Four Sent to Hospitals Following Ammonia Leak

the Associated Press

GOSHEN, Ind. (AP) — Workers welding a tank at a northern Indiana fertilizer plant set off an explosion Monday that injured four workers and spilled 2,000 gallons of ammonia into the plant, authorities said.

The ammonia was contained by a dike system at T & T Fertilizer southwest of Goshen, Elkhart County sheriff's Capt. James Bradberry said. He said the four injured people were employees of T & T and Southwest Welding.

A 24-year-old man was flown by helicopter to Memorial Hospital in South Bend. Bradberry says three other males, ages 16, 56 and 61, reported having trouble breathing and were taken to Elkhart General Hospital. None of their conditions were immediately available.

A woman answering the telephone at T & T Fertilizer on Monday afternoon told The Associated Press the company had no comment. No one answered the telephone at Southwest Welding.

The accident occurred about 11:35 a.m. Monday. Bradberry said an evacuation of surrounding homes wasn't needed because the ammonia gas had dissipated into the air. A hazardous material team was called in to clean up the site.

Neighbor Dave Wise told The Elkhart Truth he was in his shop at his home nearby when he heard hissing and two loud pops.

"It sounded like someone was letting air out of a huge tire," he said.

Wise's wife, Rachel, helped Wise's brother-in-law, who works at the business, wash off after the man ran home after the accident.

Source URL (retrieved on *12/18/2013 - 6:10pm*):
http://www.chem.info/news/2011/10/four-sent-hospitals-following-ammonia-leak