

Wood River Refinery flares light up evening sky, but all is well

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
February 7 2017 9:32 AM



ROXANA - Flares from the **Wood River Refinery**, operated by **Phillips 66**, were visible through several parts of the Riverbend Monday evening, but a spokesperson for the refinery said everything is fine.

The flares act as a safety measure to burn excess gases when necessary. They became necessary around 5:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 6, because a compressor went down, Phillips

66 Wood River Refinery spokesperson **Melissa Erker** said. Due to the compressor's failure, excess gases, which were mostly hydrogen, had to be burnt by the flares, causing a spectacle for eyes and ears adjacent to the refinery.

"We apologize to the community for that," Erker said Tuesday morning. "The flares are very visible to the community, and there is some noise with the flares. The safety of the community was not an issue with this, and proper notice was given to public officials."

The refinery's glow could be seen from New Poag Road in Edwardsville, near Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

Erker said the gas was mostly hydrogen, which is a clean-burning gas, but is very visible when it burns. She described the flares as being there as a "safety system," adding they "worked exactly as hoped."

Flares were originally utilized early in the evening, and continued burning into the night as workers worked to restore compressor operations. Erker said she was not informed of the compressor's current status, but said the refinery operations are running normally.

Even if that compressor has not been repaired, Erker said the refinery has ways of safely realigning operations and making adjustments accordingly to ensure flares do not need to be utilized more than necessary.

[VIDEO FROM CHRISTY WRAY CAN BE VIEWED HERE.](#)