

West, Texas Fertilizer Plant Explosion April 17, 2013

*District 4 Local Emergency Planning Committee
Northeast Florida Regional Council*

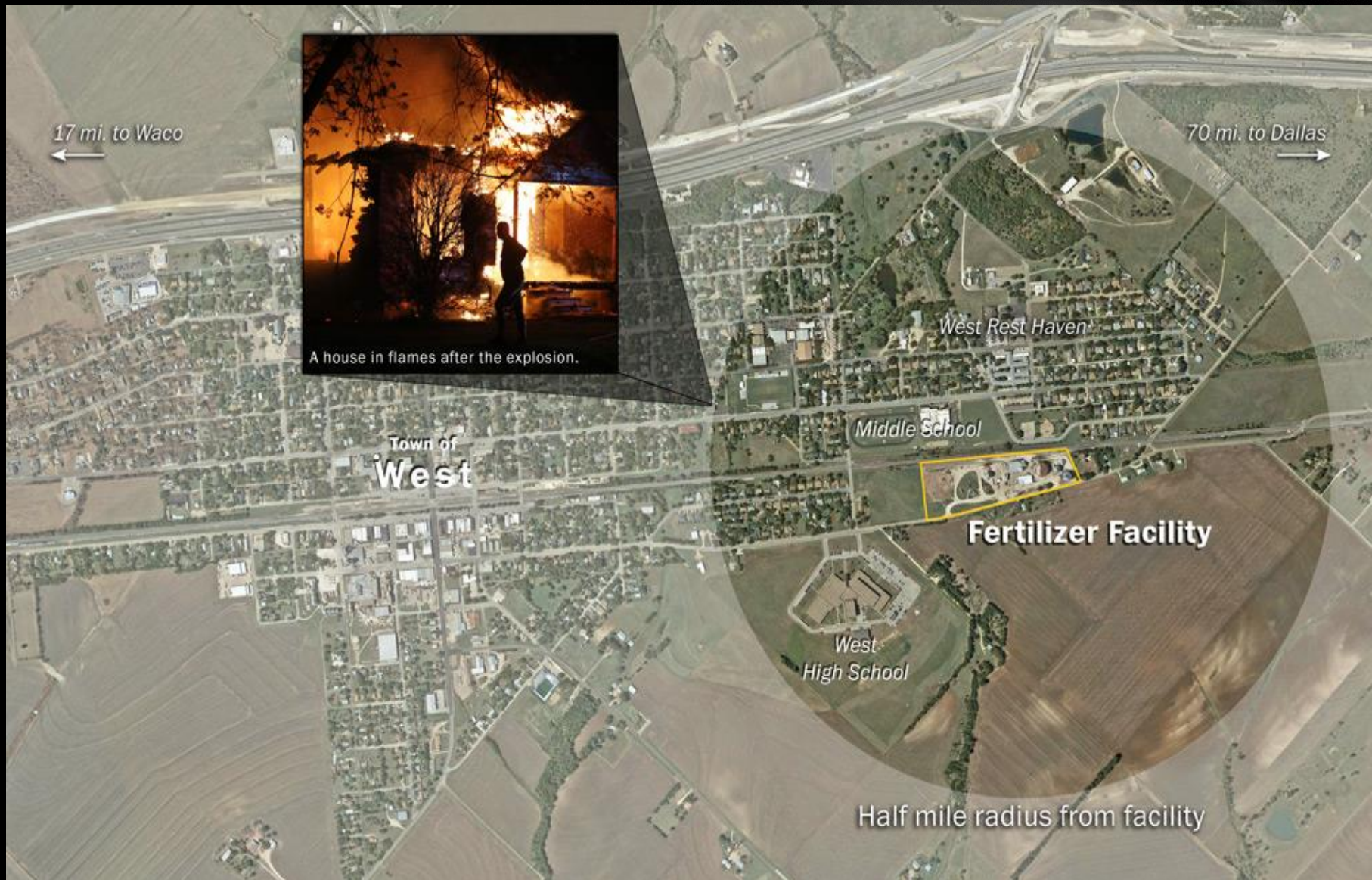
West, Texas

- 2,700 Residents
- 70 miles south of Dallas
- 20 miles north of Waco
- Predominantly a Czech farming community



