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FLORIDA DEEPWATER HORIZON RESPONSE JUNE 17, 2010

TALLAHASSEE – Under the leadership of Governor Charlie Crist, the State Emergency Response Team and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) are actively coordinating and responding to the Deepwater Horizon incident.

The following is a summary of state and BP response actions to date, as well as tips for residents and visitors to take precautions both pre and post-landfall.

Landfall Reports and Predictions:

- On June 16, dime to five inch-sized tar balls and tar patties were found in widely scattered areas of northwest Florida. The heaviest impacts have been seen from Escambia County east to Okaloosa County.
- Perdido Pass, Pensacola Pass and Destin Pass will be closed with the tide to reduce the amount of oil from entering inland waters. Boom will be deployed across each Pass at flood tide (water coming in) and removed at ebb tide (water going out).
 - Boaters in areas where skimming is being conducted, or where boom has been set, have been requested to maintain no-wake speeds.
 - The United States Coast Guard's Captain of the Port for Sector Mobile authorized the official closure of Perdido Pass, Pensacola Pass and Destin Pass. These waterways will be manned to allow access to necessary vessel traffic. Perdido Pass, Pensacola Pass and Destin Pass will be open for vessel traffic during low tide. [See NOAA tide predictions.](#)
 - A flashing light has been attached to all boom to increase visibility to boaters.
- According to NOAA projections, additional impacts are expected throughout northwest Florida within the next 72 hours due to onshore winds.
- The majority of impacts to Florida's shoreline will likely be highly weathered, in the form of tar balls, oil sheen, tar mats or mousse – a pudding-like oil/water mixture that could be brown, rust or orange in color.
- Observations by NOAA continue to indicate no significant amounts of oil moving toward the Loop Current. The Loop Current Ring, a circular current which was formerly part of the Loop Current and contains a small portion of oil slick in the form of light sheens, has detached again from the main Loop Current.
 - There have been no reports of Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill-related oil products reaching the shore beyond the northwest Florida region. There is no

indication that the rest of the state will have impacts from weathered oil products within the next 72 hours.

- Learn more at the [NOAA website](#). If oil is sighted on Florida's coastline report it to the State Warning Point at 1-877-2-SAVE-FL (1-877-272-8335) or by dialing #DEP from most cell phones.

On Site Actions:

- Current projections estimate Deepwater Horizon's discharge at 35,000 to 60,000 barrels per day. [Learn more](#).
- BP has placed a [Lower Marine Riser Package \(LMRP\) Cap Containment System](#) in an attempt to contain the leak and capture a substantial amount of the leaking oil. On June 16, approximately 14,750 barrels of oil were captured from the LMRP Cap Containment System and approximately 3,850 barrels of oil and 40 million cubic feet of natural gas were flared. BP is continuing efforts to drill two relief wells.

State Actions:

- The State Emergency Operations Center is activated at Level 1.
- The State Emergency Operations Center's reconnaissance monitoring moved its main operations branch from Henderson Beach State Park in Destin to St. Andrews State Park in Panama City. Division offices are in operation at the FWC field offices in Pensacola and Carrabelle, and at Henderson Beach State Park.
- On June 15, Governor Crist announced another free fishing weekend to encourage people, especially dads and their kids, to get out and catch saltwater fish along Florida's beautiful coastlines. All Florida residents and visitors are invited to fish statewide for saltwater species without a license during the upcoming Father's Day weekend, June 19-20. All other saltwater fishing rules continue to apply. [Learn more](#).
- On June 15, Deepwater Horizon Unified Command directed the establishment of three Deputy Incident Commanders to lead oil impact mitigation and cleanup efforts in Alabama, Mississippi and Florida. In addition, Deepwater Horizon Unified Command directed the creation of an Incident Management Team to be located in Tallahassee. This team will report to Mobile, Alabama, Incident Command Post. [Learn more](#).
- On June 13, the FWC issued an [executive order](#) to temporarily close a portion of coastal state waters offshore of Escambia County to the harvest of saltwater fish, crabs and shrimp.
 - The closure includes state waters from the beaches out nine nautical miles into the Gulf from the Alabama line east to the Pensacola Beach water tower. Interior bays and estuaries remain open to fishing.
 - This area covers approximately 23 miles of Florida's coastline in Escambia County, where oil spill is now present.
 - Recreational catch-and-release fishing is still allowed as long as saltwater fish are not harvested or possessed in the closed area. Oysters, clams and mussels are not included in the closure, because they are not expected to be affected by oil in the area. [Learn more](#).

- On June 10, DEP issued an Amended [Emergency Final Order](#) to accelerate preparedness and restoration in the counties under the Governor's state-of-emergency Executive Orders.
- On June 10, Deepwater Horizon Unified Command announced the activation of the Florida Peninsula Command Post in Miami. [Learn more.](#)
- Governor Crist has issued three [Executive Orders](#) since April 30, 2010 declaring a state of emergency in 26 coastal counties that may see impacts.
- DEP conducted water and sediment sampling to use as a baseline and is monitoring air quality data. Statewide air quality monitoring is conducted in coordination with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Learn more at <http://www.airnow.gov/> or <http://www.epa.gov/bpspill/>.
 - Air quality reports for June 16 revealed that air quality was considered good for ozone and moderate for fine particulate matter in northwest Florida. "Good" means the air quality is satisfactory and air pollution poses little or no risk. "Moderate" means air quality is acceptable for most people.

