



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Deepwater Horizon Response Transitions to National Response Center Reporting

(JACKSON, Miss.) -- The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) announced today that the Gulf Coast Incident Management Team and the U.S. Coast Guard are transitioning the Deepwater Horizon oil spill response back to the pre-spill National Response Center system.

“While the Coast Guard and the Gulf States have decided that it’s time to move toward scaling back the response there will continue to be response efforts and clean up for oil that is found. In addition, if oil is found to be MC252 oil, BP will be held accountable for the cleanup. I am extremely proud of the commitment MDEQ staff has shown and the long hours dedicated to protecting our natural resources for more than three years. We’re not going away, but we’re moving into other phases,” said Trudy Fisher, MDEQ Executive Director.

Fisher also outlined MDEQ’s continuing role in oil spill response:

- MDEQ receives and participates in National Response Center reports and dispatches staff along with the Coast Guard as appropriate.
- MDEQ staff will continue to conduct periodic inspections of shoreline segments for any presence or accumulation of oil or tar balls through the summer beach season.
- MDEQ is prepared to inspect shoreline segments and respond to other conditions after landfall in the event of a hurricane.

Mississippians are encouraged to contact the National Response Center by calling 1-800-424-8802 or accessing www.nrc.uscg.mil if any oil-related material is sighted or a spill of any kind.

The National Response Center is the sole national point of contact for reporting all oil, chemical, radiological, biological and etiological discharges into the environment anywhere in the United States and its territories. The reported information is passed to a local Coast Guardsman who investigates the report and takes appropriate action.

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U.S. Coast Guard Deepwater Horizon Response transitions to National Response Center reporting

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NEW ORLEANS - The Federal On-Scene Coordinator for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill has announced that the Gulf Coast Incident Management Team has started transitioning back to National Response Center reporting.

The primary function of the NRC is to serve as the sole national point of contact for reporting all oil, chemical, radiological, biological and etiological discharges into the environment anywhere in the United States and its territories. The reported information is passed to a local Coast Guardsman who investigates the report and takes appropriate action.

"This is another important step towards meeting our goal of returning the shoreline to as close to pre-spill conditions as possible while managing the scale of the response to meet conditions on the ground," said Capt. Duke Walker, FOSC for the Deepwater Horizon Response.

Officials here expect that the coastlines of Florida, Alabama and Mississippi will complete this transition by mid June.

Transitioning these areas back to the NRC reporting process is part of the National Contingency Plan. The Coast Guard will maintain oversight of the responsible party and continue to follow established protocol including sampling, fingerprinting and other investigative means to identify the source of the pollution and find the responsible party. If oil is found to be MC252 oil, BP will be held accountable for the cleanup.

"We will continue to respond and cleanup MC252 oil that can be removed without further damaging the environment creating the conditions for continued restoration work," said Walker. "However, we've reached a point in some areas where the impact to the environmentally sensitive land outweighs the minimal amounts of oil being

collected. Making the transition at this time will allow us to adjust to a smaller footprint for cleanup while being environmentally friendly.”

“The public has been a huge and helpful source of information for our cleanup efforts ,” said Walker. “I encourage citizens to be involved in making reports to the National Response Center by calling 1-800-424-8802.”

Go to www.nrc.uscg.mil for more information on the National Response Center and the reporting process.