CCPS
An AIChE Industry Technology Alliance

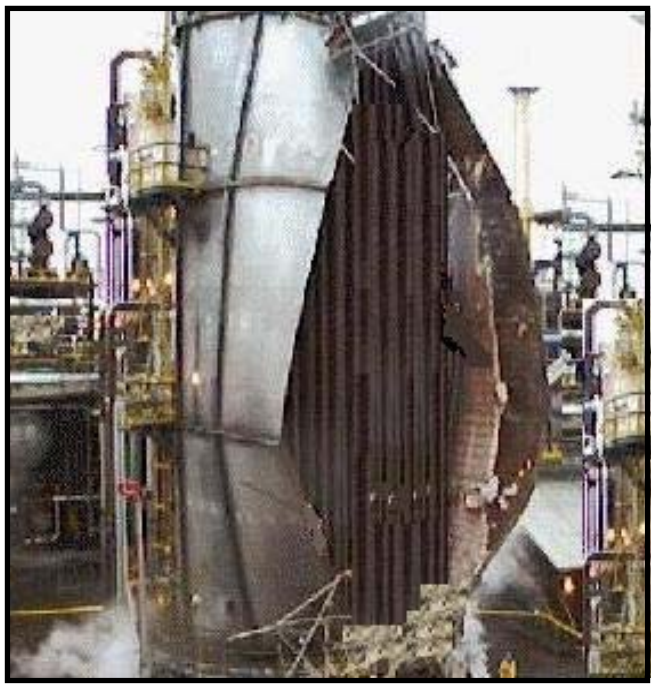
Process Safety Beacon

Sponsored by AIChE

Messages for Manufacturing Personnel

June 2003

Interlocked for a Reason…



…a Very Good Reason !

What Can You Do?

- Always use interlocks and other protective systems as they are intended to be used.
- Make sure that they are properly calibrated and receive needed maintenance so that they work when needed.
- Never disable an interlock or other protective device unless a Management of Change has been completed and approved.
- Follow established start up procedures. If they are not correct, tell your supervisor and get them corrected.
- Don't make untested or unapproved changes ***just this one time*****.**

Here's What Happened:

This heater was severely damaged during start up as a result of a fire box explosion. The operator had some difficulty with the instrumentation and decided to complete the start up by bypassing the interlocks. This allowed the fuel line to be commissioned with the pilots out. The main gas valve was opened and gas filled the heater. Then… ***K A B O O M***, the heater exploded destroying the casing and damaging several tubes. Fortunately, no one was injured.

Why Did this Happen?

The operator thought that he could speed up the job by shortcutting some of the "unnecessary" things in the start up procedure. He misjudged the importance of the interlocks. He thought they could be by-passed…***just this one time***, but he was wrong. **They were important …… this time and every time!**

PSID Members—check the following incidents--*137, *149, *317 and *343.

Every Protective Device has a Purpose. Don't Defeat it !

Contact us at ccps@aiche.org or 212-591-7319.