



NoPort News

A newsletter of the North Carolina International Terminal

All the news that prints to fit.

February 16, 2010

Another Unfortunate Event

Hazardous and explosive materials are handled at North Carolina's Ports under all safety and regulatory requirements.

–North Carolina State Ports Authority

If there is a wrong way to do something, then someone will do it.

–Capt. Edward A. Murphy, Jr., USAF

In our recent list of unfortunate events regarding ports and cargo ships, we overlooked the worst industrial accident in the country's history—the Texas City disaster in 1947.

The ***SS Grandcamp*** was taking on a load of ammonium nitrate, a common fertilizer, in Texas City, near Galveston, when the material spontaneously caught fire. The fire could not be extinguished, and the ship exploded. That spread the fire to the nearby ***High Flyer***, also loaded with ammonium nitrate, and that exploded.

The explosions destroyed the seaport and killed 581 people. Windows were blown out in Houston, 40 miles away. Read about it at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas_City_Disaster.

As the State Ports Authority says, hazardous and explosive materials are handled at ports on a routine basis. What of the proposed North Carolina International Terminal at Southport?

The preliminary engineering studies call for storage of 47,680 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEU), about 28,600 containers with the usual mix of 40-foot and 20-foot containers.

Of that space, 4840 TEU would be dedicated to hazardous materials. That is about 2900 containers. At typical loadings, about 60,000 tons—120,000,000 pounds—of hazardous material in those containers. (The figures for container storage capacity are in the CH2M Hill, Inc., *Port Planning and Terminal Concept* report, on our Web site under State Ports Authority documents.)

All of this next to a nuclear plant and an ammunition port, right here in Hurricane Alley. And those hazardous materials would move in and out of the container terminal on trucks and trains through our communities and past our schools. Along our evacuation route.

Public Meeting

On Thursday evening, March 4, at 7:00 p.m., we shall have the first of a series of public meetings of NoPort Southport NC, Inc., at the Brunswick County senior center in Smithville Crossing on North Howe Street in Southport (behind Kerr Drug and next to the Wingate). A review of what's happening and what's next. Come join us, ask questions, help out.

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