Boom Placement:

- Approximately 308,600 feet of boom has been placed in northwest Florida along the most sensitive areas and 56,050 feet is staged. Additionally, counties in the region are moving forward with supplemental booming plans. As of June 15, 234,060 feet of supplemental boom has been deployed or staged by Florida contractors.
- Placement of boom is based on where the oil is threatening, as well as each region's area contingency plan.

Health Effects:

- The Florida Department of Health, in coordination with DEP and VISIT FLORIDA has developed an online mapping resource that contains the most up-to-date health advisory information for Florida's beach waters. Visitors are encouraged to visit www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/health.htm or www.visitflorida.com/florida_travel_advisory/.
- On June 16, Okaloosa Health Department, in coordination with Okaloosa County Public Safety and local officials posted a health advisory for the area extending from Okaloosa Island through the eastern boundary of Beasley Park. [Learn more.](#)
- On June 8, Escambia County Health Department, in coordination with Escambia County Emergency Management and local officials posted a health advisory for the area extending from the Florida-Alabama state line to the entrance of the Perdido Unit, Gulf Islands National Seashore. [Learn more.](#)
- If residents or visitors see tar or oiled debris on the beach, **DO NOT PICK IT UP.** For most people, an occasional brief contact with a small amount of oil will do no harm, yet still it is not recommended. [Learn more.](#)
- For general health information questions regarding the oil-spill and exposure to oil spill products contact the Florida Poison Information Centers at **1-800-222-1222.**
- DOH has compiled guidelines for managing stress and preventing heat related injuries for those impacted by the oil spill or involved in cleanup activities. [Learn more.](#)

Fisheries & Seafood:

- On June 16, NOAA expanded the closed fishing area to capture portions of the oil slick moving beyond the area's current northern boundary, off the northwest Florida federal-state waterline. This boundary was moved to Panama City Beach. This closure does not apply to any state waters. This leaves more than 66 percent of Gulf federal waters available for fishing. [Learn more.](#)
- While state waters off the coast of Escambia County are closed for the harvest of saltwater fish, crabs and shrimp, all other state waters remain open to recreational fishing.
- The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' [seafood website](#) provides up-to-date information on Florida's fisheries.
 - The Florida Seafood Hotline, 1-800-357-4273, is updated daily at 2:00 PM, and provides information on what state waters are open, Florida's seafood supply, pricing and what seafood is being harvested and available frozen.
- Fishermen who wish to contact BP about a claim should call 1-800-440-0858.
- To report oiled wildlife, please call 1-866-557-1401 and leave a message. Messages are checked hourly.
- For the safety of the public as well as the safety of animals, rescues should only be conducted by trained responders. [Learn more.](#)

Tourism:

- Through www.VISITFLORIDA.com/floridalive, vacationers are able to view live Twitter feeds and read up-to-the-minute information on the status of any city or region in Florida.
- VISIT FLORIDA has a blog which hosts daily media coverage highlighting oil spill and Florida stories posted at www.sunshinematters.org.
- The Florida State Parks website, <http://www.floridastateparks.org>, is updated daily and will list any impacts. Learn more by calling 1-850-245-2157.

Tips for Homeowners:

- While the state appreciates the concern expressed by Floridians and the ingenuity of those seeking alternative measures to help protect the state's shoreline, the following tips are offered to ensure that these measures are helpful and not harmful to Florida's coasts, wildlife and water resources: [Tips for homeowners.](#)

Tips for Businesses and Consumers:

- The Attorney General's fraud hotline is open to receive any reports of fraud or price gouging. The hotline is 1-866-966-7226.
- The Florida Agriculture and Consumer Services Commissioner gas price-gouging hotline is also operational. The toll-free hotline number is 1-800-HELP-FLA (1-800-435-7352).
- Coastal businesses should make loss of earnings claims for damages incurred as a result of the oil spill. Learn more at <http://www.myfloridacfo.com/> or by calling 1-850-413-3089 or toll-free at 1-877-MY-FL-CFO (1-877-693-5236).
- To discuss spill related damage with BP representatives, please call the BP Claims Reporting Line at 1-800-440-0858.

Volunteer Opportunities:

- Individuals interested in volunteering can register at www.volunteerfloridadisaster.org.
- Volunteers will not be in direct contact with oil or oil-contaminated materials.
- The Governor's Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service – Volunteer Florida is encouraging Floridians and visitors to stay current on the latest information on scheduled beach cleanups and other local volunteer opportunities. [Learn more.](#)

Learn More About Florida's Response:

- DEP launched a Twitter account, www.Twitter.com/FLDEPAlert, dedicated to providing updates on Florida's response to the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill.
- DEP in coordination with the state Emergency Operations Center established an email sign-up and a comprehensive website at <http://www.deepwaterhorizonflorida.com>.
- For a list of Unified Command, BP and Florida phone numbers, visit <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/default.htm#numbers>.
- The Oil Spill Information Line is available at 1-888-337-3569 from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. seven days a week. Additional phone numbers have also been established for persons with disabilities: (800) 955-8771 (TDD) or (800) 955-8770 (voice).

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