

OIL AND GAS

Problems At The Yamburg Gas Field

Two powerful explosions resounded with rolling thunder over the swamps and taiga of the Yamburg field. And in the sky a huge pillar of fire struck with a savage booming sound. A flame of burning gas rose almost one hundred metres in the air, exploding under seventy atmospheres of pressure. It was visible for dozens of kilometres on that sunny morning and the fantastic sight continued for more than two hours ...

Everyone immediately agreed that the cause of these Yamburg "lights" was completely prosaic, although, alas, it is still very prevalent today, that is, irresponsibility and reliance on "chance".

For these were the principles which guided the Chief Engineer of "Tyumen'gazprom", Yu. Topchev, and the Deputy Director General of the "Urengoigazdobycha" Industrial Association, A. Margulov, when they ignored the fire-fighting units at their projects and accepted these structures with "slight" shortcomings.

So, therefore, in March of this year they accepted and brought on line the No. 5 comprehensive gas-treatment installation. This highly complex, twenty million rouble project, which is somewhat dangerous to operate, did not have the automatic fire-suppression system and the automatic emergency shut-down system provided for in the original plans. The representative of the fire-supervision services flatly refused to sign the acceptance document. However, his protest was quite simply ignored: "The country needs gas!"