than we typically would
11 have on that.

12 Passed along all the information to Chief Garcia and we
13 headed back to the station. Didn't think much of it, really, and
14 -- I mean, to me it seemed -- you know, we have -- you know, gas
15 leaks in structures are not unheard of, and we just figured it was
16 a leak in the house maybe or something along those lines. I
17 didn't give it much thought. And I believe the incident commander
18 called for gas company before we -- or after we left.

19 Q. So did you have any -- did you see the gas company or
20 anybody --

21 A. No.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. But I was -- as I said, we left early into the incident, due
24 to the fact we were transporting somebody back to a station.

25 Q. Okay. Did -- I want to have you elaborate a little more on

1 the -- your observation of the fire under the subfloor.

2 A. Okay.

3 Q. If you can educate me on that observation, why it's unusual
4 and interesting to you?

5 A. So, the term pier and beam house, are you familiar with that?

6 Q. I am not.

7 A. Okay. So I'm trying to think -- caisson-style construction
8 is the northern term. So they set the pier or the caissons and
9 then -- it's a crawl space essentially. But it's typically, in
10 this part of the country, over dirt. There's nothing there. It's
11 just dirt on the ground.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. So to have things burning on the dirt is extremely unusual.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. And so, there -- because there's nothing there. You know,
16 the heat goes up. Unless you get drop-down, which your floors are
17 one of the thickest parts in the house. For them to burn through
18 the drop-down usually only happens if there's an accelerant or
19 some type -- something that would make it burn through thick
20 enough to drop down to the dirt.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. So the fact that we actually had visible fire -- I mean, a
23 little smoldering or something I wouldn't think twice about, but
24 the fact that we pulled the board away --

25 Q. Right.

1 A. -- and there was, you know, significant amount of fire under
2 there, to where we took a cross-lay, opened the nozzle, and he was
3 moving around to put the fire out under there. That, to me, was
4 not something normal.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. So --

7 Q. In your experience, what -- and only if you're comfortable
8 talking about this. In your experience, what conclusions have you
9 -- could you draw about the cause of that?

10 A. I don't know. I mean, from my experience?

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. I've never -- I haven't run into that. Because gas lines
13 here run in the attic, so I wouldn't put it from the gas line
14 directly.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. You know, having been from a different part of the country,
17 here, and seeing the different construction techniques and stuff,
18 there's nothing. I redid my house, and it's a pier and beam house
19 in East Dallas. There's sewer pipes, I mean, and that's about it
20 under there, that run on the dirt. So, you know, I really
21 couldn't give you an answer.

22 Q. Okay. Did you have any conversations with neighbors or
23 residents?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Okay. Had you heard -- when you arrived on scene, had you --

1 had anyone talked to you about the source of the fire, what -- had
2 anyone talked to the homeowner at the time?

3 A. I don't know if they had. I know once I made it to the back
4 of the property, I talked to the captain from Truck 41, I believe,
5 and he was the one who said, hey, it was -- we're getting reports
6 of an explosion. And then I started to piece together what I saw
7 on the wall, on the side of the structure, and I heard at that
8 time, they announced that they did have one victim being
9 transported, for second-degree burns, is what they thought. I
10 never physically saw that person.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. I never -- typically my function, especially coming in as
13 safety officer, is the safety of our personnel. So for me to
14 interact with somebody outside of that, it's not unheard of, but
15 it's not --

16 Q. Right.

17 A. -- anything that would be necessarily normal for me to seek
18 somebody out.

19 Q. Right.

20 A. And being in the rear of the structure like that, most of the
21 bystanders, neighbors, whatnot, were in the front.

22 Q. Right. Okay. You're using the term explosion. What
23 physical evidence is --

24 A. Primarily the Bravo wall. So the -- if you're looking at the
25 house, I don't know if anybody -- if the radio -- or the

1 designations for Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta --

2 Q. Um-hum.

3 A. Okay. So the Bravo wall, and when you came into the front of
4 the structure I came up the Bravo side. From about waist-high up,
5 the whole facade had been bowed out in the center and -- I mean,
6 it had been pushed out. It was like a stucco-style material.

7 Q. Right.

8 A. And so -- because the one thing I thought is, all right,
9 between that and the car, we need to probably make sure nobody
10 walks through there, in case this falls, so it doesn't hit them.

11 So that was -- between that and then, talking to Captain
12 Baker, who said that, hey, what we read on the call sheet is this
13 was a possible explosion. That was the first time I got that
14 information, probably three-quarters of the way through the amount
15 of time I was there.

16 DR. JENNER: Okay. That's all the questions I have right
17 now. We'll send it around.

18 BY MS. GUNARATNAM:

19 Q. So you mentioned the fire underneath, but on -- was that on
20 the Bravo side or --

21 A. No. It's going to be on the Charlie and -- so this house had
22 an add-on to it, which was one of the reasons why I was concerned
23 with roof collapse, because you could tell there was a lot of kind
24 of poorly built structures even separate from the house itself.

25 And so, the true -- the original house was a rectangle, and

1 about halfway on the back they came out probably 15 feet and made
2 an additional room onto the house. That's where the burning was,
3 under that structure. So if you went to the very -- what would be
4 kind of the Bravo-Charlie -- no -- yeah, Bravo-Charlie corner of
5 that extended structure, that would be -- right at the corner we
6 were able to pull a board back and stick a nozzle under there.

7 Q. Okay. And so when you said you saw the wall come out, that's
8 on the Bravo side and it's like the middle of the wall?

