



Pen City Current

Thursday, December 6, 2018 | 8 pages | Volume 3 • Issue 1

City Council tables cemetery fee rate increase

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - A proposed increase in city cemetery fees that was to be discussed at Tuesday night's city council meeting was tabled due to lack of attendance.

Councilman Chris Greenwald, serving as mayor pro-tem for the third straight meeting, removed the item from the agenda prior to the council voting to approve the agenda.

"My reason for that, as you can see that we've got a few people not here tonight, and it's kind of a hot tamale that needs some serious argument...discussion I should call it," Greenwald said.

At the time, only councilman Bob Morawitz, Rusty Andrews, Mark Lair and Greenwald were in attendance. Councilman Chad Cangas arrived shortly after the meeting started.

The city was proposing to boost regular weekday city burial services by \$50, but was going to take substantial increases in weekend services. Some of the biggest hits

were for Sunday and holiday burials. Saturday fees are being proposed for 2019 at a 76% increase and Sunday/holiday increases could be as high as 111% to \$2,000.

The proposal submitted to the council from City Clerk Melinda Blind showed a proposed Sunday/holiday adult rate at \$2,000 up from \$950 previously and all Sunday/holiday burials would require authorization from the city's Public Works Director. The child/infant rate would be \$1,000 on Sundays up from \$600.

See **COUNCIL**, page 2

Jury finds Hamann played role in woman's accidental death

Jury rules Morning Sun man guilty of leaving the scene of the accident where his girlfriend was found dead

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - A north Lee County jury found a Morning Sun man guilty of leaving the scene of an accident where his girlfriend of about a year was found dead about nine hours later.

Damian Hamann, 29, took the stand Wednesday morning in Fort Madison and was questioned by his attorney, Curt Dial of Keokuk, and cross-examined by assistant Lee County Attorney Bruce McDonald.



HAMANN

Hamann is accused of leaving the scene of an accident that resulted in the death of 20-year-old Sadie Alvarado in the early morning hours of Sunday, Aug. 5.

Testimony in the trial began on Tuesday and revealed that Alvarado jumped from the pick-up truck Hamann was driving after the two got into an argument about staying the night at a friend's house.

Hamann told Dial that he had planned to spend the night at the friend's house on 235th Avenue in West Point but Alvarado didn't like staying at other people's houses. After an argument at the home, the two ended up leaving his friend's house at around 1 a.m. with plans to head back to Morning Sun and stay at Hamann's residence there.

About 1/2 mile into the trip back on the gravel roads, Hamann said the two were still fighting and Alvarado said she was going to jump out of the car and opened the door and jumped out.

Hamann testified that he was traveling at speeds in the range of 20



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Officials with the Iowa State Patrol, Lee County Sheriff's Department West Point Fire and Rescue responded to the scene of where 20-year-old Sadie Alvarado's body was found on Aug. 5.

mph in his truck that was also towing a trailer with a race car on the back. Hamann had raced in a Figure 8 event at Lee County Speedway on Saturday night. Hamann said Alvarado had been drinking at the races most of the night and at a bar in West Point with Hamann and some friends following the races. Hamann testified that he had one beer at the races and then three more beers at the bar over a span of about four hours before heading to his friend's house. He told Dial he did not drink additionally that night.

See **TRIAL**, page 8

IFC says flares part of start up

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

WEVER - Videos of a large flames on the property of the Iowa Fertilizer plant on Monday, surfaced on social media Tuesday morning.

Company officials said the flares were part of normal start-up operations after the plant had a shutdown during the day.

Iowa Fertilizer Co., released a statement yesterday from facility manager Darrell Allman about the incident.

"Yesterday evening, Iowa Fertilizer Company conducted a normal start up of its facility following a short shutdown. The start up was initiated and completed safely without incident. While a local resident posted a video online that prompted several questions, we want

See **IFC**, page 8

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Obituaries/From the Front

New (old) fireworks rules go into effect Friday


COUNCIL - Continued from Page 1

The issue is planned to be included on the Dec. 18 city council agenda.




