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News Release

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Update 5:00 p.m.: Fire in the North section of the site

On March 3, 2021, at 9:30 a.m., a product release of methyl diethanolamine and oxogas as well as a subsequent fire occurred in a plant in the North section of the BASF SE site in Ludwigshafen. The cause is still under investigation.

One employee was sent to the site clinic for observation and has since returned to the plant.

A maximum of 650 kg of methyl diethanolamine and 50 kg of diethanolamine, which is a decomposition product of methyl diethanolamine, leaked into the Rhine via cooling water ducts. Both substances are classified as slightly hazardous to water (water hazard class WGK1). Due to the quantities released and the dilution of the products in the Rhine River, it is not expected that this release will have any harmful effects on aquatic organisms. As a precautionary measure, the Ministry of Environment of Rhineland-Palatinate has issued a “Rhine information” for residents and businesses along the Rhine.

The fire was extinguished by 1:40 p.m. The site fire department is still on site to support safety and repair measures in the plant.

Excess gases are being burned by flares as intended, which means that the flares may burn visibly over the next few days.

The respective authorities have been informed.

The safety data sheet for methyl diethanolamine contains the following classification:

- Causes serious eye irritation.

The safety data sheet for oxogas contains the following classifications:

- Contains gas under pressure; may explode if heated.
- Extremely flammable gas.
- Toxic if inhaled.
- May cause harm to the unborn child.
- Causes damage to organs (blood) through prolonged or repeated exposure.

The safety data sheet for diethanolamine contains the following classifications:

- Harmful if swallowed.
- Causes skin irritation.
- Causes serious eye damage.
- Suspected of damaging fertility or the unborn child.
- May cause damage to organs through prolonged or repeated exposure (swallowing).