9 A. From the middle up.

10 Q. From the middle up. Okay.

11 A. So -- it was attached still, because I actually walked
12 between it and the car.

13 Q. Right.

14 A. And once I realized what it was, I was like, uh-uh, not a
15 good idea. And so, yeah. But it was a V almost, coming out like
16 this, still attached at the corners of the house.

17 Q. Okay. And when you were describing the roof, can you explain
18 what the joists were -- when you first saw it, like what it
19 looked --

20 A. So the roof of the room on the back essentially?

21 Q. Yeah. You said it fell in, that --

22 A. It was -- yeah, so the roof was a gable roof or a -- yeah, a
23 gable roof, and the rafter tails are something we sometimes look
24 at to see what size the roof joists are. So when they come and
25 aren't boxed off at a soffit, and so they were 2x4s, which to me

1 was like, all right, that's small, there's not a lot of weight to
2 the roof but it's still something that -- you know, now we have an
3 add-on that we know probably wasn't done to code, probably -- you
4 know, these are the things I'm speculating when we're doing an
5 add-on like this. You know, we need to suspect that not all the
6 times has it been looked by an inspector. And so, that was my
7 reasoning for saying that they need to come out.

8 Now, I had my thermal imager on me. Once I was able to look
9 in through a broken window, I realized that the roof was no longer
10 on, so it -- the only place it could have gone, is fallen, so --

11 Q. Okay. And the fire, can you describe color and everything
12 what you saw?

13 A. Yellow. I mean, it was -- it didn't look anything outside
14 the normal of a normal structure fire for us. The only thing that
15 -- the flames were higher than I was used to. Even fire coming
16 through the roof, they were a good 20 feet in the air, it seemed.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Because we parked probably half a block away, and when I can
19 see a significant amount of flame, that's a little unusual.

20 Q. From your car you saw it?

21 A. Um-hum.

22 Q. Oh, okay.

23 A. And that -- the one thing that I was noting differently there
24 is how quickly things changed from the 3 to 5 minutes before I got
25 there, that the initial size of it was just a little bit of smoke

1 in the back, we're going to investigate, to now I have flames 20
2 feet in the air.

3 Q. Okay. Have you ever investigated a gas fire before or a gas
4 explosion?

5 A. Nope.

6 Q. Do you respond to any gas incidents?

7 A. I did previously, as a company officer on an engine. I do
8 not typically as a battalion chief.

9 Q. Oh, okay. But that was there in Dallas, where you did that?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Oh, okay. So what kind of procedures did you -- when you
12 responded to a gas odor, would you go about -- like how would you
13 respond to a gas incident?

14 A. Code 3. So it's a Code 3 response. You typically make
15 contact with the person who called in the incident to narrow down
16 where they, they're smelling it. It's typically smell. And so,
17 if you get to a -- figure out where it is. If it's in a
18 structure, typically -- I don't know if we necessarily have a
19 policy on it, but it's standard practice to cut the gas off to the
20 structure and notify the gas company. If we feel there's any need
21 for hazmat, we can call them. Anything outside of a -- where you
22 can't identify the source readily.

23 Q. Right. So is that the first thing you do when you get on-
24 site, is cut off the gas and then call the company, or do you
25 check where the gas is coming from?

1 A. You investigate.

2 Q. Oh, okay.

3 A. You don't really check the gas meter, I mean, other than
4 unless it was struck and was leaking.

5 Q. Right. Sorry. I meant the gas -- do you use a gas detector?

6 A. No. We don't carry gas detectors. I don't -- we have four
7 gas detectors, but -- you know --

8 MR. PADGETT: On chiefs' cars. That's it.

9 MR. CLUMPNER: Yeah, we don't have them on the engines to
10 check. So it's all smell test.

11 BY MS. GUNARATNAM:

12 Q. Oh, okay. So you make contact with the caller, investigate,
13 and then --

14 A. That would be my -- personally how I do it.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. I don't think there's -- every company officer is going to
17 kind of have their own process that they go through. You know, a
18 lot of this job is you kind of learn from experience, even though
19 you have quite a bit of training, but there's a different
20 progression of how each person approaches something. It's what
21 works for them.

22 MS. GUNARATNAM: Does Dallas have a procedure for responding
23 to gas meter calls?

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes, ma'am.

25 MS. GUNARATNAM: Okay. I'll probably need a copy of that.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. I can get that.

2 MS. GUNARATNAM: Yeah. Okay.

3 Okay, so that's dealing with that. Okay. That's -- 22.

4 Yeah.

5 DR. JENNER: Okay, Chief?

6 MR. PADGETT: Nothing, sir.

7 DR. JENNER: Great.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions.

9 BY MR. MURDOCK:

10 Q. Phillip Murdock, Atmos Energy. You said that a gas odor
11 response was Code 3?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. What is that in --

14 A. It means lights and sirens.

15 Q. Lights and sirens?

16 A. So it's -- we either have a Code 1 response, which is driving
17 normal traffic conditions, or Code 3, which is lights and sirens.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. And I would say 95 percent of calls we're dispatched to are
20 all dispatched as Code 3 incidents.

21 MR. MURDOCK: Okay. Thank you.

22 MR. CLUMPNER: Um-hum.

23 MS. COLLETTI: Alex Colletti. No questions.

24 DR. JENNER: Cool. Okay. Thank you for that summary.

25 BY DR. JENNER:

1 Q. We'll get to the other house incident.

2 A. Okay.

3 Q. And same thing, just tell us about your day.

4 A. Okay. So, that one, I had literally been at the station for
5 about 10-minutes and we were dispatched to the structure fire.
6 Right off the bat, we thought, hey, that's right around the same
7 area we were in -- we had been -- the last shift, I had been told
8 by the chief I was relieving, that they had had a fire in that
9 area. He did not -- he wasn't at it, but he just was making me
10 aware, hey, that's odd, they just had one there yesterday
11 afternoon.

