

Arkema Texas Plant Explodes, Again. Major Public Health Emergency

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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VISIT MY NEW WEB SITE: stephenlendman.org ([Home - Stephen Lendman](#)). Contact at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net.

On August 31, two explosions rocked the plant, causing toxic chemical fires, contaminating air and water.

The company's web site said the "threat of additional explosions remains."

On Friday, another explosion and massive fire occurred. More could follow. Toxic black smoke filled the air, visible for miles around the plant. More explosions and fires are likely.

Trailers with chemicals at the site require refrigeration. According to Arkema official Richard Rennard, floodwaters knocked out municipal and auxiliary power. He "expect(s) the same thing to happen with those containers that we saw today."

Residents within miles of the plant aren't safe. Maybe no one in Harris County – home to 4.6 million people, living in harm's way, exposed to hazardous conditions.

A major public health emergency exists, local, state and federal authorities aren't explaining. Everyone should have been evacuated right away from areas most endangered. Instead, only a 1.5 evacuation zone was in place before the plant explosions and fires.

Emergency responders let them burn out. On Friday, Arkema president and CEO Rich Rowe said he expects six remaining trailers with chemicals to catch fire. Let them burn out, he said.

Friday's explosions and fires were more violent than Thursdays. If remaining trailers explode and ignite fires as expected, they'll cause far more widespread contamination.

On Thursday, officials called the smoke and fumes "noxious." The plant stores thousands of pounds of toxic chemicals.

If released into the environment, it could be potentially harmful to millions of Harris County residents.

Earlier, a federal court delayed approving EPA rules designed to improve plant safety. Arkema refused to release information on hazardous chemicals at its plants – disgracefully claiming it could heighten the risk of terrorism.

Under federal and Texas laws, companies can decline to disclose what toxic materials are produced or maintained at plant and other sites. Area residents have no idea about the hazards they're potentially exposed to.

In February, OCHA fined Arkema's Crosby plant \$90,000 for "serious" hazardous chemical-related safety violations - likely contributing to Thursday and Friday explosions and fires, more likely coming.

Chemical and other US industries lobby intensively to be as regulatory-free as possible. Trump and most others in Washington serve their interests.

After the fact, Arkema listed the following chemicals stored at its Crosby, TX site:

2-ETHYLHEXANOYL CHLORIDE DISTILLED

ACETIC ACID 84%

ACETONE

AROMATIC 100

BENZOYL CHLORIDE

CAUSTIC POTASH 45%

CAUSTIC SODA 50%

CUMENE HYDROPEROXIDE

CUMENE HYDROPEROXIDE

DIMETHYL HEXADIENE

DIMETHYL HEXANEDIOL DH-S

EPSOM SALTS

HEXANE

HYDROGEN PEROXIDE 70%

ISOAMYLENE

ISOBUTYLENE ISOPROPYL ALCOHOL

MINERAL OIL, WHITE

MINERAL SPIRITS ODORLESS

MONOSODIUM PHOSPHATE

NEODECANOYL CHLORIDE $\geq 98.0\%$ UNDISTILLED

PIVALOYL CHLORIDE 95-100%

PROPYLENE GLYCOL

SODIUM BICARBONATE
SODIUM CARBONATE
ANHYDROUS LIGHT
SODIUM SULFATE ANHYDROUS
SODIUM SULFITE ANHYDROUS
SULFUR DIOXIDE
SULFURIC ACID 93% REAGENT ACS
T-BUTYL HYDROPEROXIDE 70%

They're expected to burn and spread toxicity over a wide area.

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Articles by: [Stephen Lendman](http://stephenlendman.org)

About the author:

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

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