



Giant Blast at UK Oil Terminal

Posted by [Stuart Staniford](#) on December 11, 2005 - 5:23am

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From [the BBC](#):

Three large explosions have rocked a fuel depot near Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire shooting flames hundreds of feet into the sky. Police say there are casualties and emergency services are at the scene. The first blast happened at 0603 GMT at the Buncefield fuel depot, close to junction 8 of the M1 motorway, 10 miles from Luton airport.

It is being treated as an accident and rumours that a plane was involved are unfounded, said a police spokesman.

Witnesses said another two explosions followed the first at 0626 GMT and 0627 GMT. Eyewitness Sam Matton, who lives half a mile from the depot, told BBC News: "The sky is sort of orange. The flames have got to be 60ft up in the air."

The area near the site has been evacuated, while police have advised residents living nearby to keep their windows and doors closed due to fumes. Many houses have been damaged, with some reporting feeling effects from the explosion as far away as Oxfordshire, while it was heard in Surrey and Norfolk.

Malcolm Stewart, who drives a tanker at the terminal, said there were 20 tanks on the site, each holding three million gallons of fuel.

If that last quote is accurate, that's around 1.4 million barrels of oil products.

[Here's a map.](#)



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