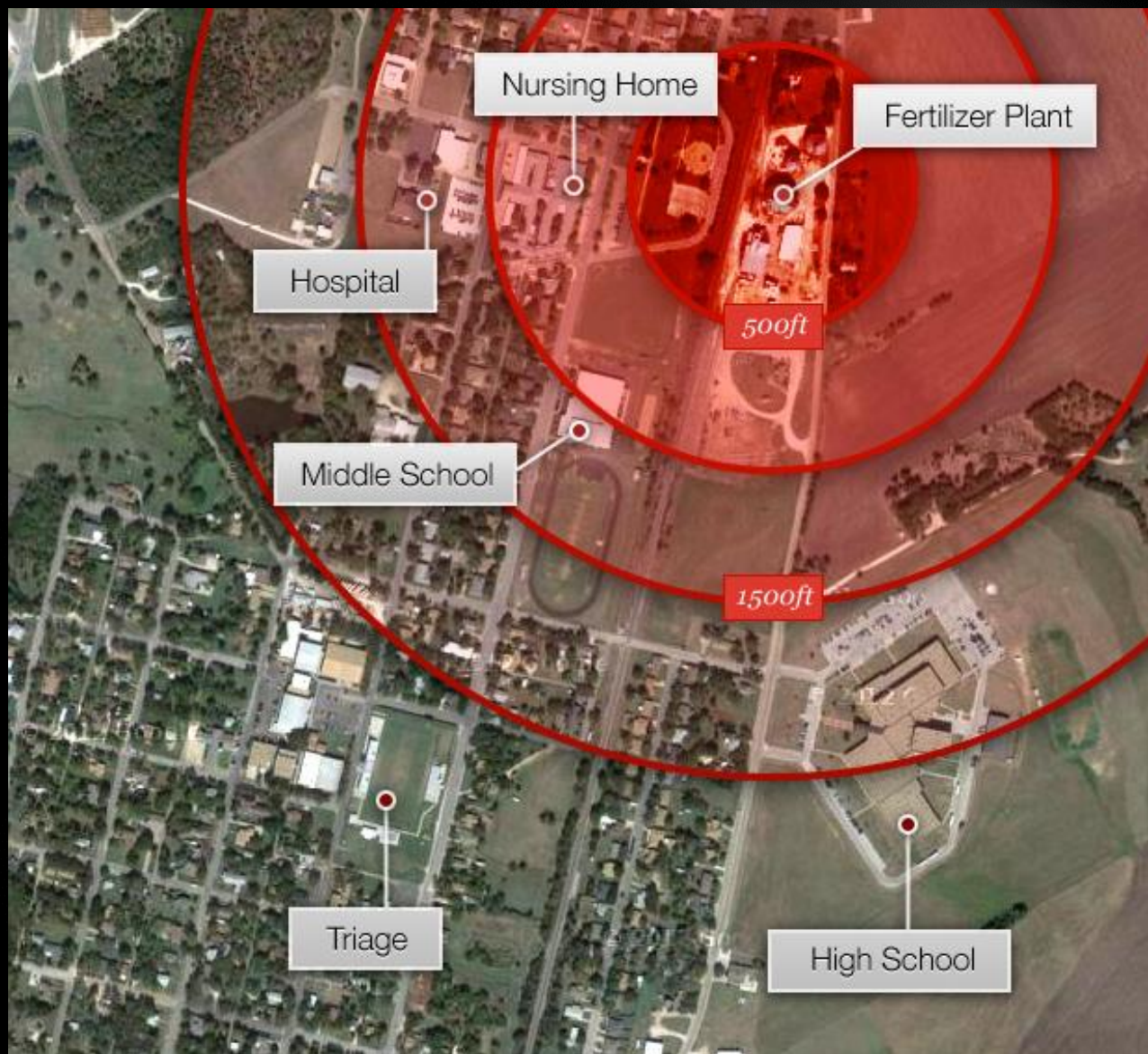


West, Texas Aerial Map



Chemical Safety Board – Blast Damage

West, Texas Explosion Proximity Map



Results of Blast @ Adair Grain, Inc.

- 15 people died (12 responders)
- 200+ injured
- \$100 million in damages
- 50+ homes were destroyed
- 50 unit apartment building gutted
- West Intermediate School destroyed
- West High School severely damaged

Chemical Safety Board - Prelim. Findings

- Explosion resulted from a fire that led to the detonation of 30 tons of Ammonium Nitrate (AN).
- The building lacked a sprinkler system or other systems to automatically detect or suppress fire. Sprinklers are only mandated for 2,500 tons of AN or more.
- Texas has not adopted a statewide fire code, and state law actually prohibits most smaller rural counties from adopting a fire code.

Chemical Safety Board - Prelim. Findings

- No Federal, State, or local standards restrict the siting of (AN) storage facilities in the vicinity of homes, schools, businesses, and health care facilities.
- West volunteer firefighters were not made aware of the explosion hazard of AN at the fertilizer facility.
- *The Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA):* exemption from hazardous chemicals reporting for “fertilizer held for sale by a retailer to the ultimate consumer.”

WFAA News Report



Current LEPC Activities

- An active SERC and LEPC that meets quarterly
- An LEPC Emergency Response Plan – Reviewed and amended annually
- Biennial Full Scale Exercise to test the Response Plan
- Hazards Analysis of facilities with EHSs on two year basis

Current LEPC Activities

- Train responders for hazardous materials response
- “How to Comply” training for facilities
- E-Plan training for electronic Tier II submission (facilities)
- E-Plan/CAMEO training for responders

Gaps: What Can We Do Better?

- Plan for ourselves. Patchwork of regulations at state and federal level but little oversight.
- Site Preplanning – Different by department, generally been reduced due to lack of funding.
- Only complete Hazards Analysis for facilities with EHSs.

Gaps: What Can We Do Better?

- Agricultural Use is typically exempt – gap in reporting.
- Responder proficiency with tools such as E-Plan and CAMEO.
- Review E-Plan for errors in facility reporting. We lack verification of information without site visits by LEPC staff or local FD.

Moving Forward

- Staff will meet with each County/Local FD to review Hazards Analysis. FD can make a determination as to what facilities require additional follow-up for preplanning.
- LEPC Staff will review E-Plan and paper Tier II's, with local responders, for facilities with chemicals that pose a community risk but do not have a designated EHS (such as AN).

Moving Forward

- Provide Hazards Analysis information from throughout the region to the three regional HazMat Teams. Interlocal agreements allow for response in each of our 7 counties.
- Offer more responder refresher courses on topics such as EPCRA, and responder hazardous materials resources such as E-Plan and CAMEO.

NPR Radio Interview – 3 Months Later



Mayor Tommy Muska with Gov. Rick Perry

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