



Smitty's Explosion & Fire Litigation Update

Environmental Testing Ongoing, Additional Defendants Named

February 18, 2026



Smitty's Supply, Inc. Explosion and Fire, Aug. 22, 2025

We want to keep you informed about the ongoing litigation arising from the explosion and fire at Smitty's Supply, Inc. and the parties responsible for the harm caused to our community.

As members of the Court-appointed Interim Leadership Group, our legal team is actively working to hold all responsible entities accountable and to ensure that every affected resident's claim is properly documented, presented, and pursued to its fullest extent under the law.

We understand the frustration and uncertainty many of you continue to face. Please know that we are reviewing thousands of documents, coordinating with experts, and advancing the case through every available legal avenue.

We are deeply grateful for your patience, trust, and cooperation as we continue this fight to secure meaningful justice and recovery for our community.

Where We Are Now

Litigation Update: On February 4, 2026, the Plaintiffs' Steering Committee filed a Third Supplemental and Amending Petition naming Edgar Ray Smith, III, CAM2 International, LLC, and Big 4 Trucking, Inc. as additional defendants in the ongoing litigation.

The amended petition alleges that Chad Tate and Edgar Ray Smith, III exercised unilateral control over the affiliated entities, making substantial business decisions—including the buying, selling, management, and transfer of significant assets—without meaningful independent governance or oversight. Any purported “board” or formal governance structure functioned in name only, lacking independence and serving primarily to create the appearance of separateness while the entities operated as instruments of Tate and Smith.

The petition further details the significant overlap between Smitty's Supply and CAM2 International. The companies share the same principal business address, the same registered agent, overlapping officers and managers, and operate in the same line of business involving the storage, handling, sale, and distribution of oils, lubricants, and related industrial products. They also conducted business through shared insurance arrangements and shared operational infrastructure.

CAM2 identifies itself as a manufacturer and distributor of automotive lubricant products—operations that overlap with and are intertwined with Smitty's lubricant business.

Our team is working diligently and around the clock to identify all responsible parties and ensure that every viable defendant is held accountable. Our goal remains clear: to maximize recovery and secure justice for all those affected.

In addition, we have found that Defendants have swapped assets between companies after the explosion. Plaintiffs have requested a preliminary injunction against Smitty's Supply, Inc., CAM2 International, LLC, Edgar Ray Smith, III, and Chad Tate. The injunction seeks to prevent Defendants, during the pendency of this litigation, from taking any action that would increase their insolvency—including, but not limited to, transferring property to third parties. This step is intended to protect assets and preserve the ability of victims to recover damages as the case moves forward. The Court is set to hear this matter on the next scheduled hearing date of February 23, 2026.

We remain committed to keeping you informed every step of the way.

Discovery Update: The Plaintiffs' Steering Committee ("PSC") continues to aggressively advance this litigation through ongoing discovery and investigation. On January 15, 2026, the PSC propounded Plaintiffs' Fourth Set of In Globo Interrogatories, Requests for Admission, and Requests for Production of Documents to Smitty's Supply, Inc. and Chad Tate, seeking additional critical information regarding operations, safety procedures, and corporate responsibility. On January 22, 2026, the PSC received documents produced by ES&H in response to Plaintiffs' subpoena duces tecum, as well as Defendants' supplemental discovery responses and additional document production. On January 27, 2026, the PSC filed a Petition for Letters Rogatory, supported by affidavit, along with a proposed Order, Letters Rogatory, and a Notice of Records-Only Deposition and Subpoena Duces Tecum directed to Pennzoil-Quaker State Company. This filing allows

the PSC to formally pursue discovery from out-of-state entities whose records are critical to uncovering the full scope of responsibility. To date, the PSC has reviewed more than 7,000 documents, and that number continues to grow. We remain committed to conducting a thorough and methodical investigation, holding all responsible parties accountable, and maximizing recovery for the individuals and families impacted.

Hearing Update: A hearing was held on January 12, 2026. Chad Tate withdrew his exception conditioned upon the plaintiffs filing an amended petition within 30 days of the hearing.

