

THE UPDATE

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The goal of our monthly update is to provide information on timely matters that may impact your practice and professional interests.



AUDITS MANDATED FOR CALIFORNIA OIL FACILITIES

Upgrades to California building codes could cost oil terminals as much as \$5 million per facility in engineering audit fees to comply with new requirements issued under Marine Oil Terminal and Maintenance Standards according to the California State Lands Commission and which have to be completed by a 8/6/08 deadline. The new criteria and requirements focus on seismic motion, manifold stability, the use of gangway towers and uploading arms, structural rehabilitation, mooring and berthing analyses, tsunami threats, fire, mechanical and electrical related fires and structural integrity. San Francisco operated Golden Eagle and Conoco-Phillips refineries have estimated their audit costs alone to will be in the range of \$15 to \$20 million.



BECHTEL'S "BIG DIG" PROBLEMS COMPOUND

A memo surfaced recently alleged to have been sent to Modern Continental Construction Co. Senior Project Manager Robert Coutts from on-site safety officer John Keaveney which called "the bolts holding up the ceiling of the Interstate connector into question". Even Keaveney's superiors were alleged to have rebutted him; stating that the method was "time-tested". Also officials at Bechtel/Parsons Brinkerhoff were alleged to have stated that the ceiling would hold in spite of Keaveney's and other ironworker concerns that the tunnel ceiling would not hold with the bolt system being used due to the excessive water pressure above. Additionally Keaveney had reported seeing water dripping from where the holes were drilled in the concrete even before the insertion of the enabling bolts and epoxy. A tunnel ceiling section subsequently failed, killing a driver.



LESSON STILL SOUGHT IN N.Y.DAM'S COLLAPSE

The failure of Hadlock Pond Dam in Washington County, N.Y. was a major topic at the recent National Conference of Dam Safety Engineers held earlier this month. The incident resulted in approximately 1 billion gallons of water flooding neighboring Fort Ann and the destruction of 6 homes. Experts from N.Y. including engineers from Clough Harbor & Associates, hired by N.Y. to conduct a probe of the failure believe a problem in the dam's surface led to the erosion. However a spokesman for the N.Y. Department of Environmental Conservation stated that "the investigation was not able to establish its conclusion with complete certainty" .



U.S. COE CALL N. CA LEVEES INTO QUESTION

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) recently removed its approval of levees that safeguard portions of Sacramento claiming newer studies by the federal and local governments reveal "levee weaknesses". The Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency has launched a \$350 million initiative to overhaul the suspect levee system based on a higher design criterion: employing a 200 rather than its former 100-year flood protection status. Approximately 20 miles of levees around Natomas will now need to be repaired.

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