

Six Workers Injured in Tennessee Military Flare Plant Explosion

On behalf of Johnston, Moore & Thompson

- September 14, 2010

An explosion at the Kilgore Flares Co. plant in Toone, Tennessee, has resulted in at least six workers injured, three of them critically. The plant, which makes flares for military aircraft, is located approximately 75 miles northeast of Memphis.

The [industrial accident](#) was first reported shortly before noon today, September 14, but the Associated Press reports that the fire was still burning at 5:30 Eastern time.

Hardeman County Sheriff John Doolen said firefighters are holding back and allowing the fire to burn itself out because the highly combustible material used to make military flares could cause another explosion.

Authorities have not yet determined what caused the industrial accident but they have ruled out the possibility of terrorism.

Three Workers Critically Injured in the Industrial Explosion

According to the AP, three workers were brought to a Memphis hospital in critical condition. Three others were taken to a smaller hospital in Bolivar, Tennessee, in good condition.

According to County Mayor Willie Spencer, who was at the scene, the fire appears to have been contained to one building, which has been heavily damaged.

"It could have been a lot worse," he told reporters. "Any time you have an explosion ... you never know how many people are around."

In April 2001, another industrial flash fire and explosion at the same plant killed one worker. The company supplies infrared decoy flares used to counter the threat of guided missiles to B-52s.

All companies have the responsibility to provide safe working conditions -- even those working on military contracts.

As a private employer, Kilgore is responsible for providing [workers' compensation](#) coverage for its workers. Just as in any industrial or construction accident, the company could be held responsible by OSHA or the Tennessee Occupational Safety and Health Administration (TOSHA) -- or potentially through personal injury lawsuits -- if any safety violations are found during an investigation of the plant explosion.

Source:

["Sheriff: Fire at Tenn. flare plant still burning"](#) (Associated Press, September 14, 2010)