



**CLOUDS** of vapor form as employees of the Bostongas Co. drain liquid propane gas from ruptured tanker on Interstate 89 near Waterbury. After unsuccessful attempt to transfer cargo to tanker at left, the company opened the valves. The escaping gas solidified and formed masses of ice on the interstate. (Photo by Aime Trahan)

## Propane Tanker Crashes on I-89

**WATERBURY** — Homes were evacuated here and traffic rerouted for several hours Friday after a semi-tractor-trailer containing 9,000 gallons of liquid propane gas went off Interstate 89 and hit a ledge south of the Waterbury exit.

Driver of the Bostongas Co. truck, Guy Daniel, 30, was not injured.

Nor were residents of Stowe and East Streets, developments adjacent to the interstate, who evacuated their homes Friday afternoon due to the potential danger of leaking gas.

Police said Daniel, of Grantham, N.H., was heading south when the left front tire on the truck cab exploded and the vehicle went out of control.

The tanker, hauling the gas from

Montreal to Boston, swerved to the left for 250 feet and slid into rock ledges at a cut in the road. The impact punctured the tank.

Representatives of Bostongas and the truck owners, who flew from Boston and Lebanon, N.H., at first attempted to transfer the liquid gas to another tanker, but later opened valves and allowed the gas to escape into the atmosphere.

Five miles of interstate traffic between Waterbury and Middlesex were rerouted along U.S. 2 until late Friday night.

State police permitted no cars to come near the truck.

Mrs. Janice Morse, Waterbury resident, said 20 families went on foot to other homes in the village early Friday

afternoon and returned about 7 p.m. to their houses when police found the gas was dissipating.

Members of the Waterbury Fire Department hosed down the interstate, which was expected to reopen late Friday night.

Police said the truck, owned by Capital Trucking Co. of Compton, Calif., was extensively damaged, but could not estimate the value of the gas.

Sgt. Laurence Wade of the Montpelier State Police, investigating the accident, said cooperation was received from the fire department, town residents, the Vermont Highway Department and Civil Defense authorities.