

Security Budgets at Chemical Plants on the Rise

HOUSTON--March 26, 2002--*The following is an advisory by Industrialinfo.com (Industrial Information Resources, Incorporated; Houston, Texas).*

U.S. producers of hazardous chemicals are employing very stringent rules and procedures that either limit access to their sites or scrutinize almost every item entering the plant site. Inspections of things as small and innocent as lunch boxes have been included in many security precaution programs.

There has been an overall increased awareness of security since the September 11th terrorist attacks, prompting immediate efforts by chemical producers to increase plant security. Some of the initiatives taken by producers have been to increase the number of security personnel on duty, to form task teams that monitor and analyze transportation and visitor logs, to install new surveillance equipment and automated gates for all entry points of the plant, and to require ID cards or magnetic key entry to control rooms or hazardous materials storage areas.

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has been asked by lawmakers to assess the state of the chemical industry's level of preparedness against terrorism. A report from the DOJ on whether the industry is adequately prepared, or additional measures should be mandated or regulated, is not expected to be ready until the end of 2002.

"A large number of the over 4,900 operational chemical plants in the U.S. and Canada that we are talking with on a routine basis as part of our direct market research are planning to spend as much as twice their normal security budgets within the next year in an effort to reduce terrorist risks," stated Trey Hamblet, Chemical Group Manager with Industrialinfo.com. "The smaller chemical plants stand to be affected the most by the increase in security spending."

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