In an unrelated issue, the city also approved a final reading of the new city fireworks ordinance which will be published on Friday. That means the new law is in effect on Friday and from that date it will be illegal to discharge first and second class fireworks within city

limits without a city permit.

In other action, the city approved the purchase of two Dodge Durango's for the police department at a cost of approximately \$58,000. Police Chief Tim Sittig said the trade-in value or sale of the vehicles will be used to outfit the new vehicles as some of the emergency equipment won't be able to be transferred.



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OBITUARIES

NANCY JANE WAGNER

Nancy Jane Wagner, age 80, of Ft. Madison, Iowa, died at 5:25 AM a.m. Wednesday, December 5, 2018 at the Madison.



WAGNER

Born November 15, 1938, in Ft. Madison, she was the daughter of Joseph & Louise (Lyon) Pollpeter. On May 18, 1957, she married James H. Wagner, at Sacred Heart Church in Ft. Madison. She graduated from Aquinas High School in 1956.

Nancy was a member of Ss. Mary & Joseph Catholic Church of Holy Family Parish. She was a legal secretary for over 20 years. She was an avid crafter for many years and was featured in "Country Woman" magazine in 1990 with her quilt creations. She was a member of KV-PEO; was vice president of Ft. Madison Community Hospital Auxiliary; former member and officer of Potowonok Circle of King's Daughters; she was a member of the Altar & Rosary

Society where she volunteered at McAleer Hall for funeral dinners & wedding receptions; very involved in sewing & instrumental in promoting the making of Christmas stockings for our military in Afghanistan. She liked playing bridge, bunco, putting together jigsaw puzzles and going to the casino.

Nancy is survived by her husband, Jim of Ft. Madison one daughter, Jill (Eric) Weiler of Tyler, TX; one son, Todd (Lisa) Wagner of Georgetown, TX; three granddaughters, Jennifer, Lindsey, & Kayley; and two great grandchildren, Annabelle & Ryan. She was preceded in death by one son, Scott J. Wagner, her parents, three sisters & four brothers.

The Memorial Mass will be held on Saturday, December 8, 2018 at Ss. Mary & Joseph Church with Rev. Joseph Phung officiating. The family will meet with friends from 9:30-10:30 AM at the church. Burial will be at a later date in Sacred Heart Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers a memorial has been established in her memory and online condolences may be left at www.kinglynk.com.

Pen City Current obituary policy

The Current runs obituaries at no charge to funeral homes and they run the day they are submitted in most cases. They are also run as submitted by the funeral homes.

Tree of Love Gatherings

Lee County Health Department would like to invite you to a series of gatherings that will take place in LCHD's lobby along with our annual Tree of Love which will be making it's first debut in its' new home.

These sessions are being offered to help bring people together during the holidays & to support those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. You are welcome to join any or all gatherings. Light refreshments will be provided.

If you have any questions, please contact Lee County Health Department.
3 John Bennett Drive, Fort Madison (319) 372.5225

#1: Relax

Wednesday
December 5th
2:00-3:00pm

Gather around the Tree of Love for:
Relaxation & comfort skills
Breathing techniques
Candlelight memorial

#2: Connect

Wednesday
December 12th
2:00-3:00pm

Gather around the Tree of Love for:
Grief support with Larry Wallingford
Share stories & pictures of loved ones

#3: Listen

Wednesday
December 19th
2:00-3:00pm

Gather around the Tree of Love for:
Share favorite songs
Live Music by Denise Coovert
How music heals



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Lotto America™	Wed & Sat	8:59 pm	10:00 pm
Pick 3 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:20 pm
Pick 3 - Evening	Daily	9:40 pm	10:00 pm
Pick 4 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:20 pm
Pick 4 - Evening	Daily	9:40 pm	10:00 pm



12/4
28 31 41 42 50
Mega Ball: 4
Megaplier: 3



12/4 MID-DAY
2 9 9
12/4 EVENING
2 2 9



12/4 MID-DAY
8 6 6 4
12/4 EVENING
6 3 3 3

Pen City Current encourages you to play responsibly.

