



PRESS RELEASE

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# City of Lebanon Fire Department

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## Mercaptan Odor, Downtown, Lebanon, NH

**February 16, 2012 Lebanon, NH:** At 1636 hours the Lebanon Fire Departments and Lebanon Communications received numerous reports of a “propane like odor” in the downtown Lebanon area. Lebanon Fire units began investigating these reports and determined that the origin of the odor was the Kleen Laundry facility on Foundry Street.

Kleen is in the process of switching from Propane to Liquefied Natural Gas. Propane in itself is an odorless gas but has a chemical odorant, Methyl mercaptan, also known as methanethiol, added prior to shipment. Methyl mercaptan, also known as methanethiol is a colorless gas with a smell like rotten cabbage or garlic.

Liquefied Natural Gas is an odorless gas but unlike Propane, does not have an odorant added prior to shipment. Methyl mercaptan, is added at the point of use. This material is added as it can be sensed by smell, safely at .002 parts per million for early leak detection.

During the above incident personnel from the gas supplier were in the process of added Methyl mercaptan to the onsite storage tank. During this process a small amount of Methyl mercaptan is released and is normal.

Our preliminary investigation suggests that the higher than normal release was a result of the gas supplier using several small containers to off-load the Methyl mercaptan and the weather conditions at the time.

The Lebanon Fire Department is working with the gas supplier to minimize the potential for incidents similar to yesterday. For more information on Methyl mercaptan please visit <http://alert.lebnh.net/>.

For further information on this incident please contact Chief Christopoulos or Asst. Chief Libbey at (603) 448-8810.

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