



TO: All Media  
Monday, August 14, 2017  
**For Immediate Release**

### **Hazardous Materials Incident, 200 Block of SE Bay Boulevard**

At 9:08 A.M., on Saturday, August 12, 2017, Newport Fire Department responded to Pacific Seafood's processing facility for leaking ammonia. Upon arrival, first responders from the Fire Department found a strong ammonia smell and vapor escaping from a room inside the plant. A plant technician informed Fire Department personnel that a valve handle broke off while he was repairing a pump in a refrigeration line. The technician was unable to shut off the flow of ammonia and was forced out of the room by rising levels of ammonia vapor.

Newport Police Department and Pacific West Ambulance also assisted on scene. Newport Fire Department responded with a fire engine, water tender, two chief officers and 12 firefighters. There were over 30 responders in total. Using guidelines from the U.S. Department of Transportation, fire crews initially set up a 1,000-foot safety perimeter. Later, the perimeter was able to be reduced based on readings received from the hazardous materials team. Newport firefighters initially made entry using self-contained breathing apparatus to attempt to shut off the flow of gas. However, they had to withdraw due to the high levels of gas in the room. At this point, the Incident Commander called for assistance from the hazardous materials (HAZMAT) team. Ten HAZMAT specialists from Region 13 HAZMAT responded.

The HAZMAT team, in full encapsulating suits, were able to shut off the flow of ammonia and began to ventilate the room using fans. The team continued to monitor conditions, and after a couple of hours were able to allow plant personnel to re-enter a portion of the facility. A hazardous

materials cleanup company removed the remaining liquid.

Newport Fire Department received mutual aid from Toledo Fire Department, Depoe Bay Fire Department, Seal Rock Fire District, and Salem Fire Department HAZMAT Team 13. As required, notification was made by incident responders and plant management staff to state and federal agencies, including the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the U.S. Coast Guard. The facility was turned over to plant personnel and Bay Boulevard was reopened around 8:30 P.M.

Newport Fire Department  
541-265-9461