



www.micro-blaze.com

800-626-6598

713-691-6468

Cleaning Up the Devine, Texas Train Wreck

On June 22, 1997, two freight trains collided on a highway overpass in the small, arid town of Devine, approximately 40 miles southwest of San Antonio, Texas. An estimated 250-750 gallons of diesel was discharged from the wreck, with a portion burning off from the explosion and the rest mixing with leaking engine oils and dropping into two storm water drains on either side of the highway below.



The fouled storm drains run southward along the highway, a main thoroughfare for the town. A mile from the impact site, the lines turn under the road, and open out into a paved road area that is used as an open storm line for the infrequent rains that visit the area.

This road slopes towards the southwest, away from the town, turning into a small spillway that allows storm water runoff to empty into a freshwater creek. Unfortunately, heavy rains were occurring the night of the wreck, carrying off the contaminants into the storm lines and into the creek.

Verde Environmental was contacted the morning after the wreck and responded with four 55-gallon drums of Micro-Blaze[®] Emergency Liquid Spill Control. The ditches and streets along the railroad tracks surrounding the entire wreckage site were immediately sprayed down with a 3% solution to alleviate the fire and ignition hazards. The solution was left on the street surface for 15-30 minutes and then thoroughly rinsed with high pressure washers and vacuumed for disposal. No other remediation was determined to be

needed on those places.

At the main source of contamination, the storm-drain openings were sealed to prevent further leakage out to the open roadway. The roadway was blocked at several street points and at the spillway to the creek. The mixture of engine oils and rainwater had blended to create a thick, acrid smelling, foamy ooze that spread over the open road that was the open storm line, another potential fire and safety hazard for the area. This area was also over sprayed repeatedly with a 3% solution throughout the day and night with vacuum trucks along the roadway picking up the residual wash-off.

An additional three drums of Micro-Blaze® Emergency Liquid Spill Control was brought in the next day for use at the starting point of the contamination - the storm drain openings below the railway overpass. The gooey oil mixture inside the lines, treated with Micro-Blaze® Emergency Liquid Spill Control earlier, was flushed from underground by water from water trucks where it too was vacuumed as it came outside at the entrance to the roadway.

The flushing and vacuuming process was repeated several times that day to prevent any more contamination running into the creek. Later testing of the discharge water after finishing the flushing process **showed contaminants at or below acceptable levels.**
