



Photos by Dave Ryan/The Enterprise

One of the hydrocracker components, already near the construction site, waits with all the other components that will feed the unit. The Valero Port Arthur refinery is moving forward with construction on their hydrocracker project initially started in 2008. When finished, it will fill about 13 acres at the 4,000-acre refinery.

VALERO: Completion, delivery of equipment will decide when contracts are awarded

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future by improving its capability to refine crude oils that contain a lot of sulfur.

The sulfur must be removed to make commercially acceptable grades of both gasoline and diesel; environmental regulations are mandating the use of ultra-low sulfur diesel in an effort to reduce air pollution.

The new unit will be capable of producing fuel-grade products from heavy crude oil at a rate of 50,000 barrels per day when it's completed, said Valero major project director John Wallace.

Valero acquired the refinery in September 2005 which started out in 1901 as Gulf Oil Co. It occupies 4,000 acres of land on the Sabine-Neches Ship Channel upstream from the Intracoastal Waterway along Texas 87.

In 2001, Valero's predecessor, Premcor, invested \$850 million in units capable of processing heavy sulfur crude oil.

Valero had begun its newest project in July 2008, but put it on hold as the economy slowed down.



Concrete anchors jut from the ground as workers prepare the site for the hydrocracker unit.

the expansion.

By the time Valero brings in the modules, construction work at the other major projects in the area will have been completed.

The \$2.2 billion conversion project at Total Port Arthur refinery is nearing completion and the first of its units is going through initial startup. The Motiva Enterprises Port

Arthur refinery expansion, valued at about \$7.5 billion, is entering its busiest phase with the final delivery of its modules, heaters and pressure vessels.

Greg Gentry, vice president and general manager of Valero's Port Arthur refinery, said the company took time to evaluate the project before resuming it.

"It made it a better fit for earnings and demand for product," he said.

Gentry said about a third of the capital budget has been spent already and that was for the major pieces of equipment and for site preparation.

The new unit will be built on 13 acres of refinery property that isn't visible from

Texas 87.

In a recent tour of the refinery construction area, workers were surveying the site and bringing in reinforced steel bar for concrete. Concrete trucks from Transit Mix and Knife River were delivering loads.

Local contractors, including workers from Industrial Process Insulation and Ma-

Greg Gentry, vice president and general manager of Valero's Port Arthur refinery, talks about the construction of the hydrocracker unit.



Wallace said other local contractors taking part in the site preparation work include Bo-Mac Contractors, Conex International, Richard Design Services, GP Industrial Contractors and Newton.

Gentry said Valero is acting as its own general contractor, which he said will give local contractors "a seat at the table."

He said Fluor Corp. had done the initial engineering, but Richard Design Services in Nederland is completing it.

"We'll issue (bid) packages individually, not through a large overseer so local contractors can bid successfully," Gentry said.

Woman drowns at Jamaica Beach in Galveston

Couple of steps off sandbar might be what cost her life

By Lindsey Wise
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A Houston woman drowned during a nighttime swim at Jamaica Beach in Galveston on Sunday.

Veronica DeLeon Jaure, 44, disappeared after wading in alone at the first beach access point after dusk on Sunday, said Chief Peter Davis, with

the Galveston Island Beach Patrol.

"She went out swimming and her son was going to meet her out there and when he got out there he couldn't find her," Davis said.

"We think she stepped off a sandbar and into a trough or canal," he said. "There's a strong lateral current that runs parallel to shore, and what it does is it makes the trough between the sandbars even deeper so it could have gone from waist-deep to overhead in a couple of steps."

Jaure's family began searching for her and called 911 at 9:12 p.m., Davis said.

Officials with Galveston Marine Response found Jaure's body about an hour and a half later, three miles down the beach.

Davis said officials had been flying a red flag for rough surf on Sunday, meaning that waist deep water was the maximum recommended for an adult who can swim well, and children and non-swimmers should stay out of the water completely.

There were more than 100,000 swimmers in the water in Galveston this holiday

weekend, Davis said. Since Friday, authorities have rescued 17 people, including

four in a boat that overturned under the causeway Monday afternoon, he said.

GET YOUR RED ON!

THIS FRIDAY, DECORATE:

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•YOUR BUSINESS

•YOUR BODY