12 Reports that we were seeing on our comments on our call sheet
13 were saying, house explosion, people injured. Listening to the
14 people arriving, the initial companies, they called for an
15 additional four ambulances, I believe, to get it up to a total of
16 five. They did say that they did have a CPR in progress on one of
17 the occupants.

18 When we responded, we came in through Larga. I did notice
19 multiple gas trucks working along here. There were piles of dirt
20 and stuff that were not there when we made the fire on Durango, so
21 we knew gas company was in the neighborhood. We ended up turning
22 down Durango because, I believe, there was a blockage here with
23 gas company, or enough equipment there to make it not worth our
24 while to try and navigate it. Turned down Durango, came up and
25 wrapped around, and came in then from the east on Espanola.

1 And initially, I assumed the role of safety officer. Walked
2 up to the command vehicle that was established a little closer to
3 the incident, asked him, hey, what do you got; what do you need?
4 Right about then, they were wheeling the stretcher by to transport
5 the CPR with the initial ambulance on scene.

6 Mark -- Captain Combs was assessing his situation. He asked
7 me to determine what our needs were for the occupants and medical
8 needs and transport, that they had ordered ambulances, but do we
9 need them or not? Went and looked at who we had. The family was
10 huddled at the sidewalk. Just by the nature, looking over at the
11 structure, having to have -- I'm still a paramedic. It was pretty
12 obvious they needed to at least be assessed at a hospital.

13 So we continue with the ambulance coming. Got a couple of
14 the companies to work and do a preliminary assessment on the
15 occupants and start working their way -- there was a lot of
16 equipment clogged in the street, so start working the occupants
17 towards the corner of El Centro and Espanola, since the ambulances
18 -- there was going to be a few minutes before they got there.

19 At that point, once that all happened, I walked back to the
20 command vehicle. There was no fire whatsoever, which was amazing,
21 that you can have something like this and they never opened a
22 nozzle. I was stunned.

23 Once we determined that the structure itself wasn't an issue,
24 there was no fire to extinguish, then it was, all right, what's
25 our plan next? And that's where I was finding a gas company rep

1 pretty quick and determining -- we, even before the gas company, I
2 think collectively -- and while I was the safety officer on this
3 and technically Mark was command, I really -- we kind of just back
4 and forth decided what we were going to do, and collectively made
5 the decision.

6 We decided pretty quickly that gas fed in from the rear of
7 the properties; that Largo to El Centro -- we knew we had the two
8 incidents on the other block. They were all fed from the same gas
9 line. We're assuming that it's gas related, and beyond some
10 malfunction on the actual property, we're going to evacuate the
11 block. So we sent companies in to each end, and started telling
12 them to evacuate the south side of Espanola and the north side of
13 Durango.

14 Shortly thereafter, we were approached at the command post by
15 a gas company guy. We told him what we were doing. I asked him
16 if he knew what was going on. He said he didn't. He said -- and
17 he was making some phone calls. He hung around the command post,
18 and then he, shortly thereafter, probably -- my times may be off;
19 time goes real quick on these -- 20 minutes, 30 minutes later,
20 maybe, told us that he had spoke with management and they wanted
21 this perimeter evacuated.

22 And so, at that point we called for additional companies.
23 Mark ended up -- he started notifying some of our higher-ups, our
24 deputy chief for that side of the city, he was on the phone with
25 him. At that point I took over the evacuation and started using

1 the remaining companies to conduct the evacuations, starting from
2 the closest to the incident out, and working from west to east.
3 And we did a coordinated evacuation, and then as additional
4 companies came, we had them staged down here on El Centro and
5 Durango, and work all the way down. And initially we were only
6 going to Cortez. The apartments were added later in the incident.
7 And we worked from west to east. At that point everything was
8 running pretty smooth.

9 Hazmat was responding at the request of Chief Padgett. And
10 they initially, when they arrived -- somehow they were directed,
11 and I don't know if this went through command when I wasn't there,
12 that there was a need for them, but they were dispatched --
13 ultimately sent over to the elementary school. And once this was
14 just about -- was organized and everything was running along
15 through the paces, Captain Combs asked that I would go over and
16 coordinate what we were doing at the school. And so I went over
17 there, and walked in. Hazmat was doing monitoring over there.
18 They just had a four-man team and they were -- they had not had a
19 single reading in the school.

20 At this time we still didn't know necessarily why the
21 recommendation for the large area was -- we were going primarily
22 off of Atmos being the subject matter experts, and when they tell
23 us they need this evacuated, we're going to go with them. They --
24 I did turn to the guy initially, when he expanded the area, and
25 asked him if this was a mandatory evacuation. He said it was.

1 And so, we didn't -- ironically, did not have any pushback, that I
2 was aware of, from any of the residents, which, I guess if I had
3 three houses catch fire in my neighborhood or explode, I wouldn't
4 be too interested in staying either.

5 Anyway, I was back at the school. Worked with Susan Harris,
6 VP of public affairs for Atmos. That was my initial contact with
7 her. She had said that Atmos was recommending that they evacuate
8 the school. I asked who, specifically. She said Brian Slaughter,
9 I believe was his name, was the person that was making the
10 recommendation.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Kyle.

12 MR. CLUMPNER: Kyle. Kyle Slaughter. And so then it was
13 just how to do an efficient and coordinated evacuation. The
14 weather was crummy. The evacuation plan called for the kids to go
15 to Thomas Jefferson and I forget the name of the middle school.
16 But they weren't exactly close, so we coordinated with the
17 district, had a regional supervisor there who was able to get
18 Dallas County Schools there to provide buses in a very timely
19 fashion. We didn't believe there was an immediate threat to the
20 children and it made more sense to be able to do an orderly
21 evacuation on buses than make them walk across town.

