

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Government Response to the BP Oil Spill

View up-to-date information on the Gulf Coast at <http://www.epa.gov/bpspill>

Monitoring Air, Water and Sediment Quality

July 2010

One of EPA's primary jobs is to identify potential risks to public health and the environment. EPA is monitoring air and sampling water and sediment to evaluate potential impacts from the BP oil spill. To date, EPA has collected thousands of samples for testing by scientists or at EPA laboratories.

EPA's data are shared with Federal, state and local authorities, and posted for the public at www.epa.gov/bpspill as quickly as it is validated by EPA's scientific experts.

Air Monitoring

Air monitoring helps detect harmful air pollution from the spill or its response. This is done through stationary air monitors positioned throughout the region, as well as mobile Trace Atmospheric Gas Analyzers, or TAGA units, traveling the area. TAGAs deliver real-time monitoring and can detect chemicals at very low levels, making them vital in rapidly identifying and addressing potential environmental and health threats. We have also deployed ASPECT, a twin-engine aircraft designed to collect air sampling data and photo documentation of environmental incidents.

EPA is keeping local officials and responders alerted to any changes or potential health threats found in air monitoring. For the most recent and accurate information on EPA's air monitoring efforts, please visit www.epa.gov/bpspill/air.

Water Sampling

EPA is collecting samples in or close to beaches and marshes where oil is present to determine the potential threats to human health and aquatic life. While EPA strives to post raw and real-time monitoring data, it may take several days for scientists to collect, analyze, verify and post data. For updates on EPA's water sampling efforts, please visit EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/bpspill/water.

Sediment Sampling

Sediment sampling allows EPA to track ongoing impacts from the spill and determine if threats exist to seabed life. This sampling plays a role in protecting and, eventually, restoring wetlands and marsh areas at risk from oil. Samples have been taken off the coasts of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. For the most recent information on EPA's sediment sampling efforts, please visit EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/bpspill/sediment.

Decisions on beach closures and other actions are led by state and local health officials. EPA will continue to provide state and local health authorities with the most accurate and timely information about air, water and sediment quality. For more information, including updates, data and maps of sampling areas, please visit our Web site at www.epa.gov/bpspill.



For more information

Restoration effort: www.restorethegulf.gov

EPA response & validated environmental air and water sampling results: www.epa.gov/bpspill

CDC response: emergency.cdc.gov/gulfoilspill2010

National Park Service: (updates about potential park closures, resources at risk, and NPS actions to protect vital park space and wildlife) www.nps.gov/aboutus/oil-spill-response.htm

Fish and Wildlife Service: (updates along the Gulf Coast and the status of national wildlife refuges) www.fws.gov/home/dhoilspill

NOAA Fisheries Service: (daily updates on fishing closures) sero.nmfs.noaa.gov

Call Centers

Joint Information Center: (713) 323-1670 or (713) 323-1671

Medical Support Line/Poison Control: (for oil spill health related questions) (800) 222-1222

Report oiled shoreline or request volunteer information: (866) 448-5816

Submit alternative response technology, services or products: (281) 366-5511

Submit your vessel for the Vessel of Opportunity Program: (866) 279-7983

Submit a claim for damages: (800) 440-0858

Report oiled wildlife: (866) 557-1401