



# TEXAS CITY "Y" RESPONSE

Official Area Command Response Information Site

Serving Galveston and Matagorda Incident Command Posts

Home

News and Info

Questions/Comments

Site Map

[Home](#) › [News Releases](#) › Update 6/Photos: Matagorda Bay

Document Number: 52

## Texas City "Y" Response Area Command



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

DATE: March 30, 2014 8:29:00 PM CDT

## Update 6/Photos: Matagorda Bay



Task force members remove oil-contaminated sand from the beach on Matagorda Island, Texas, March 30, 2014. Cleanup operations are being directed by a unified command comprised of personnel from the Texas General Land Office, U.S. Coast Guard and Kirby Inland marine. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2<sup>nd</sup> Class George Degener.



Coast Guard and contractor task force members discuss decontamination procedures during cleanup operation on Matagorda Island, Texas, March 30, 2014. Safety of responders is a top priority for a unified command comprised of personnel from the Texas General Land Office, U.S. Coast Guard and Kirby Inland marine. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2<sup>nd</sup> Class George Degener.



Task force members remove oil-contaminated sand from the beach on Matagorda Island, Texas, March 30, 2014. Cleanup operations are being directed by a unified command comprised of personnel from the Texas General Land Office, U.S. Coast Guard and Kirby Inland marine. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2<sup>nd</sup> Class George Degener.



Task force members remove oil-contaminated sand from the beach on Matagorda Island, Texas, March 30, 2014. Cleanup operations are being directed by a unified command comprised of personnel from the Texas General Land Office, U.S. Coast Guard and Kirby Inland marine. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2<sup>nd</sup> Class George Degener.

PORT O'CONNOR, Texas — An accelerated response continues to an oil spill which occurred in the Houston Ship Channel on March 22, as the Matagorda Incident Command Post in Port O'Connor, Texas, deployed more than 345 response contractors onto impacted shoreline along South Matagorda Island.

Today's work focused on cleaning up oil deposits using manual methods consisting of rakes, shovels and buckets.

These efforts are targeted to remove oil and oiled debris from approximately 24 miles of beach line on the South Matagorda Island State Park. While the logistics of transporting ATVs, gear and personnel continue to be challenging due to limited access by vessel and barge to the Island, crews are striving to overcome those challenges with great sensitivity to protecting the ecosystem. As of 4 p.m. today more than 200 bags of oiled debris has been collected and removed along a stretch of 200 yards.

Progress in containing the spill allowed responders to begin removing boom from certain areas along Bird Island. Approximately 800 feet of boom remain in place although response officials expect all remaining boom to be removed by sunset this evening. Eleven vessels continued to work in the Matagorda area to recovery any remaining oil on the water.

Additional sightings of oil near North Padre Island and along sporadic portions of Mustang Island in Corpus Christi, TX have also been reported. County and local government agencies have been notified of the sightings which were first observed through overflights conducted by Texas General Land Office and United States Coast Guard personnel around 9:30 a.m. today. A 25-person task force was pre-staged in the area for rapid response.

These sightings also include tar balls, although it is not clear whether the tar balls are the result of the March 22 spill. Response teams from Miller Environmental, who are engaged in combatting that incident, have mobilized to contain and collect those tar balls and oil in newly impacted areas as well. Tar balls, ranging from dime sized to 6 inches were observed in patches of seaweed along J.P. Luby Beach off of Zahn Road. Responders report that more than 1.25 miles of impacted shoreline has been cleaned as of 4 p.m. today, resulting in the removal 25 bags of oiled debris.

Residents, tourists and others who may observe tar balls are urged to refrain from attempting their own clean-up activities and are asked to call 361-939-6349 to report the exact locations of any sightings. Persons who may be physically impacted by the oil should take quick action to wash the affected area with soap and warm water. The public is discouraged from accessing Matagorda Island until the Unified Command announces that

response operations are complete.

Air monitoring continues and test results confirm no danger to the public at any of the affected areas.

While there are no reports of wildlife being impacted from these new observations, officials from Texas Parks and Wildlife and U.S. Fish and Wildlife have observed and captured a total of five deceased birds in the general Matagorda area. Federal and state wildlife agency personnel are actively engaged in patrolling potentially impacted areas off Corpus Christi to remain vigilant to any impact.

A wildlife rehabilitation facility has been established in Port O'Connor at the Texas Parks & Wildlife Coastal Fisheries Laboratory, to assist in the event that birds or marine life are impacted by the oil. Persons who observe any impacted wildlife should not attempt to capture or handle them but are urged to call 888-384-2000.

In a proactive move to disseminate accurate and timely information to stakeholders, the Matagorda Incident Command conducted its second a WebEx brief for elected local, county, and state officials, Emergency Management Coordinators, and port authorities from Matagorda County to Cameron County. Participants in the briefing included representatives of the Texas General Land Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Texas Parks and Wildlife and Kirby Inland Marine.

A claims line has been established for persons who may have questions regarding personal impacts from the incident. The number is 855-276-1575.

For more information, visit [www.texascityyresponse.com](http://www.texascityyresponse.com), or contact the Matagorda Bay joint information center at 214-225-8007.

###

*For more information contact:*

*Matagorda Response JIC  
Texas City "Y" Response Area Command  
(214) 225-8007  
3674 W. Adams St.  
Port O'Connor, TX 77982  
[TexasCityYResponse@gmail.com](mailto:TexasCityYResponse@gmail.com)*