22 We evacuated the school. Once that was complete, hazmat
23 returned to their vehicles which were over here on Espanola. I
24 returned to the command post, and at that point Captain Combs said
25 he was really -- we had no -- hadn't had any additional contact

1 with Atmos. And we were wondering what the status was, so I took
2 my vehicle and my driver and we went looking through the
3 neighborhood.

4 Came over to roughly Cortez and Larga. Found a crew working.
5 Saw one of the guys I had dealt with earlier in the incident. I
6 said, hey, what's the status here on getting gas cut off to the
7 neighborhood? What's our plan? He said, well, those guys in the
8 white trailer over there are making the decision. And on Webb
9 Chapel and Storey, Atmos had set up a command post. And so, we
10 went over to the command post. I met Benny -- I forget his name.
11 And I apologize, all my notes are sitting in our command vehicle
12 still.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Rosenberg?

14 MR. CLUMPNER: Yes. And so, introduced myself, explained,
15 you know, here's where we are; where are you guys at? He was
16 explaining that they were working systematically to shut off the
17 gas to this area and we ended up -- again met with Susan Harris
18 and determined what our needs were going to be for the folks in
19 this area, and we just started setting up a coordinated what we
20 were going to do to address all the different variations of what
21 needs to occur. So --

22 And at that point, I remained there and doing various
23 different things mostly related to the community and liaisioning
24 between Atmos and our folks till about midnight.

25 Q. Okay. Good story. Thank you.

1 One question. You were in discussions about to the -- well,
2 let me just ask you. About what time did you decide to make the
3 evacuation, to formerly --

4 A. The initial evacuation or this larger one?

5 Q. The initial.

6 A. The initial evacuation, I would say, it was within 10 to 15
7 minutes.

8 Q. After arrival?

9 A. After -- yeah. We knew pretty quick that we had something
10 that needed -- we needed to at least get a handle on.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. We were looking at it from the logic of knowing what the
13 feeder lines were and knowing that they came in from the alley and
14 everything was connected to that. And I say feeder -- the service
15 lines all came from one line down the alley for all the incidents
16 that we had had over the 3 days. So that was our reasoning behind
17 the initial evacuation we chose to do.

18 Q. Okay. Okay, well, since you raised it, so 10 to 15 minutes
19 after arrival for initial evacuation and then the decision to
20 expand it to its full scope --

21 A. It was probably 30 to 35 minutes in. And that's off of my
22 memory. Having been through this on the other side for some of
23 our line of duty, typically those time frames don't always match
24 up with what you think happened.

25 Q. I understand.

1 MR. CLUMPNER: I don't know, have we pulled the tapes, chief?

2 MR. PADGETT: Yeah, I got (indiscernible).

3 MR. CLUMPNER: Okay. Because we did try and make a point of,
4 even if we were talking face to face, talking over our fire ground
5 channel, knowing that it was being recorded. So that should paint
6 a better picture than any of us can.

7 Q. Okay. Did you -- in your discussions with the gas company,
8 did it come up why they were there in the first place?

9 A. No, I never asked. I assumed it was because of the few
10 previous incidents, but I never asked.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. And at this point it was just what do we need to do to make
13 sure we have a safe area and this doesn't happen again while we're
14 here, let alone -- well, period. But we don't want it to happen
15 while we're standing here trying to figure out what's going on.

16 Q. Sure. When you talk about mandatory evacuation, how
17 mandatory is mandatory?

18 A. That is a great question that I think internally to the fire
19 department is going to be a discussion.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm sorry, (indiscernible) --

21 MR. CLUMPNER: Of how mandatory is mandatory?

22 So, initially -- you know, Atmos is a quasi-public agency or
23 governmental agency. I don't know. They're a publicly, publicly
24 -- I'm trying to think, trying to remember; I just said it earlier
25 this morning -- regulated utility. You know, how much authority

1 do they have? I don't know. How much authority do I have? I
2 knew that my job -- you know, I can keep people out of a building
3 on fire. So I looked at it, to expand that, this is no different
4 and I'm going off of their recommendation.

5 We did not have any pushback. Now, about at about 11:00 that
6 night, we expanded to El Rito, Poquita -- my Spanish isn't that
7 great -- and one of these houses in here had a woman who was
8 confined to a wheelchair who was adamant she wasn't leaving. And
9 I said, well, we're going to have police come over there. And the
10 cop said, we'll go over there with you, but unless you can cite
11 what law we're using to remove her from her home -- and that was
12 about 15 minutes before I was sent home and so, the chief that
13 relieved me was going to make the decision on that.

14 BY DR. JENNER:

15 Q. Right.

16 A. So, I don't know.

17 Q. So you're -- on the map you're referring to, now you're
18 referencing a point outside the --

19 A. Well, this was part of our evacuation area in the school.

20 Q. Oh, okay. I see.

21 A. We came down the northeast side, I guess, of El Rito --

22 Q. Right.

23 A. -- down to Almazan and up Del Centro, and we were on the
24 verge of evacuating these three apartment complexes at about
25 midnight that night. And then Atmos changed their minds and said,

1 we cut the gas to the properties; we don't need to evacuate them
2 but they will not have gas. So --

3 Q. Okay. So were you satisfied with the communications, ongoing
4 communications between you and the gas company?

5 A. Yeah. I mean, they had a job to do and we had a job to do.
6 So as everything is escalating quickly, you know, they made a
7 point of being at the command post pretty quick. Told us -- you
8 know, initially we told them what we were doing, then they told us
9 what they recommended. We made the call to go with their area.
10 But at that point, they've told us what they need and they're
11 going to do what they have to do.

