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Published on Industrial Maintenance & Plant Operation (<http://www.impomag.com>)

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HOUSTON (AP) — A jury in Houston has ordered a chemical manufacturer to pay nearly \$8.4 million in a negligence verdict over a 2004 industrial fire.

The blaze at the Control Solutions Inc. pesticides warehouse forced some Pasadena and other nearby residents to take cover for hours.

A jury Friday decided negligence by India-based Gharda Chemicals Limited, and its seller, Gharda USA Inc., caused the March 9, 2004, blaze.

Attorney John P. Abbey, who represented Gharda USA, Inc., did not immediately comment. No response immediately came Tuesday to an e-mail by The Associated Press sent to Gharda Chemicals.

The bulk of the verdict was to Control Solutions and company president Mark Boyd. The verdict also awarded \$1 million to United Phosphorus, Inc.

The Houston Chronicle reports Gharda Chemicals was accused of selling the Texas company contaminated drums of chemicals.

Source URL (retrieved on 01/28/2015 - 5:49pm):

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