Environmental Testing: The published Environmental Protection Agency's test results shows that the EPA's initial public notice that the area around the fire was safe was not only premature, but it was also wrong. EPA already had ASPECT flyover and other data that showed a mix of toxic volatile chemicals in the air and the soot fallout that could damage human health. EPA's testing ignored many of the most toxic and persistent organic pollutants. Still, what it did find should have led to a warning for the community. Testing by the court-appointed legal team investigating the fire was more expansive than the testing conducted by EPA, and our test results show the presence of many chemicals beyond the published EPA results. These chemicals include dioxins and furans, Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs), and Polyaromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs). Dioxins, PCBs, and PAHs tested by the legal team were not among the tests results released by EPA, but they are some of the most toxic and longest-lasting chemical residues associated with petroleum product fires.

Our testing methodology included taking soil and water samples. Among the chemicals found in soils and surface waters were 2,3,7,8-Tetrachlorodibenzofuran (TCDF), which

is one of the most toxic of the many forms of dioxins and furans. The concentrations of these highly toxic compounds were far above the normal background and also far above the concentrations of pollutants generally found in the most industrialized parts of the Lower Mississippi River region.

Experts retained by the court-appointed legal team are engaged in an on-going testing protocol and continue to collect and analyze samples. The data produced from testing will not only inform community members about their exposure, but it will be essential to the presentation of claims in litigation.

Status Conferences Scheduled: Judge Sledge has scheduled the next status conference for February 23, 2026, at 10:30 AM at the Tangipahoa Courthouse in Amite. Additional status conferences are set for March 16, 2026, March 30, 2026, April 27, 2026, May 18, 2026, June 15, 2026, July 6, 2026, July 27, 2026, September 8, 2026, September 28, 2026, November 2, 2026, and November 30, 2026.

Community Concerns

Editorial: Keep up the push to investigate Smitty's disaster: Last month, additional details emerged regarding the investigation into Smitty's. Officials with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency confirmed that a criminal investigation was initiated last year, including the execution of a search warrant at the facility in mid-November. Although the agency declined to confirm whether the criminal probe remains ongoing, it did issue an order directing Smitty's to remedy multiple violations related to its handling and storage of hazardous waste. These violations were identified during an inspection conducted more than a month prior to the execution of the search warrant.

The findings are deeply concerning. Inspectors examined portions of the facility that had not been impacted by the fire between October 7 and October 9. During that inspection, they documented extensive floor contamination from leaks, improperly labeled containers of hazardous materials, and, in one area of the grease plant, a spigot plugged with a rag that was actively leaking an unidentified liquid onto the floor. (Source: Times Picayune, Feb. 5, 2026)

Schedule Your Appointment at the Court-Appointed Claims Office

Thank you to all of our clients who have already scheduled their appointment and completed the claim form for their individual claim. If you have not yet scheduled your appointment, please do so as soon as possible. Employees of the Claims Office, along with your legal team, will continue reaching out to assist you in setting an appointment and completing your Claim Form. Completing this form is essential to moving forward with your claim against Smitty's Supply, Inc. and any other potential defendants. Please make scheduling your appointment a priority so we can continue pursuing justice on your behalf.

Claims Office Location & Contact:

59649 Guzzardo Lane

Amite, LA 70422

Phone: 985-355-9101 & 985-355-9593

Email: terri@pscclaimoffice.com

Your Role

At this stage, it is essential that you schedule an in-person appointment at the Claims Office to complete your Claim Form. Everyone MUST complete a Claim Form. If you have any relevant records—such as receipts, correspondence, or notes about your experiences—please keep them safe and easily accessible. Continue documenting all

damages carefully by taking photos, saving receipts, recording medical treatment, and noting any disruptions to your daily life. Stay in close contact with us or your chosen counsel; we want to hear from you and are here to support the community as we navigate this challenging time together.

Schedule your appointment: Please click the following link to set your appointment.

👉 <https://www.cognitofrms.com/CalvinFayardJrAPC/SCHEDULEANAPPOINTMENTT>

[OCOMLETEAPROOFOFCLAIMFORM](#)

Add us on Facebook: The Plaintiff's Steering Committee has now launched an official Facebook page that you should add to your personal devices and check for updates. The page is www.facebook.com/smittyslitigationPSC/.

Our Commitment

This process takes time, but please know that we are working diligently on your behalf. The Interim Leadership Group remains united and fully committed to holding accountable Smitty's Supply, Inc. and any other entities responsible for the damages experienced by our clients. We will continue to provide updates and keep you informed as the case develops.

This newsletter is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Each client's situation may vary. Please contact your attorney with any questions regarding your individual case.