

# The Great Boston Molasses Disaster

## What Happened ?

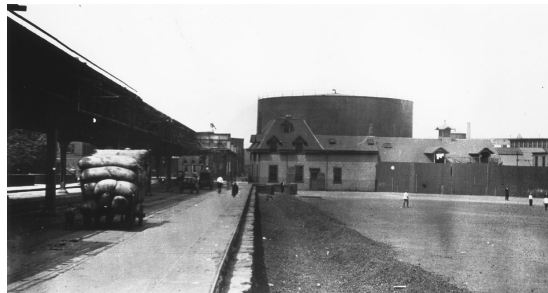
On January 15 1919, 2.3 million gallons of molasses burst from a nearby storage tank in the North End neighborhood of Boston. The massive wave traveled at about 35 miles per hour and rose to 35 feet high and 160 feet wide. The molasses moves for about 3/4 of a mile, destroying almost everything in its path. The flood kills 21 people and injures 150, many very seriously.



## The Molasses Tank

Specs:

- 50 feet tall
- 90 feet diameter
- 242 feet circumference
- About the volume of 3.5 Olympic sized swimming pools



## What Caused the Flood?

- **Poor materials. Steel was much thinner than needed.**
- **Rushed construction to make profit during WWI.**
- **No testing or inspection.**
- **The project manager had no technical or engineering experience**
- **Pressure within the tank caused by carbon dioxide from fermentation as well as a temperature change from 2 degrees to 41 degrees in one day.**