



Texas City Explosion - Archive of past b

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Contract worker sues BP

He wants details about possible leak in Texas City

By **BRETT CLANTON**

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A contract worker sued BP Monday to try to force the British oil giant to release information about a possible leak at its Texas City refinery, after 100 workers complained of illness last week.

But so far, BP has not been able to find any evidence of a leak.

The lawsuit, filed in a Galveston federal court, accuses the company of trying to cover up the latest in a "series of blunders" in Texas City and asks the court to give BP 10 days to identify the "toxic substance" that sickened workers.

On Thursday night, workers doing repairs and upgrades on an oil-processing unit, which was shut down since before Hurricane Rita in 2005, reported feeling ill, BP said.

They complained of eye irritation and nausea and were taken to two area hospitals, and most were released within hours, the company said.

BP spokesman Scott Dean would not comment directly on the suit. But he said Monday the company has done a number of air tests since Thursday, and "none have come back with anything."

The lawsuit filed Monday challenges BP's claim. It was brought by Aaron Wilson Garner, a contract worker with Houston's HydroChem Industrial Services.

HydroChem officials could not be reached for comment late Monday evening.

Garner's attorney, Anthony Buzbee, said Garner has experienced severe headaches, dizziness and trouble sleeping since the incident. Buzbee said he is representing 20 workers "so far" in the matter.

"Mostly, what the guys are hunting is information," he said.

BP's Texas City plant has been under scrutiny since a March 2005 blast killed 15 workers. The company has also reported four mishaps since the beginning of the year.

Though initial air tests turned up nothing, Dean said the company is awaiting the results of more thorough tests in Texas City.

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