

Unsafe Power Supply Caused Acid Cloud

PETROLIA, Pa. (AP) — The U.S. Chemical Safety Board says a pump used without an electrical safety shut off caused an acid cloud that forced hundreds of western Pennsylvania residents to evacuate last year.

Indspec Chemical Corp. faces more than \$150,000 in state environmental and federal workplace safety fines for the leak in Petrolia on Oct. 11.

Oleum leaked when a transfer tank overflowed because its pump was connected to an outlet without an automatic shut-off. Oleum forms sulfuric acid when exposed to air and the cloud forced 2,500 people from their homes for a day.

The Chemical Safety Board says workers often used the outlet without the automatic shut-off to save time on weekends, when fewer workers were present.

Dave Dorko, who manages the plant 60 miles north of Pittsburgh, says the offending worker was fired.

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<http://www.chem.info/news/2009/10/unsafe-power-supply-caused-acid-cloud>