



Texas City Explosion - Archive of past b

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Lawyer: BP to settle Texas City explosion lawsuits

By JUAN A. LOZANO
Associated Press

GALVESTON — A lawyer representing more than 100 plaintiffs who sued BP PLC over the deadly Texas City refinery explosion said today he expects all his cases to be settled within 10 days.

The settlements would mean BP Chief Executive John Browne would not have to give a deposition in the 52 federal cases against the company. However, a decision is pending on whether he would be deposed in state court.

A judge last week ordered Browne's deposition in the federal lawsuits stemming from the March 2005 blast that killed 15 people and injured 170 others.

Tony Buzbee, the attorney representing the 52 federal cases as well as 59 more pending in state court, said three other cases were settled today and that he expects the rest to be finalized in 10 days.

"I think my clients are going to do great and I'm very happy," Buzbee said. "If I wasn't, I wouldn't settle the cases I would assure you."

Kenneth Tekell, an attorney representing BP, said the company has settled 950 lawsuits.

"We have more cases we are continuing to try to settle," Tekell said. "We are attempting to get everything settled."

State District Judge Susan Criss heard arguments today about whether Browne should give a deposition in the state court lawsuit filed by Eva Rowe, whose parents, James and Linda Rowe, were killed in the blast. Criss was set to hear additional arguments Wednesday before making a decision on the trial set to begin next month.

The Texas City blast occurred when faulty sensors did not warn of gathering vapors near a unit that boosts the level of octane in gasoline. The vapors ignited as the unit was starting up.

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