

Morrow, Kirk

From: Morrow, Kirk
Sent: Saturday, February 13, 2021 8:31 PM
To: NDEQ Media Appraisal
Cc: Pomajzl, Mark; Schumacher, Ross; Michl, Greg; Heil, Neal
Subject: RE: RE: Release of Thin Stillage and Cattle Manure from Digester at AltEN LLC, IIS # 84069, RA #021221-NH-0845

Update:

USEPA OSC Ferguson and I were at/near site from 1520 until 1830 hours. We had a meeting with AltEn Reps (Ken Peterson, Scott Tingelhoff and Mary Tingelhoff. We then were escorted to various places on and off the site the we requested to see.

We met with USEPA's START contractor and took water and sediment samples for pesticides:

- At the point of release,
- at the initial dam site on Mead Cattle property,
- At the dam/culvert site on UN-L property
- At Road H.

The tank is likely nearly empty (estimated that 4 million gallons of waste discharged). Waste was still warm and easily identifiable even at Road H. Activities were suspended due to darkness and weather. USEPA plans to return to the area southeast of the plant tomorrow.

I will prepare a much better report on Monday. Feel free to call my cell (402-890-0082) should you require any information before then.

Sincerely,

Kirk Morrow, P.G.
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From: Heil, Neal <neal.heil@nebraska.gov>
Sent: Saturday, February 13, 2021 3:52 PM
To: NDEQ Media Appraisal <NDEQ.MediaAppraisal@nebraska.gov>
Cc: Morrow, Kirk <kirk.morrow@nebraska.gov>; Pomajzl, Mark <mark.pomajzl@nebraska.gov>
Subject: FW: RE: Release of Thin Stillage and Cattle Manure from Digester at AltEN LLC, IIS #84069, RA #021221-NH-0845

All,

Mark Pomajzl and I met at AltEn today to monitor activities taken by AltEn in response to the release of thin stillage and manure. The digester which suffered the leak appears to have, for the most part, emptied itself. There was some flow yet from the vessel, however the rate of release was probably no more than about 10 gallons per minute. We asked the two AltEn representatives we encountered what was being done to prevent a similar release (broken pipe due to



freezing) from the other digester in light of the forecast for even colder weather. The AltEn representatives stated that insulation and a heat lamp had been placed over the piping on the digester that had not had a leak. We asked if the second digester contained thin stillage and manure. We were told it does. We observed the insulation over the piping as described by the AltEn employee (see attached photo). We also observed liquid leaking from a fitting near the top of the digester that had not had a release that would suggest that this digester is nearly full to capacity (see attached photo).

Mark and I checked downstream of the digester for the presence of spilled material. We observed liquid we believe to be spilled materials at the locations depicted on the attached Google Earth image identified as Culverts A, B, C, and D (see attached photos). We did not observe liquid at the Culvert E (under County Road G between Road 7 and Road 8). The distance between the digester and the last observed liquid we believe was spilled material is about 3 miles.

The AltEn representatives we encountered were working to add dirt to a dam constructed just upstream of Culvert A. The dam had been constructed of plastic sheeting, hay bales, earth, and concrete rip-rap. There was significant flow downstream of the culvert; suggesting the dam was not effective in stopping the flow of spilled material through the culvert at that location. We were told a contractor is bringing equipment from Kansas that will be used to pump spilled material from Culvert A back to the AltEN lagoon(s).

I attempted to contact AltEn representative Scott Tingelhoff, but he did not answer and his voice mailbox is full. Kirk Morrow and EPA Region VII OSC Doug Ferguson are meeting at the facility this afternoon. Mark Pomajzl will return to the facility tomorrow for additional observation.

I am on call until 8:00 am Monday. I can be reached, if needed, on the NDEE ER Duty Cell Phone at (402)-430-7896.

Neal Heil
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