

Lauren Brogdon in *The Houston Lawyer*: 'Arkema Explosion Cases Demonstrate Need for Coordination on Both Sides of the V'

May 16, 2022 Lauren Brogdon

PRACTICES Litigation, Chemical, Environmental Litigation, Crisis Management, Energy Litigation

Haynes Boone Partner [Lauren Brogdon](#) authored an article in *The Houston Lawyer* titled “Arkema Explosion Cases Demonstrate Need for Coordination on Both Sides of the V.” Read an excerpt below.

In late August and early September 2017, in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, an explosion at the Arkema plant in Crosby, Texas, resulted in a community evacuation and exposure, property damage, and potential exposure to first responders. What followed included criminal charges against Arkema personnel, investigations by at least seven government agencies, and hundreds of civil claims, bringing some of Houston’s preeminent lawyers into the fray.

The incident resulted from a unique confluence of a natural disaster – Hurricane Harvey – and industrial factors. Refrigeration at the plant was disabled by the unprecedented flooding that followed Harvey. Residents within a 1.5-mile radius were evacuated. In the following days, some unrefrigerated organic peroxides at the plant decomposed and spontaneously combusted. Others were ignited by city officials as several law enforcement agencies, including the Houston Police Department’s bomb squad, were involved in the disaster response.

Over 150 first responders sued Arkema almost immediately, alleging personal injury related to chemical exposure. Hundreds of Crosby-area residents filed personal injury and property damage claims. Those and other cases were consolidated into multi-district litigation. Harris County and Liberty County have separately sued Arkema – joined by the Texas Council on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) – seeking reimbursement for response efforts related to the incident, public nuisance damages, and for violations of state environmental laws.

Excerpted from *The Houston Lawyer*. Read more [here](#).