Refuelling equipment Fatality File

Man Dies in Fuel Tank Explosion

TENSAS PARISH, La. – According to State Fire Marshal deputies, they've concluded their investigation into the cause of a fuel tank explosion that claimed the life of a dispensing truck operator.

Per the SFM deputies, on December 29, 2020 around 2:00 PM, the District #1 Tensas Fire Protection team responded to a report of an explosion off of Hogue Road in Newellton. Firefighters say they arrived on scene where a fuel tank had exploded, killing the operator and setting fire to a passenger truck as well as nearby machinery.

Authorities say official identification is pending autopsy by the Tensas Parish Coroner's Office, however, the victim is believed to be a 56-year-old man from Newellton.

After investigating the scene and reviewing surveillance video, investigators determined the explosion occurred while the victim was fueling a tank on the property which was being used to power construction equipment. The official cause of the fire currently remains undetermined, although SFM investigators are unable to rule out a static electricity ignition of the fuel as it was being dispensed.

Authorities say they would like to remind all Louisiana residents to place fuel containers on the ground when refilling them as this can reduce the potential danger of static electricity. In addition, they also would like to advise you to avoid smoking or using electronic devices while refueling vehicles and/or containers.