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Founded in 2016


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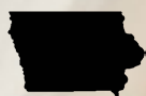
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Business News

FMCH awards Guardian Angels nominees

FORT MADISON - The following are the Fort Madison Community Hospital Guardian Angel award winners.



DR. CHASE NEWTON

Dr. Newton - A gift was received in Dr. Chase Newton's honor through the Fort Madison Community Hospital Foundation Guardian Angel Program. The gift was given by Benita Aguirre. "Dr. Newton helped me get better. I thought my neck was broken, but it was not. Dr. Newton was great!"



CAROL REED and JENICA STEWART

Carol Reed - A gift was received in Carol's honor through the FMCH Foundation Guardian Angel Program from Tamara Dietsch. "Carol provided care for my significant other, Alan Clark during his care in the

FMCH Hospice Program. As a nurse, they provide the basics of nursing – vital signs, pain assessment, medication, and treatment. Carol did all of the required elements of nursing plus went above and beyond. Her schedule was to make visits 2-3 times a week. I can attest that I know that one week, she was by every single day. For the other weeks, she called myself, my mom who was the caretaker while I worked and she would also text. Her phone was always on and always available for me to call at any time whether it is was the middle of the night or during the day, or the weekend. During Alan's hospice treatment, we had a couple of emergencies which Carol was a part of. That woman went and above and beyond in helping me clean up the situations. While I realize that she is a nurse – her duties that she assisted with were far out of the realm of a nurse and I can't express my gratitude enough. I am so thankful for the FMCH Hospice program but I am most thankful for the angel that you have on staff named Carol Reed. She's always going to hold a special part in my heart for life."

Jenica Stewart - A gift was received in Jenica's honor through the Fort Madison Community Hospital Foundation Guardian Angel Program. The gift was given by Tamara Dietsch. "Jenica provided bathing for my significant other, Alan Clark during his hospice program treatment. Every Monday through Friday, she spent at least an hour bathing Alan and some days, it was probably a little more than that. Alan really liked Jenica and always told me that she was good to him. I had no clue that the bathing treatment was part of hospice but I can say that it made my life easier as well as Alan's.

While I realize that bathing a patient is just part of Jenica's job – I truly believe that she went above and beyond on a daily basis. She took such great care of Alan and cleaned him up daily. After that was done, she always put everything away and there was no telltale signs she had even been there. Dirty towels were put in the washer – everything was cleaned up so nicely.

Alan and I were very thankful for the care that she provided – thank you isn't enough, but we mean it

from the heart."



LYNDA RICKELMAN, MARY OVERTON, and CHRIS PANTHER

Lynda Rickelman, Mary Overton, Chris Panther - A gift was received in Lynda's, Mary's and Chris's honor through the Fort Madison Community Hospital Foundation Guardian Angel Program. The gift was given by Joann Fenn. "Thank you for your help, you are so kind, helpful and sweet. I do not know what I would do without the van services. Thank you from the bottom of my heart."



SARA NEWTON

Sara Newton - A gift was received in Sara's honor through the Fort Madison Community Hospital Foundation Guardian Angel Program. The gift was given by Tabitha Rudd. "My Mom, my aunt, and my daughter were involved in a major car accident. Sara and her kids went out of their way to help them. Sara stayed with my family members until EMS arrived. "

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We recognize that the holidays can be a difficult time for families after the loss of a loved one; our desire is to continue our service to you at this time of year by inviting you to attend a Holiday Service of Remembrance, which will be held on:

Tuesday, December 4, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.
at the Schmitz Funeral Home in Donnellson

If you are unable to attend this service, a Holiday Open House will be held at the following locations

Schmitz Funeral Home in Farmington
Thursday, December 6, from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m.

Schmitz Funeral Home in West Point
Saturday, December 8, from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m.

As the holiday season approaches, we would like for you to know that you continue to be in our thoughts and prayers. With each funeral service that we conduct, we feel as if within a few days we become a part of your family and you of ours. In appreciation of the trust you have placed in us, a Christmas ornament will be available to you at the Service of Remembrance or the Open Houses. We hope you find peace during this season.

