

NEW SKIMMERS TO BE IN MISSISSIPPI WATERS BY JULY 5

Revised information from previous press release

BILOXI, Miss. – The State of Mississippi will have its own skimmers beginning to operate in Mississippi waters by July 5, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) announced Saturday. Belt skimmers will be built by Trinity Yachts in Gulfport and Overing Yacht Designs in Ocean Springs. Governor Haley Barbour directed the construction of these vessels and for the costs to be paid by BP. In addition, state officials continue to locate additional skimmers for immediate use in Mississippi waters. Overing Yacht Designs, a Mississippi company, will build from the keel up ten 40 foot belt skimmers and four 30 foot belt skimmers in Amelia, Louisiana. Trinity Yachts will build nine 30 foot belt skimmers. The first one is scheduled to be available July 5 with all boats finished by August 1. Local boat captains are being interviewed to be hired, and they will be trained to operate the skimming system. The State of Mississippi will maintain control of the vessels, and they will be operated under the authority of MDEQ. “Belt skimmers are the best technology available, and they are able to deal with all types and consistencies of oil. In addition, the design of the boats will allow them to be used in deeper waters south of the Barrier Islands all the way to the shallow areas of the bays if necessary. We are looking for these vessels to be piloted by Mississippians who know our waters best,” said Trudy Fisher, MDEQ Executive Director. More information and links about MDEQ’s and DMR’s roles in oil spill response are available at www.deq.state.ms.us and www.dmr.ms.gov.
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