



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region**

Notice No. 115

July 18, 1983

OCS Operations Safety Alert

Fire

A pipeline pump engine on an offshore production platform caught fire when natural gas leaking from a fitting on the fuel supply line ignited. Sparks were observed around the engine just prior to the fire, and the source of ignition is believed to be a faulty low-tension ignition system. Another possible source of ignition could be engine backfire through the carburetor. The fire destroyed the sight glass on the engine oil reservoir tank and related plastic oil hoses around the engine and ignited motor oil which added to the fire. The fire caused approximately \$5,000 damage to the equipment. There were no injuries.

In order to prevent a recurrence of this type of accident, the following precautions are recommended:

1. Low tension ignition systems should be checked periodically for loose connections between the metal sheath surrounding the electrical cable and the ground connection to the engine.
2. Gas fittings or fuel supply lines should be checked frequently for leaks.
3. All oil supply lines should be changed to stainless steel or flexible metal lines to prevent the spread of fire.

[signed] D.W. Solanas

Regional Supervisor

Offshore Operations Support

Gulf of Mexico OCS Region