12 So, you know, I didn't feel -- there was a slight break down
13 there, but once we had kind of gone into our full scale we're
14 getting this neighborhood evacuated, there wasn't somebody left at
15 the command post, but they did give us a phone number. Finding --
16 setting up a liaison officer with the incident commander at Webb
17 Chapel and Storey alleviated any communication issues. Because we
18 were getting some calls for gas odors in the area outside of here.
19 I know we had one north. And so, I was able to walk from our
20 command post to their command post and say, hey, be advised we
21 have an engine going to X, Y, Z address; can you have one of your
22 gas guys to go over there with him? And so we were able to do
23 that at two or three of the incidents outside of the perimeter
24 pretty quickly. So, yeah, I thought communication went well.

25 Q. Okay. And communication between you and your -- and all the

1 responders, how was that?

2 A. That was fine. I mean, this isn't -- well, it's a little
3 larger scope of what we're used to. It's not outside of what
4 we're all trained to do. So we have a system in place and it ran
5 ho it's supposed to run. I mean --

6 Q. What was your biggest challenge of this whole incident?

7 A. Keeping track of people because of the larger scale of it.
8 Knowing where people were. But just -- by the end of the day, I
9 really felt like we really addressed every need people would have
10 had. Even to the point where -- I don't think as a fire
11 department we always do a great job of addressing after the fact
12 with people. You know, the incident downgrades and we all go back
13 to our station ready for the next call, but we leave a mess in our
14 aftermath. This one, I think we did a much better job of
15 addressing that by setting up our command post here, working with
16 Atmos to have fliers stationed with each of the officers so that
17 they could hand them to them. If people needed back into the
18 neighborhood, we were allowing them back in for medication and to
19 get their pets out, knowing that it could be a long-term incident
20 where they wouldn't be allowed in.

21 We ended up bringing in some fire department vehicles and
22 using any -- we had two or three Suburbans, we used a couple
23 chiefs' cars, and we just had companies -- two persons out on the
24 front, cycle in, two people in the back get them what they need
25 and get them back out. That took us -- they didn't wrap that up

1 till about midnight, and we started that probably at about 3:30.

2 Yeah, I mean, it -- we were able to get the EEOC up and
3 running and get the rec center set up so that that was at least a
4 point to direct people so that Atmos could address their shelter
5 and food needs. I mean, you know, I think everybody did the best
6 in a bad situation.

7 DR. JENNER: Great. Thanks for all of that description.
8 I'll pass it on to my right.

9 BY MS. GUNARATNAM:

10 Q. This is Rachel, NTSB. So can you identify the exact street
11 location of the command post?

12 A. Sure. It's going to be the parking lot on the northeast
13 corner of Webb Chapel Road and Storey Lane.

14 Q. Webb Chapel and Storey Lane?

15 A. Yes. Storey is spelled S-T-O-R-E-Y.

16 Q. E-Y. Okay. Okay, and where was the Atmos command post?

17 A. There as well.

18 Q. Oh, same? Okay.

19 A. Yes. We intentionally -- so our initial command post was in
20 front of the incident on Espanola. And we had two different
21 command vehicles. So that command vehicle set up there and then,
22 once the school evacuation had emptied and I was -- I basically
23 became liaison officer with Atmos, that's when I discovered they
24 had their incident command post set up there.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. So I set up next to them. And our plan was to, once we had
2 done the evacuation and the secondary search -- so in the fire
3 service we do a primary and a secondary search. We applied that
4 same to this. So we had companies -- and you never use the same
5 personnel to do your secondary that did the primary. So we would
6 have all the companies work west to east, and then you switch them
7 all around so that the next ones going down the block aren't the
8 same ones that went down that block initially.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. And so, once that was complete, our plan was to take all of
11 our personnel out of the area and bring them over here and stage
12 them, and put all the equipment on Storey Lane and determine what
13 our next plan of action was. And we did that approximately 3:30,
14 give or take. That's once we had completed the evacuation and
15 then relocated everybody outside of the hazard zone, is kind of
16 the way we were approaching it.

17 Q. Okay. And when did the evacuation get lifted?

18 A. I have -- it was still in place when I left at midnight.

19 Q. At midnight. Okay. Were you there when the incident
20 commander switched over?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay. So it went from Chief Combs to --

23 A. Chief Meador.

24 Q. Chief Meador.

25 A. And that probably happened about 6 p.m.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Give or take.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. And yeah, so I remained -- at that point I would say I was --
5 I mean, he was technically command. I was liaison, safety,
6 whatever you want to call me. We just had two chiefs at the fire,
7 or at the incident.

8 Q. Okay. So you were the liaison for how long?

9 A. Oh, I would guess it probably started around 2, till
10 midnight.

11 Q. Okay. And you got relieved when?

12 A. I did not get relieved. At that point we had decided to
13 downgrade it to a chief and an engine only. Or a couple -- there
14 were still a couple engines there, but our -- we had decided that
15 one chief and one engine overnight would be sufficient. And it's
16 kind of outside the norm for us to leave a chief sitting on
17 something overnight, but the thought was -- it kept escalating and
18 de-escalating. So we had our -- once we finish this, at 3:00 we
19 really were expecting to come back. We hadn't even ordered the
20 command van yet. We were thinking our work here is done and we'll
21 leave it to Atmos to handle it.

