

Bitumen Emulsion Spill

An incident occurred when a Bitumen Emulsion Tanker arrived to discharge into an Emulsion Tanker in a storage depot. Before the transfer process the operative connected the pipework to the delivery truck and opened the top hatch to inspect the contents. The process of transfer started and continued for 25 minutes, after which the pipework started to shake indicating the tank was also emptying. The operative instructed the delivery driver to wait until the top hatch was closed before the pipes were cleared.

The operative climbed on top of the tanker and instructed the delivery driver to cease transfer. During this process the hatch was not fully closed and the delivery driver failed to immediately switch off the transfer, reverting to the emergency shut off valve. Unfortunately, the tanker blew air through the lines and sprayed bitumen emulsion through the top hatch. As the operative tried to close the lid it created a spray off emulsion over the lower half of the operative, over the tanker and on the surrounding streetlighting columns. The operative was unharmed and the spillage was quickly dealt with in the depot.

This incident could have caused severe injuries to the driver and caused significant environmental damage.



This safety alert has been prepared by the RSTA. Completed forms for adding to the RSTA website should be submitted to Kathy@rsta-uk.org further information regarding this safety alert please email Kathy or phone **01902 824 325**