



[U.S. Steel Workers Keep Working after Alarm Sounds – Gas Explodes, 20 Seriously Injured](#)

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This week, as U.S. Steel is expected to announce [its third quarter profits](#), many of its workers and their families are still reeling from the [July 14, 2010, explosion at the US Steel Coke Works plant](#) in Clairton, Pennsylvania.

U.S. Steel has reported a net loss for the past five quarters in a row. [Having a profit this quarter is big news.](#)

However, the juxtaposition of U.S. Steel's profitability announcement and the Clairton coke gas explosion may tell another story: the steel company has been fighting for profits over the past few years, and one has to wonder how much worker safety has been put on the back burner in the corporation's focus on getting in the black again.

Big Blast Happened Before Sunrise

This was a huge blast: [news reports](#) are that as Clairton maintenance crews worked at basement level, there was a gas explosion resulting in a fire that burned inside the B Battery section of the plant for hours following the blast.

Walls were literally destroyed; thick steel beams were bent by its force. [It's being called a miracle that anyone survived.](#)

One Worker's Eyewitness Account of What Happened – Loud Boom, Everything Went Black

Television station [KDKA interviewed US Steel worker Brian Doyle](#) as he was recuperating in Pittsburgh's McKeesport Hospital, one of the 20 steel workers injured in the coke gas explosion.

Workers Continued to Make Repairs Despite Alarms Sounding

Doyle recalled that while his gas detector's alarm was ringing, he and his crew remained where they were, trying to seal up a coke gas pipe. Gas levels were extremely high, and the gas exploded. Doyle remembers the explosion being so forceful that he was catapulted into the air.

Mr. Doyle's own account of what happened that day is worth reading at KDKA's site. Read his interview yourself, and ask: was this man being adequately protected from harm?

OSHA is investigating, as is the United Steelworkers Union.