



MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: (866) 920-MEMA

*This release is the result of information sharing among lead responding agencies Mississippi Departments of Environmental Quality and Marine Resources, responding support agencies, BP and the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency as the coordinating agency. This information will be updated three times a week until further notice.

Media Contact:
866-920-6362

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 19, 2010

Mississippi oil spill response updates

BILOXI—The following are upcoming actions and a summary of Mississippi's and BP's responses to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

Upcoming actions:

MDEQ:

- Beach assessments by MDEQ staff as members of Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Teams.
- Boom inspections three times a week.
- Sampling three times a week.
- MDEQ State Emergency Response Teams respond to calls and inquiries from the public and local officials.
- Air monitoring with EPA.

MDMR:

- Continue beach assessments.
- Conduct air observation flight planned for Mississippi Sound and adjacent waters to develop awareness of any event related to contamination in or near the Mississippi areas of interest.
- Two vessels and crews are scheduled to conduct square meter samples of the oyster reefs in the western Mississippi Sound.
- Collect routine shrimp samples.
- Top and bottom water samples are scheduled in all of the passes between the barrier islands and west of Cat Island and east of Petit Bois Island. These samples are planned for Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week.
- Routine gillnet samples are scheduled on near shore artificial reefs.

BP:

- Continue regular air and water monitoring.
- "Top Hat" currently on seabed pending effectiveness of riser tube insertion and will be used if the riser tube doesn't work.

-MORE-

Upcoming actions continued:

National Guard:

- Finalizing state response plan.
- Participate in air reconnaissance of Mississippi Sound and adjacent waters with MDMR staff.

Current public announcements:

- More than 2,100 Mississippians have filed claims with BP, and \$1,750,000 has been paid out.
- Reports still indicate that the main oil slick from the BP Deepwater Horizon oil leak is more than 50 miles from the Mississippi Gulf Coast.
- The MDEQ and MDMR Resources are still asking the public to AVOID handling any tar balls, and to please report tar ball locations and broken or disconnected boom by calling: (866) 448-5816.
- Boom deployment: Incident Command Post in Mobile, Ala. Reports that 89 percent of the area contingency plan is complete with 354,600 feet of boom deployed to protect sensitive areas along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. MDEQ and MDMR are working with BP, the responsible party for the spill, to direct the placement of the boom.

Summary of actions completed:

MDEQ:

- MDEQ responded to a citizen call about possible rig debris; BP was informed, and the material is in the custody of DMR.
- MDEQ SERT teams responded to two reports of tar balls.
- MDEQ continued boom patrol along with DMR and National Guard.
- Current air monitoring data from MDEQ, EPA, and the other Gulf states is available at: www.epa.gov/bpspill/air. All levels are normal.

MDMR:

- The Commission on Marine Resources today voted during its regular monthly meeting in Biloxi to draft a resolution urging BP to utilize and give first priority to Mississippi commercial and charter boat fishermen in the Vessel of Opportunity program in Mississippi.
- MDMR's Marine Patrol had four boats and nine marine patrol officers are patrolling federal waters enforcing the commercial and recreational fishing closure in the oil-affected portions of the Gulf of Mexico.
- MDMR Marine Patrol and DEQ personnel check boom placements in Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties and the barrier islands on Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week.
- Routine shrimp samples were collected at nine stations across the Mississippi Sound.
- The National Guard handled the flight for today with MDMR and MDEQ personnel onboard. The flight made several passes moving from east to west both north and south of the Mississippi Barrier Islands.
- DMR Fisheries staff and Marine Patrol finished preparations to conduct square meter samples of oyster reefs in western Mississippi Sound for baseline comparisons beginning May 19. These samples are being conducted about a month ahead of schedule to get population and mortality estimates ahead of any potential impacts from the Deepwater Horizon spill.

MS Military Department:

- MMD conducted a second overnight flight in order to recon areas of interest to include shoreline and island booming, and the flight was extremely successful.
- MMD officials are now finalizing a comprehensive state response plan. Currently 52 national guardsmen are on orders to plan and prepare for any needed activities.

