OSHA News Release

2008 - 04/15/2008 - U.S. Department of Labor's OSHA fines Valero Energy Corp. in Port Arthur, Texas, more than $100,000 for alleged safety violations

OSHA Regional News Release

U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Public Affairs

Region 6

Region 6 News Release: OSHA-08-510-DAL
Tuesday, April 15, 2008
Contact: Diana Petterson Elizabeth Todd
Phone: 972-850-4709 972-850-4710

U.S. Department of Labor's OSHA fines Valero Energy Corp. in Port Arthur, Texas, more than $100,000 for alleged safety violations

PORT ARTHUR, Texas -- The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has cited Valero Energy Corp. and proposed penalties totaling $101,750 for alleged safety violations.

OSHA issued the citations alleging 13 serious, two repeat and one other-than-serious violation following an investigation that began Oct. 16, 2007, at the company's Port Arthur refinery. The inspection was initiated as part of OSHA's National Emphasis Program for petroleum refineries. Valero, headquartered in San Antonio, has about 830 employees at its Port Arthur facility.

"We are pleased that Valero has expressed a willingness to take quick, corrective actions in resolving the safety and health violations," said Dean McDaniel, OSHA's regional administrator in Dallas.

Serious violations include failing to: implement accurate process safety information, provide employees with accurate operating procedures, have an adequate system in place to advance recommendations from process hazard analysis and correct equipment deficiencies. A serious violation is one with potential to cause death or serious physical harm to employees when the employer knew or should have known of the hazard.

The repeat violations address the company's failure to implement inspection and testing procedures that follow OSHA's standards and regulations. Repeat violations are issued when an employer previously has been cited for the same, or a substantially similar, violation that has become a final order.

The company has 15 business days from receipt of the citations to comply, request an informal conference with OSHA's area director in Houston, or contest the citations and penalties before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

Employers and employees with questions about workplace safety and health can contact OSHA's Houston South Area Office at 281-286-0583. A toll-free hotline at 800-321-6742 may be used to report workplace accidents, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to employees.

OSHA operates a vigorous enforcement program, conducting more than 39,000 inspections in fiscal year 2007 and exceeding its inspection goals in each of the last eight years. In fiscal year 2007, OSHA found nearly 89,000 violations of its standards and regulations.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace for their employees. OSHA's role is to promote the safety and health of America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards; providing training, outreach and education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual process improvement in workplace safety and health. For more information, visit www.osha.gov.

# # #