

<b>CATEGORY:</b>	<b>Operations</b>	<b>Tank Cleaning Fire</b>
Operations Team:	<u>Piceance Production</u>	Incident date: <u>September 21, 2018</u>
Work type:	<u>Well, Pipeline &amp; Facility Operations</u>	Alert date: <u>October 10, 2018</u>
Location:	<u>C 26 NW</u>	

## C26NW Tank Cleaning Fire



### Description:

On Friday 09/21/2018 at approximately 11:35 am, a tank on the C26NW ignited a flash fire while being prepared for cleaning. No injuries occurred. The location was ESD'ed and everyone immediately evacuated and activated emergency services. The fluids had been drained from the tank. Gas monitors were in use but did not alarm. The event occurred as the crew began sliding the manway and associated tank heater assembly out of the tank. The source of ignition is not exactly known. All indications point to static discharge or a spark created by metal on metal contact as the manway/heater assembly was pulled through the sand and sludge mixture, across the bottom of the tank, and over the bolts that secure the assembly to the tank.



# Operations Alert

## Potential Contributing factors:

- As with most all other tank cleanings an amalgamation of sand and sludge could not be completely extracted from the bottom of the tank.
- A PVC stinger was used on the hydrovac that was waiting to collect any fluids that began to escape the vessel.
- Fully evacuating all flammable gases from the head space prior to removing the man way/heater and beginning the cleaning of the tank is not always possible.

## Immediate corrective action/prevention:

1. The use of non-sparking tools, such as brass pry bars will be used when freeing the mayway/heater assembly for removal.
2. The manway/heater assembly will be bonded and grounded to dissipate any static build up created by the removal of the assembly
3. When the potential for static ignition is identified, hydrovac operators will insure that their trucks are grounded/bonded and their stinger and hose combinations do not have materials known to allow for the build up of static charge.
4. When cleaning tanks, air movers will be utilized in an effort to accomplish the three objective outlined below. When possible, we would request that the air movers be attached, and be in operation the night prior to the start of the tank cleaning process.
  - a. To evacuate the head space of the tank from as much LEL as possible.
  - b. To improve the air in the breathing zone of those individuals working at the manway.
  - c. To hopefully redirect any fire that may occur away from the workers at the manway and out the hatch at the top of the tank.

---

**Contact name:** Reed Koeneke

---



**For internal use and distribution to Contractors.**