



Bailey & Galyen Urges Texas Families and Workers to Understand Their Rights After Chemical Plant Fires and Explosions

Bailey & Galyen is urging Texas workers, families, and residents to understand their rights after chemical plant fires, explosions, and toxic releases.

SAN ANTONIO, TX, UNITED STATES, August 28, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Serious chemical incidents can affect workers, nearby residents, and entire communities. In addition to causing severe or fatal injuries, these emergencies may lead to evacuations, toxic exposure, property damage, lost income, and concerns about long-term health effects.

A recent Wall Street Journal analysis of data reported to the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board found that serious chemical accidents have increased nationwide. The analysis also reported that oil, gas, and chemical companies, including many operating in Texas and Louisiana, appeared among facilities with repeated incidents.

Those national findings may be especially important for Texans. Texas leads the country in petroleum refining and has a substantial petrochemical and industrial presence, particularly along the Gulf Coast. When a chemical accident occurs, the effects may extend beyond plant employees to impact contractors, nearby residents, apartment communities, schools, drivers, and families placed under shelter-in-place or evacuation orders.

Recent Texas incidents illustrate the range of people and companies that can become involved. In June 2026, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration announced more than \$3.5 million in proposed penalties against three companies following its investigation of a sulfuric acid spill response at a Channelview industrial facility. OSHA reported that the December 2025 spill released approximately 1 million gallons of sulfuric acid and resulted in multiple worker injuries.

The U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board has also reported on a May 2025 chlorine gas release at a Freeport facility. According to the agency, approximately 8,000 pounds of chlorine gas were released, one worker was seriously injured, significant property damage occurred, and the surrounding community was placed under a shelter-in-place order.

The attorneys at [Bailey & Galyen](#) are available to help workers, residents, and families understand the general legal issues that can arise after an industrial fire, explosion, or chemical

release.

Chemical Accidents Can Cause Immediate and Long-Term Harm

Chemical emergencies can develop quickly and expose workers, first responders, and surrounding communities to dangerous conditions. Depending on the substances involved and the circumstances of the incident, those affected may experience:

Burn and explosion injuries: Industrial fires and explosions can cause thermal burns, chemical burns, broken bones, crush injuries, hearing damage, traumatic brain injuries, and other serious harm.

Respiratory problems and toxic exposure: Smoke, fumes, gases, and airborne chemicals may irritate the lungs, eyes, skin, and throat. Some symptoms may appear immediately, while others may develop over time.

Work-related injuries and fatalities: Employees and contractors can be harmed by unsafe equipment, inadequate maintenance, missing protective systems, or failures to follow required safety procedures.

Evacuation and displacement: Families may be ordered to leave their homes or shelter in place, sometimes with little warning. An evacuation can lead to hotel, food, transportation, childcare, and medication expenses.

Property and financial losses: A fire, explosion, or chemical release can damage homes, vehicles, businesses, personal belongings, or land. Workers and residents can also lose income while recovering or while a facility or neighborhood remains inaccessible.

Wrongful death losses: Families who lose a loved one can face not only funeral expenses but also lost financial support, loss of companionship, and significant emotional hardship.

When a Chemical Accident Happens in Texas, the Investigation Matters

Determining how a chemical accident occurred can require a detailed review of the facility, equipment, maintenance history, operating procedures, and decisions made before and during the emergency.

Responsibility can involve more than one company. Industrial facilities frequently rely on plant operators, property owners, maintenance contractors, cleanup companies, subcontractors, equipment manufacturers, and other businesses. Each may have different responsibilities concerning workplace safety, equipment maintenance, hazardous materials, employee training, and emergency response.

Depending on the facts, investigators and attorneys may examine:

- Whether tanks, pipes, valves, pressure systems, or other equipment were properly inspected

and maintained;

- Whether corrosion, leaks, overheating, or other warning signs had previously been identified;
 - Whether employees received appropriate training, supervision, and protective equipment;
 - Whether contractors and subcontractors followed required safety procedures;
 - Whether alarms, shutdown systems, fire-suppression equipment, or emergency plans worked as intended;
 - Whether nearby workers and residents received timely warnings or evacuation instructions;
 - Whether environmental monitoring detected hazardous substances in the air, soil, or water;
- and
- Whether prior incidents, complaints, violations, or maintenance records revealed an ongoing safety concern.

