NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

Department of Public Safety & Corrections • Public Safety Services

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Man Dies in Fuel Tank Explosion

TENSAS PARISH- State Fire Marshal (SFM) deputies have concluded their investigation into the cause of a fuel tank explosion that claimed the life of a dispensing truck operator.

Around 2 p.m. on December 29, Tensas Parish Fire Protection District #1 responded to a report of an explosion located on a property off of Hogue Road in Newellton. Firefighters arrived to find a fuel tank had exploded, killing the operator and catching fire to a passenger truck as well as nearby machinery.

While official identification is pending an autopsy by the Tensas Parish Coroner's Office, the victim is believed to be a 56-year-old man from Newellton.

Following an assessment of the scene, including reviewing surveillance video, deputies determined the explosion occurred as the victim was fueling a tank on the property that was being used to operate construction equipment needed for a road project on the property. While the official cause of this fire remains undetermined at this time, SFM investigators are unable to rule out a static electricity ignition of the fuel being dispensed.

While this incident was commercial in nature, the SFM would like to remind all Louisiana residents to always place fuel containers on the ground when filling. This would reduce the potential for static electricity to occur during refueling. In addition, it is advised to avoid smoking or using electronic devices while refueling vehicles and/or containers.

The SFM would like to thank the Louisiana State Police HazMat team, the Tensas Parish Sheriff's Office, Tensas Parish Fire Protection District #1 and the Tensas Parish Coroner's Office for their assistance with this investigation.

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