

Press release, 21 Dec 2007:

AarhusKarlshamn gives details of cause of accident on 4 December 2007

Today AarhusKarlshamn Denmark A/S sent details on the accident to the Danish Ministry of the Environment after a good two weeks' investigation.

The investigations have shown that the cause of the accidental explosion on 4 December was a metal pipe corroding through with subsequent leakage of hexane into a concrete duct and then permeating into a basement through a 30 cm thick solid exterior wall.

It has hitherto been regarded as inconceivable that there could be any hexane in that basement and the electrical systems were not spark free in contrast to other areas where hexane is normally used.

The electrical systems operate automatically and a spark from them triggered the explosion, which led to the tragic death of a member of staff when he was outside the building alongside the spot where the explosion occurred.

This is clear from the information that AarhusKarlshamn Denmark A/S sent to the authorities today.

Since the accident, the hexane in the covered concrete ducts and all damaged pipe work have been removed, while safety systems in the form of ventilation, gas detection, fire alarm systems and automatic foam extinguishers have been upgraded.

AarhusKarlshamn Denmark A/S' managing director Jørgen Balle explained: "with the cause established, we can now carry out the repairs and improvements involved in ensuring that a similar accident cannot happen again. We can then get on with things, which is what everyone wants after an accident that has affected us greatly."

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AarhusKarlshamn is the world's leading producer of high value-added speciality vegetable fats. These fats are characterized by a high technological content and are used as substitute for butter-fat and cocoa butter, transfree solutions for fillings in chocolate and confectionery products, and in the cosmetics industry. AarhusKarlshamn has production facilities in Denmark, Mexico, the Netherlands, Sweden, Great Britain, Uruguay and the US. The company is organised in three Business Areas; Chocolate and Confectionery Fats, Food Ingredients and Technical Products & Feed. Further information on AarhusKarlshamn can be found on the company's website www.aak.com.