Sincerely - Brian Schmitz, Mitch Beals, Wendy Vonderhaar, Jan Loges, Emma Dravis, Cody Warth, Dave Dingman, John King & Lyndsey Schmitz

One letter is being sent to each family. Please feel free to forward this invitation on to other family & relatives. All are invited to attend. If you are unable to attend, please contact us to make arrangements to receive your holiday ornament engraved with your loved one's name. (Additional ornaments may be purchased at \$20 per ornament)

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Sports/Weather

Hound wrestlers blow out Mediapolis

PCC STAFF

MEDIAPOLIS - FMHS wrestlers took advantage of nine forfeits enroute to a 78-6 dual win over Mediapolis on Thursday night.

Fifth-ranked Sam Hayes won again pinning Daniel Hightower at 1:39. Junior Danen Settles also won by pin at 5:04 at 285 over the Bulldogs' Brennan Breuer. The Bloodhounds Quinton Ross pinned Mepo's Lucas Wagenbach at the 3:12 mark and Keaton Poe pinned Josh Darbyshire at 2:53.

Mediapolis's only points of the night came when Quinten Aney pinned Elton Kruse at 2:23.

The meet was originally scheduled as a triangular with Mediapolis and Iowa City Liberty, but Liberty pulled out of the meet last week.

The Hounds travel to Pontiac, Illinois on Friday for this weekend's Pontiac Invitational.

Fort Madison (FOMA) 78.0 Mediapolis (MEDI) 6.0 113: Quinten Aney (MEDI) over Elton Kruse (FOMA) (Fall 2:23) 120: Matthew Steffensmeier (FOMA) over (MEDI) (For.) 126: Gavin Wiseman (FOMA) over (MEDI) (For.) 132: Mason Schau (FOMA) over (MEDI) (For.) 138: Quinton Ross (FOMA) over Lucas Wagenbach (MEDI) (Fall 3:12) 145: Nathan Steffensmeier (FOMA) over (MEDI) (For.) 152: Keaton Poe (FOMA) over Josh Darbyshire (MEDI) (Fall 2:53) 160: Joey Dodson (FOMA) over (MEDI) (For.) 170: Chance Hocker (FOMA) over (MEDI) (For.) 182: Bryce Britton (FOMA) over (MEDI) (For.) 195: Sam Hayes (FOMA) over Daniel Hightower (MEDI) (Fall 1:39) 220: Diego Lozano (FOMA) over (MEDI) (For.) 285: Danen Settles (FOMA) over Brennan Breuer (MEDI) (Fall 5:04) 106: Owen Kruse (FOMA) over (MEDI) (For.)

FMMS 8th graders down MP

PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON - Fort Madison's 8th grade girls downed Mt. Pleasant in a close game Tuesday night at FMMS.

Fort Madison A-Team won 25-23. Leading scorers for the Bloodhounds were Molly Knipe and Camille Kruse with 10 points each. Rounding out the scoring for the Bloodhounds was Isabella Boeding with four points and McKenna Cashman with one point. Fort Madison rebounding was led by Knipe with seven followed by McKenna Cashman with six, Isabella Boeding and Ivy Arnold had two rebounds and Emily Steffensmeier had one. Assist leaders were Kruse with three assists followed by Boeding with one.

Fort Madison B-Team was also on the winning side by a score of 9-7. Leading the scoring was Ran Deltetsen with three points followed by Arnold, Cashman, and Eveonna Smutney with two points each. Rebounding leaders were Arnold with seven rebounds followed by Cashman with four, Rylee Dubois had two and Steffensmeier and Kayley Noble had one rebound each. The Bloodhounds were led in assist by Edlicia Smutney with one assist.

Bloodhound play next on Thursday Dec 6th at Fairfield.

HTC junior high girls record four wins

PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON - The Holy Trinity junior high basketball teams registered wins over the past week.

The 8th grade girls knocked off Cardinal 34-11. Mary Hellige led the Crusaders with 12 points and Brooke Mueller had 11. Kayla Box put in eight in the win and Jenna DiPrima had five Thursday night.

