

Jackson farmer triggers gas leak with tractor

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BY Robert Wang

REPOSITORY STAFF WRITER

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JACKSON TWP A farmer working on his field Tuesday evening with a tractor accidentally cracked a gas valve of a gas well, triggering a gas leak that resulted in the release of noxious natural gas around Mount Pleasant Street NW and Arlington Avenue.

Jackson Township Fire Battalion Chief Ed Miller said several people in the township and in Green called 911, starting at 6:21 p.m., and reported an awful gas odor. It took township firefighters more than 35 minutes to figure out where the gas was coming from - a farm near Overwood Avenue NW, southeast of Mount Pleasant and Arlington. The loud noise of 1,500 pounds of heavily pressurized gas pouring out of a 1-inch hole of the gas well led firefighters to the source.

"It sounded like a jet engine going off," said Miller, who added that it could be heard 3/4 of a mile in each direction. "We had to cover our ears to get to it."

Miller said the gas pressure disintegrated corn in an area 30 feet wide by 100 feet long. He said if the well had been much closer than a half mile to the nearest allotment, he would have had to order a neighborhood evacuation, in case of a gas explosion. But he said there was no explosion and no one was hurt.

A Dominion East Ohio utility worker was able to shut down the gas well and stop the leak.

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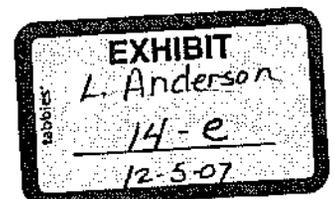
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