



## **NEWS RELEASE**

Date: August 27, 2009  
Release: Immediately  
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### **(Natural Gas Leak Forces Brief Evacuations in Hillsboro)**

A natural gas leak prompted a brief evacuation of at least two businesses and disrupted Tri-Met's Max service in downtown Hillsboro Thursday afternoon. The leak was reported at 1:12 pm after a track hoe operator for Lease Crutcher Lewis contractors accidentally severed the three-quarter inch line while digging a trench near a sidewalk along Washington Street.

Hillsboro Fire & Rescue and Hillsboro Police Department responded to the scene and cordoned off the area for one block in each direction until Northwest Natural Gas Company crews could arrive, don protective gear and enter the trench to clamp off the leaking gas. The gas worker was able to stop the flow of natural gas by 2:04 pm. Firefighters and gas company workers used sensitive gas monitors to ensure there were no accumulations of gas in the commercial buildings before allowing the occupants back inside.

The leak prompted the self evacuation of the Learning Tree Daycare center at 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Washington Street. About 61 children from the daycare center were escorted about a block away to the front yard of a residence where two Hillsboro Firefighters assisted daycare staff in keeping the children corralled.

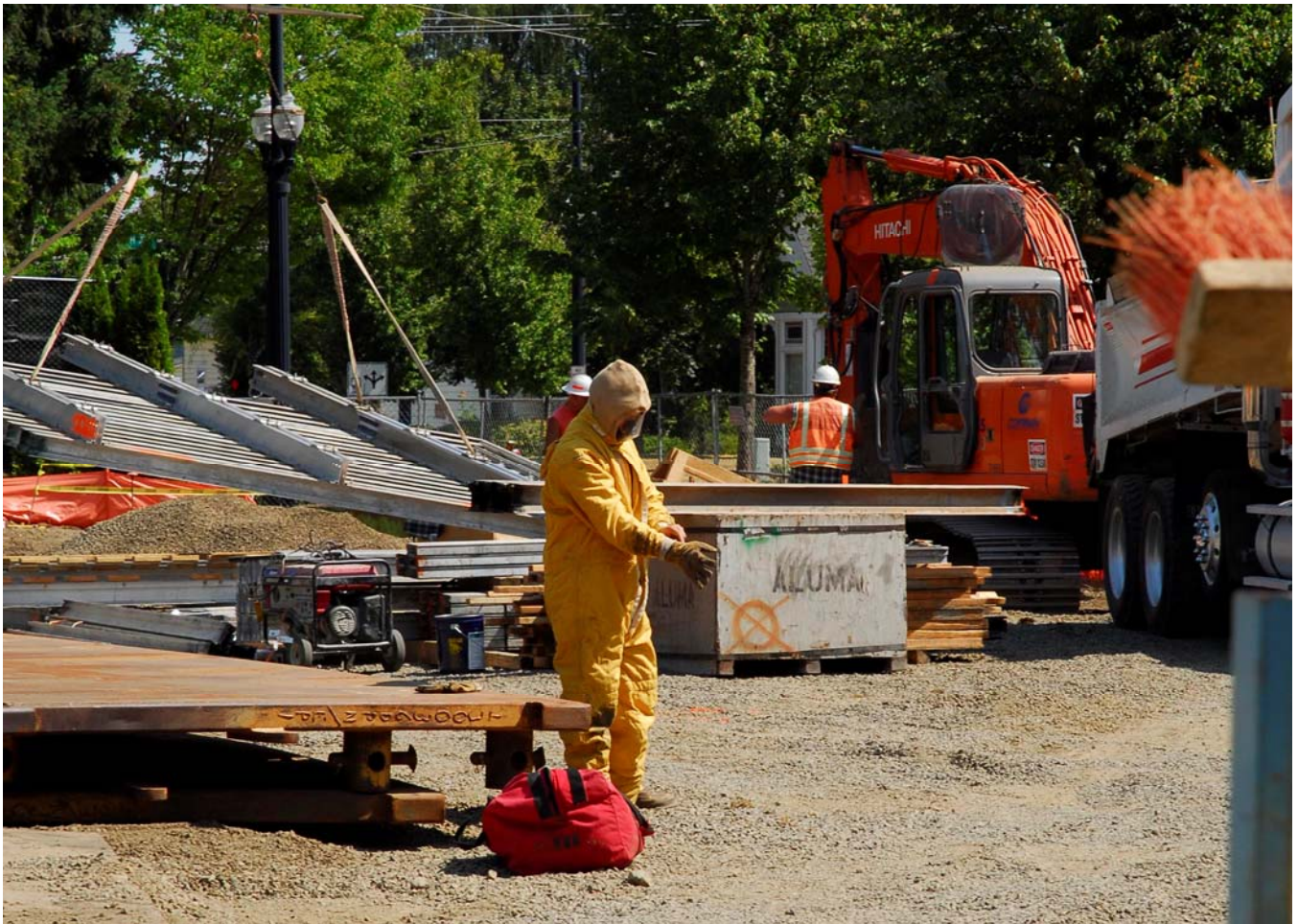
More than 50 staff, students and faculty at Pacific University's Health Education building on the southeast corner of 8<sup>th</sup> and Washington directly south of the break also evacuated their building and moved to a nearby parking lot. A Tri-Met bus was requested to the scene to provide a shelter for the evacuated workers and students. Homeowners in the area were advised to shelter in place and to not use any spark or flame producing devices. Tri-Met Max service was disrupted during the gas leak. Passengers were being bused around the section temporarily out of service between 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. For more fire and life safety information, visit: [www.ci.hillsboro.or.us/fire](http://www.ci.hillsboro.or.us/fire) or call 503-681-6166.

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**Photo Captions:**

Evacuated children 6772.jpg – More than 60 children and daycare staff wait for a leaking natural gas line to be repaired a block away before they can return to their building at 9<sup>th</sup> and Washington.



Nat Gas worker 6773.jpg – A Northwest Natural Gas company worker dons protective gear before entering a trench to shut off leaking natural gas at 8<sup>th</sup> and Washington Thursday afternoon.