22 Well, then, sure enough, we need to expand the area. That's
23 when we incorporated these two -- three apartment complexes.
24 Well, that ramps us back up because that takes -- it's manpower
25 significant. And then we realized people were starting to show up

1 and we needed to address their needs. So -- and then, even as
2 late as 11:00, they -- the incident commander for Atmos was saying
3 they thought they needed to evacuate these three apartment
4 complexes. We ordered four more companies and we're getting ready
5 to ramp up again. Ultimately, the decision was made that that
6 didn't need to occur, but the thought was with this back and
7 forth, having a chief there who could make a decision immediately
8 and coordinate with Atmos IC -- and so, we left a chief there
9 overnight.

10 Q. What other government agencies responded?

11 A. Railroad Commission -- I believe you were out there, right?

12 MR. COLLINS: Yes, sir.

13 MR. CLUMPNER: Was the initial one. There was a consulting
14 engineering firm out of San Antonio. Baker maybe?

15 BY MS. GUNARATNAM:

16 Q. Baker, yeah.

17 A. Those were the two initially that I had interaction with. I
18 did witness the mercaptan test on the -- they had an access port
19 on the building just adjacent to where we were set up and I did
20 witness that. And then I had one of my hazmat people go around
21 with them for their additional test to witness. Yeah.

22 Q. Police, did they come?

23 A. Oh, yeah. I -- they're always with us, so --

24 Q. Oh, okay.

25 A. Sorry. Yeah. So we had -- the initial police response early

1 on in the incident, we did get a major. And then ultimately when
2 we moved over to the command post on Webb Chapel and Storey,
3 Chief Watson from police was there.

4 Q. Okay. And did they help to block off the streets or
5 anything?

6 A. Yeah, so we -- early on -- once we determined we were doing
7 an evacuation, so when -- we automatically get police on a working
8 fire. Because of the nature of this it was, in our terminology
9 considered a working fire, so we did initially have police. We
10 initially blocked off El Centro both sides of Espanola. And then,
11 once we determined -- as soon as we determined we were doing a
12 large-scale evacuation, we requested police at every intersection
13 that entered that area, and they maintained a perimeter, at least,
14 until I left. When I had talked to Chief Watson, they were doing
15 shift changes and, ultimately, we had put a sergeant in the
16 command post with us to coordinate communications between us and
17 police.

18 Q. Okay. And OEM came?

19 A. OEM, we had them out there at the initial scene. More than
20 anything, it was just letting them know what was going on and that
21 we were going to have some sheltering needs.

22 Q. What time did they arrive?

23 A. They were there before I made it to the command post. So
24 they were there prior to 1500.

25 Q. Okay. So you interacted a lot with -- you were the person

1 between the fire department and Atmos, right?

2 A. Correct.

3 Q. Okay. And you felt you had sufficient information from them?

4 A. Um-hum.

5 MS. GUNARATNAM: Okay. That's all I have for now.

6 DR. JENNER: Great.

7 Chief?

8 BY MR. PADGETT:

9 Q. This is Chief Padgett. Chief, I know you said the command
10 van for Atmos was right there on the Storey-Webb Chapel area. Did
11 we have command at one time at -- in the parking lot there at
12 Larga and Webb Chapel, or am I mistaken on that?

13 A. There was never anything at Larga and Webb Chapel.

14 Q. Okay. So y'all were in a parking lot --

15 A. Well, so I think whoever said that, the whole -- that whole
16 thing is a parking lot, one end to the other.

17 Q. That's what I thought.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Okay. So y'all were in the parking lot, is what I wanted to
20 clarify?

21 A. Correct. So I actually, where that -- if you're looking at
22 the same map --

23 Q. Yeah. No, I get it.

24 A. Yeah, where Webb Chaplain and Storey --

25 Q. Right.

1 A. Right there in that very corner of the parking lot was the
2 van -- our A-25 as well their -- they have an IC trailer. And
3 then we put all the apparatus on Storey.

4 Q. And you were in walking distance to the Atmos trailer that
5 they had, correct?

6 A. Yeah, 30 feet, at most.

7 MR. PADGETT: Okay. That's all I had.

8 MR. COLLINS: No questions.

9 MR. MURDOCK: Nothing.

10 BY MS. COLLETTI:

11 Q. Alex Colletti. I'm sorry, I got a few.

12 So the main person you were speaking with throughout the day,
13 that was Susan Harris?

14 A. No. So I had -- kind of bifurcated. So Susan Harris was the
15 VP of community affairs, I believe. So she was dealing with all
16 the issues that we were -- anything we needed to deal with, with
17 the residents and their displacement.

18 Then on the other side was Benny Rosenberg. He was their IC,
19 what I would consider from our technical standpoint, operations.
20 He was addressing the what are we doing to fix the problem? And
21 so, I kind of went to the different -- depending on who I needed.
22 Like he would come to me and tell me, hey, we're getting ready to
23 evacuate two more apartment complexes. And I'd go, Susan, all
24 right, here's what we got coming. And then, I'd coordinate with
25 our OEM and get ahold of rec center and make sure that we gave the

1 on-duty -- or on-call chief notification what was going on. Just
2 keeping everybody in the loop.

3 Q. Okay. So, for example, when you were talking about the
4 isolation of those mains along those three alleys, that would be
5 something that Benny would have communicated to you?

6 A. Correct. So that was one of my questions and concerns, how
7 long before we can verify that we have the gas cut off to this
8 area. Because initially our thought was once the gas is cut off
9 to the area, hazard is mitigated, there's no reason for us to
10 remain on the scene. He said that they were running into
11 challenges, they were probably -- so at about 3:30, he said they
12 were 2 to 4 hours from completely cutting it off. They were
13 having to call in welders to weld on fittings, that some of the
14 valves were not operational. And so, they were working on it and
15 they would keep us abreast.

