

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-2927
Minority (202) 225-3641

April 30, 2010

Mr. David J. Lesar
Halliburton Co.
U.S. Corporate Headquarters
3000 North Sam Houston Parkway East
Houston, Texas 77032

Dear Mr. Lesar:

According to a report in *The Wall Street Journal* today, one possible cause of the explosion that destroyed the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig and led to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico could be a problem with the cementing that was supposed to seal the well. In this procedure, cement is used to plug the well and to fill gaps between the well pipe and the hole drilled into the ocean floor in order to prevent combustible oil and gas from escaping. Problems with the cementing process have frequently been identified as causes of oil well blowouts. The article quoted one independent expert who said: "The initial likely cause of gas coming to the surface had something to do with the cement."¹ Halliburton Co. provided cementing services for the Deepwater Horizon rig.

As part of the Committee's investigation into the cause of the oil spill, we ask that you take three steps. First, we request that you arrange a briefing on May 5, 2010, for Committee staff with Halliburton officials knowledgeable about Halliburton's cementing activities at the Deepwater Horizon rig.

Second, we ask that you provide the Committee with all documents in Halliburton's possession relating to (1) the explosion at the Deepwater Horizon rig; (2) the possibility or risk of an explosion or blowout at the Deepwater Horizon rig; and (3) the status, adequacy, quality, monitoring, and inspection of the cementing work related to the Deepwater Horizon rig. We request that you provide these documents by May 7, 2010. An attachment to this letter provides additional information on how to respond to Committee document requests.

¹ *Drilling Process Attracts Scrutiny in Rig Explosion*, *The Wall Street Journal* (Apr. 30, 2010).

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Third, we ask that you preserve for potential future production to the Committee all documents relating to Halliburton's operations at and involvement with the Deepwater Horizon rig.

We appreciate your assistance with the Committee's investigation. We believe it is essential that the spill and its causes are thoroughly investigated. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Meredith Fuchs of the Committee staff at (202) 226-2424.

Sincerely,



Henry A. Waxman
Chairman



Bart Stupak
Chairman
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Joe Barton
Ranking Member

The Honorable Michael Burgess
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations