

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
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MMS Announces Interagency Initiative on Emergency Response

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) announced today the publication of an agreement to implement interagency "one-plan" guidance for spills of oil and hazardous substances. This agreement, known as the Integrated Contingency Plan, supports President Clinton's review of federal authorities related to hazardous materials prevention, mitigation, and response.

In announcing the agreement, MMS Director Cynthia Quarterman described it as a common-sense approach to emergency response. "A single plan is the most efficient way to handle spill clean-up that involves a number of agencies and overlapping regulations. This agreement will minimize duplication of effort and ensure a response that should quickly counter potential hazards to people and the environment," she said.

The Integrated Contingency Plan was signed by the Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and the Department of Transportation's Research and Special Programs Administration, in addition to the Minerals Management Service. The plan was developed under the leadership of the National Response Team, with participation by industry, environmental groups, and state agencies.

A core facility response plan explains how emergency personnel should begin their response to a spill of oil or hazardous substances under existing federal laws and regulations. Annexes to the core plan contain additional information, such as a description of the facility's incident command system and data on specific hazards that may be present. Facility plans prepared to comply with the new guidance will satisfy emergency response planning requirements of the five federal agencies and will be the preferred method of such planning.

MMS is the federal agency that manages the Nation's natural gas, oil, and other mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf, and collects, accounts for, and disburses about \$4 billion yearly in revenues from offshore federal mineral leases and from onshore mineral leases on federal and Indian lands.

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