16 Q. Were you ever notified when the gas was completely isolated
17 on all those lines?

18 A. Yes. Let's see. It was right around the time we shifted or
19 changed command ICs. So right before that, give or take. So
20 about 6-ish?

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. At that point, it was not a notable event for us because we
23 had completed our evacuation. We had nobody -- none of our
24 personnel in the hazard area. So at that point that was an Atmos
25 issue, when they could get it cut off.

1 Q. So I just want to backtrack a little bit when you're talking
2 about the area being made safe essentially when the lines are
3 isolated. Did Atmos explain why they wanted to keep the area
4 continuously evacuated after that time?

5 A. They did not. It was impressed upon me that we were looking
6 at the age of the infrastructure in the neighborhood.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. That -- because one of my questions was, how are we
9 determining what our area is? And it was based on their maps,
10 that the age of the installation of all the piping, and that was
11 what the basis was, was my understanding. I would not be able to
12 cite who told me that because we were interacting with a lot of
13 different Atmos folks.

14 Q. Okay. But after 6 p.m. after the isolation, they didn't
15 provide you for an explanation for why they wanted to -- why they
16 didn't release that evacuation?

17 A. Correct. But they were clear that they did want it to
18 remain.

19 Q. They wanted it to remain? Okay.

20 A. And we had expanded it at that point over the other side of
21 Marsh as well. We were -- so the north side of Wemdon and the
22 south side of Cortez, over here to Mixon, were also evacuated.
23 And they -- we asked, because that came later in the evening, and
24 the question was, well why is that? Well, we discovered that that
25 piping was the same age as this one.

1 Q. And I'm guessing this small portion here -- sorry between --
2 I'm pointing to the portion on --

3 A. Yes. This right here?

4 Q. -- Rito, El Rito and Almazan and --

5 A. Same issue.

6 Q. -- El Centro, that's the same issue, they discovered that
7 later?

8 A. Um-hum.

9 Q. Did they explain why they were going to have these three
10 apartments evacuated and then later decided not to?

11 A. No. At that point, they -- I know they did cut the gas to
12 those.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. They made the decision not to evacuate them. We -- I took
15 it, you know, that they were making the decisions based on their
16 being the subject matter experts and they're making
17 recommendations to us. I have -- I don't have the expertise to go
18 against a recommendation from the utility that, you know, that's
19 their business.

20 Q. Right.

21 A. So we left it in their hands. We were gearing up to evacuate
22 these and they -- they said they were precautionary at that point.
23 And then they decided that it wasn't necessary, but they weren't
24 going to have gas. So --

25 Q. Okay. Did they -- so from what I understood with speaking

1 with Captain Combs earlier, and I just want to make sure I have
2 this correct, he made the decision to evacuate the school prior to
3 Atmos deciding that the school needed to be evacuated?

4 A. No. He sent me over there to determine whether or not --
5 basically to get a handle on what was going on over there. He was
6 remote from it, and so --

7 Q. Okay, okay.

8 A. The decision, I would consider -- I mean, if somebody's got
9 to take responsibility for it, I ultimately pulled the trigger on
10 it.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. I know -- and we had no readings in there and I -- my -- the
13 captain that was the hazmat group supervisor was not necessarily
14 in agreement on that decision. But ultimately Kyle Slaughter
15 wanted it evacuated, and that went back to you have the public
16 utility telling me that they want to evacuate a school. I don't
17 have the knowledge base and the expertise to go against their
18 recommendation.

19 Q. Okay. So that was a bit of a joint decision?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. I apologize for not --

22 A. No, no problem.

23 Q. I just wanted to clear that up.

24 MS. COLLETTI: I'm trying to see what else I've got for you.

25 I think that's pretty much it. Thank you.

1 MR. CLUMPNER: Um-hum.

2 DR. JENNER: Okay. I'll just look around the room to see if
3 there are any follow-up questions?

4 MS. GUNARATNAM: Can you come back to me in just a second?

5 DR. JENNER: Okay. I'm looking slowly --

6 BY MS. COLLETTI:

7 Q. Oh, I'm sorry. I've got one on the expanded areas. How were
8 those communicated to you?

9 A. So this was -- at this point we had, you know, a joint
10 command post essentially, two different structures right next to
11 each other.

12 Q. Directly --

13 A. Benny came over and told us, hey, look, we need to expand
14 this a little bit. So that's why it worked out really well
15 setting us up here.

16 Q. Okay, great.

17 BY MS. GUNARATNAM:

18 Q. So you said they were communicating -- Atmos was
19 communicating with you about when they were shutting off the gas?
20 Or did they shut it off --

21 A. They initially -- and I'm going off of memory from what I
22 wrote down because I was tracking where they cut it off. They had
23 initially cut off -- their first cutoff, I believe, was between
24 Espanola and Durango, all the way across. And they were working
25 outward, which would make sense with what we were doing. At,

1 let's see, probably about 3:00 they were still working on the one
2 between -- they were working on the one between Fontana and
3 Gaspar. They weren't looking for an evacuation there but they
4 were cutting that one as well.

5 And then they were also, at the same time, they had another
6 crew down here working -- and I could actually, physically see
7 these guys; they were working at the west end of -- what is that
8 there?

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Larga?

10 MR. CLUMPNER: Yeah, between Cortez and Bolivar. And then
11 they still had to cut off Larga after that.

12 So he was keeping me apprised of what their progress was. I
13 never felt like Atmos wasn't sharing any necessary information
14 with us.

