

At 7:00 a.m., after Enbridge field employees verified the release, Enbridge notified the National Response Center of a crude oil leak in the company's 34-inch pipeline. This notification indicated that an unknown amount of crude oil had been released. The pipe was found to have ruptured at MP 1002.73, about 7 miles downstream of the Deer River pump station. The company then contacted local, State, and Federal officials, as well as Enbridge spill response contractors, who proceeded to the spill site. Enbridge also had right-of-way representatives contact landowners in the vicinity of the spill. At 12:09 p.m., Enbridge called the National Response Center again and updated the spill volume to 6,000 barrels of crude oil. At the time of the accident, Enbridge had not designated the area where the rupture occurred as a high-consequence area³ based on the criteria defined in 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) Part 195, "Transportation of Hazardous Liquids by Pipelines."

Emergency Response

Booms were placed in Blackwater Creek as a precaution to prevent crude oil from moving away from the spill site toward nearby waterways, including the Mississippi River. Enbridge started building a 1/4-mile-long road along the right-of-way to the spill site using wood mats. With heavy rain forecast, responders were concerned that the crude oil might spread farther and contaminate the Mississippi River. The unified command for the accident response was established and included the Cohasset Fire Department, Enbridge, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, the Minnesota Department of Emergency Management, and the Forestry Division of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

The unified command decided that the best way to prevent the crude from entering nearby waterways was to perform a controlled burn. As a precaution, the command designated 12 homes in the local area to be evacuated, and seven residents were evacuated. Later in the afternoon, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources coated the spill's perimeter with chemical fire retardant from tanker planes. After the chemical was placed, flares were shot into the crude oil to ignite the oil.

The controlled burn was ignited about 4:45 p.m. (See figure 3.) The burn created a smoke plume about 1 mile high and 5 miles long. (See figure 4.) The controlled burn lasted until about 5:00 p.m. the next day, July 5. While they monitored the fire, Enbridge personnel, firefighters, and environment authorities also monitored the spill perimeter to ensure that no crude was getting into area waterways. Reportedly, no free-flowing product reached any of the boomed areas.

³ *High-consequence area* refers to commercially navigable waterways, high population areas, concentrated population areas, or unusually sensitive areas that might be affected by an accident involving the pipeline in that area. Title 49 CFR 195.450, 195.452, and 195.6 contain the criteria for designating an area a high-consequence area for hazardous liquid pipelines.