Natalie Randolph led the seventh graders with 14 points in a 39-20 win over Cardinal. Breanna Peterson and Mary Kate Bendlage each had eight points in the win.

On Monday night the 8th grade girls lost to West Burlington 36-21. Hellige scored 16 points for HTC. Mueller had three and Lora Mehmert scored two.

In the 7th grade game Randolph again had 14 in a 33-8 win. Peterson had eight, Holvoet scored six, while Jenna Hellman and Taegen Denning had two and Bendlage scored one to round out the Crusaders scoring.

On Tuesday night, the

8th grade girls fell to WACO 23-15. Hellige had seven to lead Holy Trinity, while Mueller had six and Jenna DiPrima had two. The

seventh grade girls won 38-7 behind 17 points from Randolph. Peterson scored seven, Bendlage had six and Holvoet scored five in the win.

5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

THU 06 Dec

Light Snow
High- 23.3° F | Low - 8.6° F

FRI 07 Dec

Clear Skies
High- 15.0° F | Low - 3.7° F

SAT 08 Dec

Light Snow
High- 19.0° F | Low - 18.5° F

SUN 09 Dec

Light Snow
High- 20.8° F | Low - 5.6° F

MON 10 Dec

Clear Skies
High- 16.4° F | Low - 8.9° F

[OpenWeatherMap](#)

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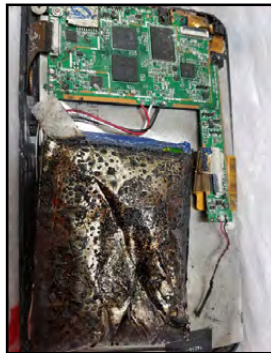


Great River Regional Waste Authority would like to remind you **not to recycle** Christmas Wrapping Paper as some of the materials used in the making of it are not recyclable. Please dispose of any wrapping materials in your regular trash cans. Any curbside bins containing these materials can potentially compromise an entire load.

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Classifieds

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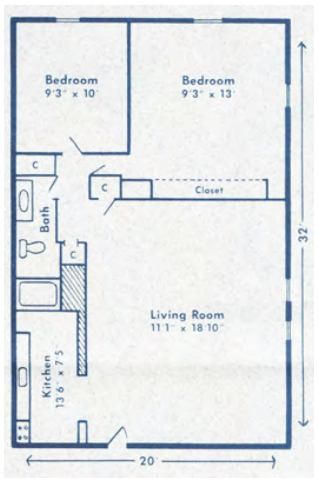
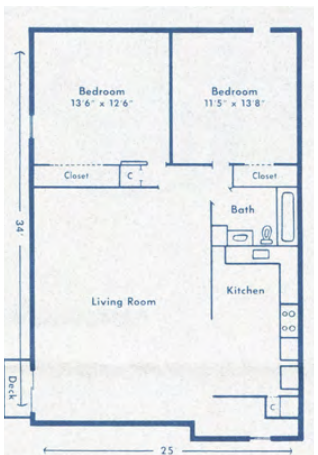
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From the Front

State to ask for prison at Feb. 1 sentencing

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Hamann told the jury that he didn't stop to check on Alvarado because he didn't think she was injured and assumed she was walking back to his friend's house. On Monday during the state's case, McDonald produced cellphone evidence through Lee County Sheriff's detective Chad Donaldson that showed a string of texts between Hamann and his friend about the incident and inquiring to see if Alvarado had shown up. However, no evidence was found on the phone that indicated a call to emergency crews or law enforcement about the incident or Alvarado's whereabouts.

Hamann proceeded to his home in Morning Sun and then came back to the area obtaining a ride from his ex-wife. He was at his friend's house on 235th Avenue when Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation Investigator Ryan Herman canvassed the neighborhood looking for evidence in the incident.

Herman testified that Hamann was visibly upset when he came to the door at his friend's residence and told Herman that he believed the girl discovered in the ditch was his girlfriend. Hamann said his friend heard that the body was discovered on a scanner.

During his direct examination by Dial on Wednesday, Hamann said he was shaken when he heard from his friend that a body had been found in the ditch.

