



SHARP START



July 31 — Every Alarm Has a Purpose

Contractor was power washing the extractor when they found a pocket of hexane which set off the alarms which indicated there is a hexane leak.	Got everyone to evacuate the extraction building and out to the parking lot.
---	---

Alarms aren't meant to interrupt your work...

They're meant to protect your life.

While power washing the extractor, a contractor disturbed a pocket of hexane vapor that activated the area's gas detection system. The alarm indicated the possible presence of a flammable atmosphere, requiring immediate action.

Rather than assuming the alarm was a malfunction or trying to finish the task, work stopped immediately and employees followed established emergency procedures until the area could be evaluated and declared safe.

It's easy to become familiar with alarms, especially in facilities where they are tested or occasionally activate for unexpected reasons. However, every alarm should be treated as real until proven otherwise. The few minutes spent responding appropriately are insignificant compared to the consequences of ignoring a warning that turns out to be genuine.

Emergency procedures only work when everyone responds quickly, calmly, and consistently.

Hazards

- Flammable vapor release
- Fire and explosion hazards
- Hazardous atmosphere
- Failure to respond to alarms
- Delayed evacuation
- Complacency toward warning systems

Words of Wisdom

Alarms are designed to warn us before an incident occurs. Never assume an alarm is "just a false alarm." Stop work, follow established procedures, and allow the situation to be evaluated before returning to the area.

Pause and Think

- How should you respond when a gas detection alarm activates?
- Why can familiarity with alarms lead to complacency?
- What could happen if someone ignores or delays responding to an alarm?
- Are you familiar with your site's emergency response and evacuation procedures?
- How can your actions during an emergency help protect both yourself and your coworkers?

Closing Thought

The best emergency response is the one that happens immediately. Every alarm deserves your attention, every time. Treat it seriously, follow the plan, and never assume someone else will respond for you.

See Something • Say Something • Do Something