

Government Response to the BP Oil Spill

View up-to-date information on the Gulf Coast at <http://www.epa.gov/bpspill>

Waste Management

July 2010

Oversight of Clean up Efforts

The U.S. Coast Guard is leading the Federal government response to the BP oil spill. Admiral Thad Allen is the National Incident Commander and has overall responsibility for the Federal government response. BP is the responsible party for the oil spill under U.S. law and is responsible for clean-up activities under supervision of the FOSC.

Waste Directive

In cleaning up the oil spill, BP is generating a variety of liquid and solid wastes including recovered oil and contaminated materials. The Coast Guard, with EPA and the Gulf States agreement, has issued a directive to BP on how the company will ensure this waste is properly managed to protect the environment and public health. Federal and state officials will hold BP accountable for implementation of approved waste management plans and ensure that directives are followed by conducting independent review and inspections of BP operations.

Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida and Texas are leading oversight of BP's waste management. The Federal government is complementing their activities by providing further oversight and imposing additional requirements such as public disclosure of waste disposal volumes and locations.

Under the directive, EPA samples waste materials to verify that they are being properly and safely managed. This is in addition to sampling already being done by BP. All waste sampling must be done in compliance with EPA and state regulatory requirements.

BP must comply with all applicable Federal, state and local laws and regulations and ensure that all facilities where waste is located or placed have obtained all permits and necessary approvals. Access to these facilities must be given to EPA and state agencies. Access includes allowing the agencies to perform any activities necessary, such as assessments, sampling or inspections.

The Coast Guard directive also provides guidelines for community engagement activities and sets transparency requirements for information regarding planned waste disposal activities. BP will establish a response system for the public to submit concerns and questions regarding waste management activities.

For information on waste management or to read the waste management plan, please visit EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/bpspill/waste.html.



Staying Healthy – Avoid Contact with Oil

For most individuals, brief contact with a small amount of oil, while not recommended, will do no harm. Some individuals are especially sensitive to chemicals, including the hydrocarbons found in crude oil and petroleum products. They may have an allergic reaction or develop rashes even from brief contact. If contact occurs, wash the area with soap and water, baby oil or a widely-used, safe cleaning compound such as the cleaning paste sold at auto parts stores.

The public is reminded that oily debris should only be retrieved by trained personnel. Volunteers must be properly trained and equipped to assist shoreline response efforts. For volunteer inquiries, visit www.serve.gov/oilspill.

For more information

Restoration effort: www.restorethegulf.gov

EPA response & validated environmental air and water sampling results: www.epa.gov/bpspill

CDC response: emergency.cdc.gov/gulfoilspill2010

National Park Service: (updates about potential park closures, resources at risk, and NPS actions to protect vital park space and wildlife) www.nps.gov/aboutus/oil-spill-response.htm

Fish and Wildlife Service: (updates along the Gulf Coast and the status of national wildlife refuges) www.fws.gov/home/dhoilspill

NOAA Fisheries Service: (daily updates on fishing closures) sero.nmfs.noaa.gov

Call Centers

Joint Information Center: (713) 323-1670 or (713) 323-1671

Medical Support Line/Poison Control: (for oil spill health related questions) (800) 222-1222

Report oiled shoreline or request volunteer information: (866) 448-5816

Submit alternative response technology, services or products: (281) 366-5511

Submit your vessel for the Vessel of Opportunity Program: (866) 279-7983

Submit a claim for damages: (800) 440-0858

Report oiled wildlife: (866) 557-1401