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Texas City "Y" Response Area Command



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Update 9/Photos: Matagorda Bay



Crewmembers work to remove oil and reduce impact to the beaches of National Seashore Park April 1, 2014. Machinery was provided by Miller Environmental Service to help sift together any materials containing oil that may have washed up ashore. Crewmembers worked in large groups to help clean the beach efficiently. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Carlos Vega.



Crew members work to remove oil and reduce impact to the beaches of National Seashore Park April 1, 2014. Machinery was provided by Miller Environmental Service to help sift together any materials containing oil that may have washed up ashore. Crew members worked in large groups to help clean the beach efficiently. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Carlos Vega.

PORT O'CONNOR, Texas — Oil spill response plans for today center around continuing efforts to collect oiled sand and debris from impacted shoreline along South Matagorda and Mustang islands and parts of the Padre Island National Seashore. While high tides may limit areas accessible for safe activity by work crews, "Aggressive work will continue wherever and whenever possible," according to Matagorda Command Post Incident Commander Randal S. Ogryzdiak.

"Plans for today call for approximately 389 response contractors to continue their good work along the shores in conjunction with federal and state wildlife agency personnel who are on alert for sightings of distressed birds and marine life," said Incident Commander Randal S. Ogryzdiak. "I'm pleased with the progress we've made to date and am confident we're moving steadily in the right direction."

Yesterday, response crews removed approximately 32,900 pounds of oiled sand and debris from shoreline on south Matagorda and Mustang islands and at the Padre Island National Seashore. Since shoreline recovery efforts began, approximately 71,350 pounds of oiled sand and debris has been removed. Oil on north Padre Island seems confined largely to tar balls in certain areas. Vehicular traffic in the Padre Island National Seashore remains closed to traffic at this time although pedestrians still have access to the area.

Incident Command Rapid Assessment Teams continue their reconnaissance of shoreline and ocean from the Colorado River to the Rio Grande River in Brownsville, TX, which covers approximately 225 miles of south Texas shoreline and comprises two-thirds of the Texas coastline.

Members of the Unified Command are scheduled to participate in an informational session to take place on Thursday, April 3, at the Port O'Connor Elementary School, 508 Monroe Avenue. The session will begin at 6:30 p.m. and allow attendees access to officials from a variety of federal, state and local agencies, including the United States Coast Guard, Texas General Land Office, Texas Parks and Wildlife, NOAA, Texas Department of Health Services, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife.

"Keeping the public informed is as central to our success as the work we are doing on the water and on the shore," said Incident Commander Randal S. Ogryzdiak. We urge all interested parties to attend this meeting and share their thoughts and concerns."

Air monitoring continues to confirm no risk to the public from any of the affected areas.

Wildlife officials report an increase in the number of oiled and recovered birds from the Matagorda / Padre Island area. As of late Monday night 43 deceased animals were in possession of wildlife experts including a mix of loons, herons, terns, shorebirds and others. There are no reports of harmful impacts on Whooping Cranes in the area. Two deceased fresh water turtles were brought to the center over the weekend. Medical analysis will make an ultimate determination regarding the causes of death. Persons who observe any impacted wildlife should not attempt to capture or handle them but are urged to call 888-384-2000.

Daily conference call updates with county and city officials, their Emergency Management Coordinators, and port officials and state agencies will continue in an effort to keep them and their constituents and stakeholders fully informed.

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.

A claims line has been established for persons who may have questions regarding personal impacts from the incident. The number is 855-276-1275. **Please note that a previously published number is no longer operational.**

For more information, contact the Matagorda Bay joint information center at 214-225-8007, or visit www.texascityYresponse.com.

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