Important evidence can be altered, repaired, cleaned, discarded, or lost following an industrial accident. Records, electronic data, surveillance footage, inspection documents, and physical equipment can all become relevant to understanding what happened.

Workers May Have More Than One Potential Legal Option

Workers injured in a chemical fire or explosion may have questions about workers' compensation, employer-provided benefits, medical expenses, and lost wages.

The options that are available depend on several factors, including whether the employer carries workers' compensation coverage, whether a separate company contributed to the accident, and whether defective equipment, outside contractors, property owners, or other parties were involved.

A workers' compensation claim and a claim against a separate responsible party are not necessarily the same. Industrial facilities often involve multiple employers, vendors, contractors, and equipment manufacturers. Identifying the companies involved is therefore an important part of evaluating an injured worker's situation.

Nearby Residents May Also Have Legal Questions

A person does not need to work at a chemical facility to be affected by an industrial accident. Nearby residents can experience breathing problems, evacuation costs, property damage, interruption of business operations, or concerns about possible contamination.

Chemical releases can also disrupt apartment communities, schools, roadways, and local businesses. Residents may be instructed to remain indoors, turn off air-conditioning systems, avoid certain roads, or leave the area while emergency officials evaluate the danger.

Potential claims depend on the facts and available evidence. Questions can arise regarding medical expenses, lost income, temporary housing, damaged property, cleanup costs, loss of property use, and other losses connected to the incident.

People experiencing possible exposure symptoms should seek appropriate medical care. Medical records can document when symptoms began, what conditions were identified, and what treatment was provided.

Steps Workers and Families Can Consider After a Chemical Emergency

People affected by an industrial fire, explosion, or toxic release may consider taking the following steps:

Follow emergency instructions: Pay attention to evacuation, shelter-in-place, road closure, and public health directions from local authorities.

Seek medical care when needed: Burns, respiratory symptoms, dizziness, headaches, skin irritation, hearing problems, and other conditions may require prompt evaluation.

Document what happened: When it is safe to do so, preserve photographs, videos, alerts, text messages, workplace communications, evacuation notices, and information about visible smoke, odors, debris, or property damage.

Keep records of expenses and losses: Save medical bills, hotel receipts, transportation costs, medication expenses, repair estimates, pay records, and other documents connected to the incident.

Preserve relevant work-related information: Employees may want to retain schedules, training records, safety complaints, incident reports, photographs, and communications regarding equipment or working conditions when they can lawfully do so.

Use caution before signing documents: Insurance representatives, employers, facility operators, or other parties may request statements, releases, or settlement documents. Those affected may wish to understand how a document could affect their rights before signing it.

Bailey & Galyen Is Offering Free Consultations

Bailey & Galyen offers free consultations to workers, families, and residents affected by chemical plant fires, industrial explosions, toxic releases, and related emergencies.

The firm can listen to what happened, identify general legal issues, and explain what options may be available under the circumstances. Depending on the facts, a matter might involve a workplace injury, third-party liability, burn injury, toxic exposure, wrongful death, property loss, or displacement.

People affected by a chemical accident may be dealing with medical concerns, financial strain, and unanswered questions at the same time. Call Bailey & Galyen to discuss your situation and learn more about possible next steps.

About Bailey & Galyen

One of the Lone Star State's premier consumer law firms, Bailey & Galyen has been Solving Your Legal Puzzle® for more than 40 years. With 24 locations across the state of Texas, as well as New Mexico, Colorado, and Arkansas, Bailey & Galyen provides aggressive advocacy in matters involving injury, property loss, fire and burn victims, wrongful death, and other legal matters. Known for its commitment to 100% client satisfaction, the firm has received more than 6,000 five-star reviews on Google. For more information, call (855) 810-7010 or visit www.thetexasattorney.com.

Phillip Galyen

Bailey & Galyen

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