15 BY MS. GUNARATNAM:

16 Q. Okay. So they just slowly started cutting off in a wider
17 area, the gas?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. And initially, early on, the vaults were flooded from all the
21 rain. They brought in a pump truck pretty quick and it was
22 pumping them out.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. So that made -- it was one of those, every possible thing
25 that you could have in your way was in your way.

1 Q. Were they doing leak surveys?

2 A. Yes, they had the trucks -- we were calling them the sniffer
3 trucks. But the ones with the little bells on the front of them,
4 they were driving. And I believe, they were even doing a pretty
5 wide swath outside of our evacuation area. They told me that they
6 were doing it here, it was going to take some time. Because I was
7 trying to gauge how long we were going to need to have resources,
8 what we needed to gear up for, and I know they were doing this
9 entire neighborhood. And he said that was going to take them a
10 while to drive the neighborhood with their sensing trucks.

11 Q. Okay. And did you see them do any other tests?

12 A. I saw a vehicle with a tall thing on it that looked pretty
13 interesting.

14 Q. Was it air monitor?

15 A. Probably.

16 Q. Yeah, okay.

17 A. It was driving all over the place. I mean, they had a lot of
18 folks out there. This ramped up -- I mean, it looked like the
19 Google Maps car.

20 Q. Okay.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Except bigger.

22 BY MS. GUNARATNAM:

23 Q. Did they talk to you of gas readings?

24 A. No. But throughout this entire incident I never smelled gas
25 once.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. The only time I smelled it actually was when I was doing the
3 mercaptan test.

4 Q. Right.

5 A. Other than that -- and we never -- at the school, we never
6 had any gas readings. And so, partially that's what -- I didn't
7 feel like there was an overall like high risk, immediate issue
8 that we're going to get people killed this instant if we don't get
9 this evacuated. So -- I mean, it was definitely important but it
10 was not --

11 Q. Yeah. But you attended the odorization testing?

12 A. The initial one.

13 Q. The initial one, and they passed that?

14 A. Um-hum. They had to educate me on what we were doing
15 initially, but yeah, it -- the threshold test and all that, yes.
16 Yeah.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Yeah, and they did it twice with two different machines.

19 Q. Okay. And they did that second test when?

20 A. This was the initial one, correct?

21 Q. Right.

22 A. Yeah, they did that -- it was pretty early on. Probably
23 right at 3:00. And then right after that they sent all their
24 folks to get drug tested.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. They were like, well, we got to wait until he goes, because
2 -- so they were -- they seemed to be following a pretty thorough
3 process.

4 MS. GUNARATNAM: Okay. Jim, you were there for the second
5 one?

6 MR. COLLINS: Yes, I was present for all three. And we did
7 have a little delay because of the person that was going to
8 conduct the sniff test was going to be drug tested, but they said
9 okay, we can wait until we get these done before he had to leave.
10 So we immediately left and went to the next two locations. We
11 went to an address off of -- what's the street just north of--

12 MR. CLUMPNER: Bolivar?

13 MR. COLLINS: No. Espanola. What's this street here?
14 Fontana. So we went to the alley 3641, I believe, Espanola and
15 3640 Fontana.

16 MS. GUNARATNAM: For the third test?

17 MR. COLLINS: For the second test.

18 MS. GUNARATNAM: Second test.

19 MR. COLLINS: And the third test was done at the elementary
20 school.

21 MS. GUNARATNAM: Okay.

22 MR. COLLINS: At their -- in the (indiscernible).

23 MS. GUNARATNAM: And they passed?

24 MR. COLLINS: All passed.

25 MS. GUNARATNAM: Yeah.

1 MR. COLLINS: And we have records of all that.

2 MS. GUNARATNAM: Okay. And -- all right. That's all I got.

3 DR. JENNER: Okay, nothing else?

4 BY DR. JENNER:

5 Q. One question I've been curious about. The -- there was a car
6 in front of the house that was parked on the lawn sort of
7 diagonally. Was it parked there when you arrived?

8 A. Yes. Is that normal?

9 Q. Yeah, is that normal?

10 A. In that part of town, yes.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. You know, you have some of the older city neighborhoods that
13 don't have a lot of garage space and there's not really a
14 driveway. And honestly, I lived in the city and you don't park
15 your -- if you don't want your car getting broken into, don't park
16 on the street.

17 Q. Oh, okay.

18 A. And actually it's a city policy, if you have a take-home car
19 you cannot leave it on the street.

20 Q. Okay.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: For security reasons?

22 MR. CLUMPNER: Yeah, it'll get broken into. I mean, it's
23 just city living.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

25 MR. CLUMPNER: I grew up in Chicago. At least the car's

1 still here the next morning. Now, up in Chicago, the car won't
2 even be there.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh, wow. Okay.

4 DR. JENNER: Terrific. Thanks so much for all your
5 description. Is there anything that we didn't ask that you think
6 could help us in our investigation?

7 MR. CLUMPNER: No. I mean, I'm sure -- hopefully you guys
8 come to a conclusion on what actually occurred. So --

9 DR. JENNER: We're trying to put pieces together. So --

10 MR. CLUMPNER: Yeah, I understand. It's an interesting
11 puzzle.

12 DR. JENNER: Terrific. Again, thank you so much. Appreciate
13 your time and effort.

14 MR. CLUMPNER: Yeah, absolutely.

15 DR. JENNER: It is 4:07 p.m.

16 (Whereupon, at 4:07 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: NATURAL GAS-FUELED EXPLOSION OF
 RESIDENCE, DALLAS, TEXAS
 FEBRUARY 23, 2018
 Interview of Scott Clumpner

ACCIDENT NO.: PLD18FR002

PLACE: Dallas, Texas

DATE: February 26, 2018

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.



Deborah D. Sweigart
Transcriber