"He told me that there has been a body confirmed in the ditch, and I lost it. I was in tears," Hamann told the jury.

Alvarado was found by Mike Ungerer and his wife who were on their way home from church. The two called 9-1-1 and flagged down another couple to help at the scene. Emergency response crews from Lee County EMS, Lee County Sheriff's Department, West Point Fire & Rescue, and DCI were called to the scene.

McDonald produced photographic evidence that showed Alvarado less than 10 feet from the roadway and her sandals were found roughly 18 feet from her body. Upon investigation of the body, an ID with a different name was in Alvarado's pocket, but her real identity was made when Hamann informed Herman that he believed it was his girlfriend.

Dr. Dennis Firchau of the University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics Decedent Care Center, testified Tuesday that he ruled Alvarado's death accidental due to multiple blunt force traumas to the head. In addition to subdural bleeding under the skull, Alvarado had severe bruising on the left side of her brain, along with multiple contusions and abrasions and a skull laceration. Firchau also testified that Alvarado's blood-alcohol content was .184.

During his cross-examination of Hamann Wednesday morning, McDonald laid foundation that Hamann knew Alvarado was "very intoxicated" and that she said she was going to jump from the vehicle and opened the door and did it and Hamann didn't stop.

"Did you stop to check on her...Did you even slow down?" McDonald asked Hamann.

"No. I didn't believe she was injured." Hamann said.

Dial told the jury during his closing statement that the state hadn't produced any evidence to show how fast the truck was going and said he didn't believe the state proved the incident was an accident because Hamann didn't believe an accident had occurred. He said the jury was responsible for only considering the evidence produced at trial and nothing else.

"It's an accident if you know there was an injury. He had no knowledge of any injury," Dial told the jury.

During his closing statement, McDonald told the jury it isn't plausible that Hamann didn't think an injury could have occurred.

"He took off to protect himself and to hell with Sadie," McDonald told the jury.

Hamann is currently released on bond and, according to Lee County Attorney Ross Braden, he will remain on bond until sentencing which was set for Feb. 1. Braden said he will be looking for jail time of Hamann on the Class D felony conviction.

"It carries an indeterminate prison sentence, but we'll be asking for jail time considering the circumstances," Braden said after the trial.

Dial asked District Judge Michael Schilling at several points during the trial for a directed judgement and dismissal which were denied. After the verdict was read, Dial asked for the judge for a deferred judgment consideration and Schilling said the court would look into the matter. Dial said the sentence could be prison time, probation or a deferred judgment which would carry a term of probation and, if completed successfully, would wipe the conviction off Hamann's record.

Officials say flames were part of start-up protocol

IFC - Continued from Page 1

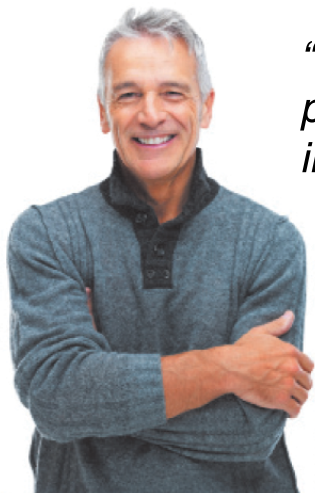
to assure the community that the Iowa Fertilizer plant continues to operate safely and the natural gas flare is a normal part of our plant startup process. There was no uncontrolled fire.

When the plant began startup measures two years ago, officials said flaring would be seen due to the combination of natural gas and hydrogen and the occurrence was a normal part of plant start-ups.

Jesse Harris, a spokesman for Iowa Fertilizer said the video is natural gas venting. "What you are seeing in the video is natural gas venting and burning in our flare stack and it's a normal part of the start up process. Natural gas is not vented and burned in this stack during normal production operation," he said.

"The flame may look bigger and brighter than usual because of the low-level clouds, the steam from the cooling tower, wind direction, and that this was the heaviest point of the flare. Also, the fact that the start up was completed at night rather than day certainly makes it appear brighter than usual. But again, this startup was normal, safe and without incident."

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