BP:

- The riser insertion tube remains inserted into the riser pipe, and the drill rig Enterprise is collecting an oil/gas mixture with less than 1 percent water.
- Other solutions remain on standby to assess the effectiveness of the riser insertion tube. Individuals interested in specialty volunteer training should email horizonresponse@pecpremier.com to request training information from British Petroleum.
- BP has opened three Mississippi community outreach offices, and two Mississippi claims offices. The locations and hours are as follows:

Mississippi Community Outreach Centers:

Hancock County
454 Hwy. 90, Suite K
Waveland, MS 39576
Hours: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Harrison County
1319 24th Ave
Gulfport, MS 39531
Hours: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Jackson County
710 Delmas Ave.
Pascagoula, MS 39567
Hours: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Mississippi Claims Office:

Hancock County
1171 Hwy. 90
Bay St. Louis, MS 39520

Harrison County
920 Cedar Lake Road, Suite K
Biloxi, MS 39532

Jackson County
5912 Old Mobile Hwy
Pascagoula, MS 39581

- BP continues to monitor air and water samples. To date, 3,727 vessel owners, captains and crew have participated in the training across Mississippi. About 968 vessel owners in Mississippi have submitted charter agreements and about 325 owners are activated to check boom status, and keep watch for any sheen near the coastline.

Small Business Administration:

- Business Recovery Centers are scheduled to open today in George, Hancock, Jackson and Stone counties.
- Businesses may obtain loan information and application forms by calling SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or (800) 877-8339 for the hearing impaired, e-mailing disastercustomerservice@sba.gov, visiting SBA's website at www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance, or visiting a local Business Recovery Center.

-MORE-

MS State Department of Health:

- MSDH continues health surveillance in the three coastal counties for health conditions that may be oil spill related.
- MSDH continues to respond to questions and inquires from the public, and is continuing to providing oil spill health information on our agency website, www.healthmys.com.

MS Department of Mental Health:

- Community Health Centers on the coast are still prepared to deal with any potential mental health response, but neither of the centers has reported any requests for mental health assistance.

MS Emergency Management Agency:

- MEMA continues to staff Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties with planning, operations and public information personnel.

MS Department of Wildlife, Fisheries & Parks:

- MDWFP has 20 officers scheduled to attend HAZWOPER training beginning Wednesday, May 19 and ending Thursday, May 20.
- Training for an additional 20 officers will be scheduled next week.

MS Board of Animal Health:

- MBAH is continuing to identify MS Animal Response Team (MART) members qualified and eligible to work as paraprofessionals.
- These paraprofessionals will work within the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center to support Tri-State Bird Rescue's response to rehabilitate oiled wildlife as requested.
- Training requirements and opportunities have been identified and are being communicated to active MART members.

Civil Air Patrol:

- CAP flying to support MDMR has been suspended for this week.

MS Department of Employment Security:

- The WIN Job Centers and the MDES call centers are working with employers to post job orders and refer job applicants to jobs related to the oil spill.
- MDES is accepting applications from MS residents seeking paid oil response work at WIN Job Centers as well as online at www.mdes.ms.gov.
- Currently MDES has 10 employers listing oil spill related jobs, 6,190 job openings with over 3,000 individuals having been referred to employers for this work

MS Development Authority:

- MDA reports no travel restrictions or disruptions on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.
- The state's coastal businesses, both traditional business enterprises and tourism and hospitality-related businesses, are open for business as usual.

Oil spill state agency roundup
May 19, 2010

MS Commission for Volunteer Service:

- MCVS is working with multiple agencies to create a pre-impact, coast watch team, while also trying to determine other appropriate volunteer response.
- MCVS is scheduling meetings with county EMA directors along the coast in efforts to explore each community's immediate needs and offer volunteer assistance.
- Volunteer reception center locations will be available soon. MCVS is accepting registration of volunteers at www.mcvs.org, and is working with BP to identify prospective volunteer activities.

Please check www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com for regular updates on the spill and the response.

Important Phone numbers:

Submit Claims to BP: 800-440-0858

Report oiled Wildlife: 866-557-1401

Report oiled Shoreline/ Vandalized, broken or damaged boom: 866-448-5816

Alternative technology, services or products/ Vessels of Opportunity: 281-366-5511

Volunteer Hotline/ Community Information: email: horizonresponse@pecpremier.com

Report fish kills: 228-523-4128

PEC Hotline: Specialty Wildlife training: 866-647-2338

Register with the MS Commission for Volunteer Service for non-paid volunteer opportunities at www.mcvs.org.

###