

(NZ Herald, 2023a)

Home / Business

CO2 shortage: Why Todd Energy shut down critical gas plant revealed

NZ Herald

20 Jan, 2023 05:13 PM ⌚ 2 mins to read

5th

P

Todd Energy's CO2 production plant in Kapuni, Taranaki, has been closed since **December 20, 2022**. Photo / RNZ, Robin Martin

An ammonia leak in a pressure safety valve forced Todd Energy to close the country's only liquid carbon dioxide production plant last month, the private company has revealed following an internal investigation.

“Just before Christmas, our normal operating surveillance detected a risk relating to the release of ammonia from a pressure safety valve at our liquid CO2 plant.” Todd Energy

chief executive Mark Macfarlane said in a written statement.

“At the time all plant safety and evacuation systems were activated with no harm caused to people or the environment.”

The plant shutdown caused a nationwide CO2 shortage with suppliers forced to ration supply to medical needs, leaving beverage manufacturers with no supply.

Macfarlane said Todd would reopen the plant in stages, beginning with 30 per cent of production capacity in two weeks’ time.

“Todd Energy is planning a staged production ramp-up which will see the plant built back to full capacity over the next few months. The first production of liquid CO2 is expected in around two weeks.”

Todd Energy had been in communication with government agencies that were monitoring the impact of the shutdown.

“To enable the CO2 plant to resume operation, we needed to understand the root cause of the problem and be satisfied that the right engineering solution can be installed to allow the plant to operate safely, without risk to people or the environment,” Macfarlane said.

“The age of the plant and lack of instrumentation means that it has taken some time to identify the issue, but now that we understand the cause, we can begin implementing solutions to bring the plant back online.

“The first stage engineering solution will see the plant resume operation under strict operating procedures and at reduced capacity in around two weeks.

More to come.

Latest from Business

