



Friday, September 11, 2020

Statement on Hurricane Shutdown and Startup Process

When preparing for or recovering from any natural event, such as a hurricane, the top priority of any refinery or chemical plant is the safety of people - our workforce and our neighbors.

- As part of the focus on safety, these facilities work to minimize any potential environmental impact. That includes air emissions. One way to minimize the impact is the use of flares to destroy emissions.
- Flaring is an approved way to safely relieve pressure during a unit shutdown and is considered an industry “best practice.” These controlled releases are reported to state and federal regulatory authorities.

Our industry’s storm preparedness plans are flexible to adapt to changing external conditions.

Because shutdowns are complex processes that must be carefully performed in phases over multiple days, many companies and plants initiated precautionary operational adjustments before the arrival or known path of Hurricane Laura.

These proactive steps were taken to allow for continued operations while simultaneously preparing facilities to expedite the disciplined shutdown process and minimize potential excess emissions, in the event those activities became necessary in response to Hurricane Laura.

- While shutdowns must occur at times, those decisions are carefully planned, given the importance of our operations and products to national security and our nation’s needs for fuel, health care supplies, medicines, disinfectants, cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE) for first responders and healthcare professionals.
- Chemical plants and refineries are critical and complex operations. Their shutdown and restart must follow detailed guidelines to ensure the safety of everyone involved and nearby.

Following a major event such as a hurricane, the restart process requires that the plant perform a thorough review of all equipment to look for damage and to ensure that all equipment is working properly. This process can take many days, and longer if equipment has been damaged.