

Pipeline ruptures crude near Caddo Lake

By Glenn Evans gevans@news-journal.com | Posted: Friday, October 17, 2014 4:00 am

Cleanup crews had recovered 1,400 barrels of crude oil by midday Thursday from a 4,000-barrel spill south of Caddo Lake in Louisiana on Monday, state agencies reported.

The spill was from a 20-inch pipeline that originates at Longview's Sunoco Logistics Partners.

The cause of the rupture, shortly before 2 p.m. Monday, is under company and state investigation as crews excavate the site.

The crude bled into a tributary feeding Caddo Lake's southern shore in Louisiana.

Three families evacuated voluntarily, because of the smell, but no injuries were reported, Louisiana State Police Spokesman Trooper Matt Harris said.

Sunoco Communications Manager Jeff Shield said Thursday afternoon that none of the crude oil had reached Caddo Lake. The tributary, Tete Bayou, empties into the lake at Hawley's Arm, a mile and a half west of Mooringsport, Louisiana.

"Caddo Lake has not been impacted," Shield said. "The pipeline has been shut down. We don't have a schedule to restart yet. The pipeline moves from Longview up to the refineries in the Midwest."

The Mid-Valley Pipeline carries crude oil from Longview to Samaria, Michigan.

Harris said the rupture site was several miles south of Caddo Lake. Cleanup, which had gone on all week, was about to get a boost as other crews completed more access roads to the bayou, he added.

"They access it (now) from two points," the trooper said. "Once they get those access roads made, they will be able to get it out much quicker."

Four thousand barrels is almost 168,000 gallons.

Harris said weather and the bayou's high bank were working in favor of the cleanup effort.

"It's several miles from Caddo Lake," he said. "The only way it could actually get out of the walls of that creek is if we had another torrential rain like we had this week."

There was no rainfall predicted in the National Weather Service's 10-day forecast Thursday.

The Environmental Protection Agency, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office were responding to the spill, state environmental agency spokesman Greg Langley said.

"As of Wednesday, they had a remediation company there with 100 workers," he added.