

## **Arkema Statement on Final Report by U.S. Chemical Safety Board on Crosby Incident**

May 24, 2018

Arkema is pleased that after an eight-month-long investigation, the Chemical Safety Board (CSB) report accurately depicts the unforeseeable nature of the situation Arkema faced during Hurricane Harvey. The CSB report shows that Arkema had multiple policies and safeguards in place to address the risks associated with hurricanes, that Arkema followed those policies, and that our employees went to extraordinary lengths, under difficult conditions, to maintain safety at our site during the “most significant tropical cyclone rainfall event in the history of the continental United States.” The CSB report makes clear that Arkema employees took precautions to prepare for Hurricane Harvey well before it made landfall, even though the site was not projected to be in the direct path of the storm. The report notes that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration estimates show that the rainfall during Harvey had less than a one-in-one-thousand-year likelihood of occurring.

The CSB found that the Arkema Crosby plant has a written Hurricane Preparedness Plan detailing protective measures to be taken before, during and after a hurricane. The report notes that the plant has an Emergency Response Plan that addresses many potential emergency situations, and that the plant has other written policies detailing the safe handling procedures for its products. Importantly, the CSB report shows that Arkema followed those plans. In particular, the CSB noted that Arkema had multiple safety systems in place to ensure that organic peroxide products were kept cold. In fact, the report states Arkema’s systems were sufficient to withstand a 100-year flood; and, if the floodwaters had only reached a 500-year flood level, the incident likely would have been prevented based on Arkema’s existing policies and procedures. Unfortunately, as we now know, the floodwaters from Harvey were “unprecedented” and extended well above the 500-year flood level.

The CSB report makes clear that Arkema notified emergency responders that there would be organic peroxide fires days before any fires broke out. As stated in the report, “Arkema warned the Unified Command about the hazards of organic peroxide decomposition and alerted them that emergency responders who may be exposed to this material should wear personal protective equipment and self-contained breathing apparatus.”

The CSB report also makes a number of important recommendations for future actions by Arkema, as well as the chemical industry in general. First, after an extensive review of regulations and guidance on flood planning, the CSB concluded that at the time of Harvey – and today – the standards specified in the applicable industry guidelines would not have been sufficient to avert the incident. With respect to Arkema, the CSB notes the “positive actions” Arkema has taken since Harvey, including the commissioning of a site elevation survey for the Crosby Plant, as well as a hydrological study to understand flooding during hurricanes. Finally, the CSB recommends the development of detailed guidance by government and industry on how companies should evaluate and address future extreme weather events, like Harvey. Arkema looks forward to receiving such guidance.

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