

TN Plant Blast Deemed Accidental

Published on Chem.Info (<http://www.chem.info>)

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Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Federal investigators say a deadly explosion at a military flare plant in West Tennessee was an accident and not caused by a criminal act.

In a news release, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives says Saturday's explosion at the Kilgore Flares plant in Toone occurred in a mixing room.

Officials say the explosion severely burned worker Michael Chism on more than 90 percent of his body. Chism was hospitalized and died on Monday.

Kilgore makes air and naval decoy flares for the military. Records show that six people have died in explosions or fires at the plant since 1993.

According to its website, Kilgore has a 264-acre plant and a 242-acre test site in Toone, about 60 miles east-northeast of Memphis. Kilgore is owned by Chemring Group PLC.

Source URL (retrieved on 01/26/2015 - 5:38pm):

http://www.chem.info/news/2014/02/tn-plant-blast-deemed-accidental?qt-most_popular=1