



14-01

April 13, 2001

- ◆ Brazilian oil-giant Petrobras suffered another environmental setback on Thursday, April 12 when a blowout (i.e., an uncontrolled gush of gas and oil) on one of its offshore oilrigs forced the evacuation of workers and spilled oil into the sea. The company said that oil leaked from a pipe during tests of a well in about 700 feet of water. The oilrig, known as P-7, has been in operation since the 1980's and produces 13,000 barrels per day. (Source: *AP Newswire*) **Be sure to check the SCAA web site (www.scaa-spill.org) for the latest news stories on spill events!!**
- ◆ On April 9, 2001, the Koch Petroleum Group, L.P. pled guilty to covering up environmental violations at its refinery in Corpus Christi, Texas. Under the plea agreement, the company will pay a total of \$20 million - \$10 million in criminal fines, and \$10 million for special projects necessary to improve the environment in Corpus Christi. The agreement also requires Koch to successfully complete a five-year term of probation and adhere to a strict new environmental compliance program. The company was charged with criminal violations of the Clean Air Act as well as conspiracy and making false statements to the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission. (Source: *Maritime Items* and *U.S. Department of Justice Press Release*)
- ◆ **Did you know?** A lawsuit was recently filed by the state of Rhode Island's Attorney General that accuses paint manufacturers and the lead trade industry of conspiring to sell lead-based paint they knew to be harmful to human health. Inspired by recent tobacco litigation, the Attorney General is asking that the defendants be forced to fund the cleanup of lead based paint in houses throughout Rhode Island and pay the costs of treating children that have been poisoned by lead-based paint. The estimate to fund such programs extends into the billions of dollars. (Source: *Environmental Protection E-News*)
- ◆ On April 6, 2001, Alaska's governor Tony Knowles signed into law Senate Bill 16, which implements pollution prevention and response standards for large non-tank vessels and the Alaska Railroad. The legislation covers some 900 marine non-tank vessels, which includes cruise ships, cargo vessels and seafood processors – all of which carry large amounts of fuel for propulsion and not as cargo. The Alaska Railroad has routinely carried fuel as cargo, but was not covered by existing laws regarding oil spill planning. (Source: *Maritime Items* and *Office of Governor Press Release*)

- ◆ The Partnership Action Team's ("PAT's") working group on Basic Ordering Agreement ("BOA") issues will reconvene in the near future, and we want to be sure that we are made aware of any BOA-related issues our member contractors have that they would like addressed by the working group. John Parker (IMS/Parker Systems) and Mark Miller (Miller Environmental) are the SCAA representatives on the working group. Please call us at 1-313-849-2649 to relay your concerns, or send e-mail to mikes@scaa-spill.org (Mike Snyder), jparker@imsenv.com (John Parker), or mmiller@millerenv.com (Mark Miller). ***Remember – your input is vital to the success of this working group!!***

- ◆ The NPFC Funds Use Seminar scheduled for May 1-2, 2001 in Corpus Christi, Texas has been cancelled to comply with the Commandant's budget guidance ALCOAST requiring that all non-operational/non-critical travel be canceled. As of the writing of this newsletter, the NPFC is still moving ahead with the seminar scheduled for June 26-27, 2001 in Portland, Oregon. If you have any questions, please contact Jan Voorhees at the NPFC via telephone (1-202-493-6719) or e-mail (jvoorhees@ballston.uscg.mil)
- ◆ The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ("USEPA") Region 5 has filed an administrative complaint against Detroit-based R & F Metals Co., Inc. for alleged violations of the clean air, clean water, and hazardous waste regulations at the company's scrap metal processing plant. In the complaint, the USEPA is alleging that the company improperly disposed of appliances containing ozone-depleting refrigerants, failed to keep records of proper evacuation of the refrigerants, and failed to have an oil spill prevention, control, and countermeasures plan. The USEPA is proposing a penalty of \$319,836.00. The company has 30 days to respond to the complaint and request a hearing, and can request an informal conference to discuss the complaint at any time. (Source: *PR Newswire*)
- ◆ The Joint Staff, in conjunction with the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology, the Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Directorate, the National Institute of Justice, and the Department of Energy, is hosting Force Protection Equipment Demonstration III on May 8-10, 2001 at the Quantico Marine Corps Base, Virginia. Among other things, the event will showcase personal protective equipment and first responder equipment. In 1999, the event attracted 366 U.S. and foreign vendors and more than 4,000 attendees. For more information on this event, visit www.monmouth.army.mil/smc/pmpse/fped on-line. (Source: *The Beacon*)
- ◆ As you may know, the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives voted affirmatively last month to pass a joint resolution of disapproval of OSHA's final rule on ergonomics. President Bush signed the resolution into law on March 20, 2001. As such, the ergonomics regulation has no force or effect – meaning no organizations will have to comply with the rule. No state-plan states will be required to adopt any similar rule, and no further litigation over the rule's validity will be required. (Source: *ASE Bulletin*)
- ◆ **Work/Life/Health:** Did you know that the emotions associated with job over-commitment (i.e., feeling competitive, impatient, obsessed or unable to "let go" of workplace issues) can actually hinder the body's ability to dissolve blood clots and may raise your risk of heart disease? Here are some ways to combat these emotions: (1.) Step back and take a deep breath if you feel compelled to work late to finish a project; if you let a small setback cloud your mood; or if you find yourself getting impatient with a co-worker. Ask yourself – will it make a difference 5 years from now? If the answer is no – let it go! (2.) Allow yourself 20 –30 minutes midday to do whatever you want – no guilt allowed. Chat with a co-worker, read a magazine, or do nothing at all. Resist the temptation to finish up "just one more thing" at your desk. (3.) Leave your work at the office as much as possible. Establish a ritual to help you unwind when you get home – warm showers, walks, tea, etc. (Source: *Health Connection*)
- ◆ **Quote of the Week:** "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it *now*, deserves the thanks of men and women. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly; it is dearness only that gives everything its value." – Thomas Paine (1737-1809), *The American Crisis*, no. 1 [December 23, 1776]