

Boiler explodes at Suncor

No one injured, but plant evacuated following explosion, small fire

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Sarnia Sun

Suncor officials were monitoring the extent of damage last night from an exploded steam boiler that sent shock waves through the city.

No one was injured in the incident, but homes several miles away were shaken from the blast's impact — even Mayor Mike Bradley said he felt something in his downtown Sarnia apartment.

The steam boiler in Suncor's Plant One exploded just after 4 p.m. after a "steam outage" had been experienced at the refinery, confirmed Jason Vaillant, a Suncor spokesperson.

"We were bringing down a number of our operating units after the steam outage, and in the process of bringing down one of those units, the steam boiler exploded."

Vaillant said an emergency alarm was immediately sounded, and Suncor personnel "responded quickly to bring the situation under control."

As well, support was offered by Sarnia's fire service.

"We are going to start an immediate investigation," Vaillant said, less than an hour after the explosion.

He wouldn't speculate on the extent of damages, or how the refinery's operations might be impacted.

"We'll be investigating that tonight."

Vaillant said workers were sent home for the day, but not before "we could ensure that things were safe and stable."

One of those workers was Petrolia resident Corey ...



Gord Bowes/Sarnia Sun

Vehicles leave the Suncor plant shortly before an "all clear" was announced following an explosion of a steam boiler at the site. No one was injured.

just showed up for his 4 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. shift.

A safety advisor with a Suncor contractor, Bell said he was just preparing to start work when the explosion rocked his work trailer.

"It really shook our trailer," he said.

Bell was to work in Suncor's Genesis Grass Roots project, but said the area was evacuated.

"We all went to an evacuation point in the lunchroom trailer and were told to ..."

apartment when

he felt part of the explosion's impact.

"I knew something had happened because I live downtown and I could see something had happened, but wasn't sure what it was."

"I certainly felt something."

Bradley said the explosion is a rare occurrence for Suncor and the Chemical Valley.

"It's a huge chemical complex, and Sarnia is able to deal with this," he said.

Suncor has notified the Ontario Ministry of the Environment.