Oil or Chemical Spill Notification

call the National Response Center at
800-424-8802

Oil Spill Response

in the Region IV Coastal Zone,
contact the U.S. Coast Guard
Marine Safety Office (MSO):

MSO Wilmington, NC
910-792-8408

MSO Charleston, SC
843-724-7616

MSO Savannah, GA
912-652-4353

MSO Jacksonville, FL
904-247-7310

MSO Miami, FL
305-732-0160

MSO Tampa, FL
813-228-2189

MSO Mobile, AL
334-441-5121

In the Region IV Inland Zone,
contact the U.S. Environmental
Protection Agency:
404-562-8700

Inland Zone U.S. Coast Guard Offices are:

MSO Huntington, WV
800-253-7465

MSO Louisville, KY
800-253-7465

MSO Paducah, KY
502-442-1621

MSO Memphis, TN
901-544-3912

State Pollution Response Contacts are:

North Carolina
919-733-3300

South Carolina
Spill: 888-481-0125
Office: 803-896-4000

Georgia
404-656-4300

Florida
850-413-9911

Alabama
334-242-4378

Mississippi
601-352-9100

Tennessee
800-258-3300

Kentucky
800-928-2380

Suggested References:

Oil in the Sea
National Academy Press 1985

EPA's Oil Program Website
www.epa.gov/oilspill/

Coast Guard's Marine Safety and
Environmental Protection Website
www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/

NOAA HAZMAT Website
response.restoration.noaa.gov

Oil Spill Intelligence Report's Oil Spill Basics: A Primer for Students
www.cutter.com/osir/primer.htm

Document prepared by:
Region IV
Regional Response Team

RRT IV Co-chairs:
U.S. Coast Guard 305-536-5651
U.S. EPA 404-562-8721

OIL SPILL PREVENTION, PLANNING, AND RESPONSE MEASURES

Introduction

Nationwide, the safe shipment of oil and adequate preparedness to respond in the event of an oil spill are top priorities for both industry and government. Federal and state agencies, from the eight states in the southeast U.S. that comprise the EPA federal Region IV, have assembled this series of pamphlets to provide an overview of oil spill prevention, planning, and response topics. References are also provided to guide the reader to additional information on oil spill prevention and response.

Some Oil Facts:

• The United States consumes over 700 million gallons of oil daily, and U.S. oil imports are projected to grow about 2.2% per year through 2001.

• Over half of the oil consumed in the U.S. is imported over sea or land.

The Oil Pollution Act of 1990

The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA90), which was enacted by Congress soon after the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill in 1989, greatly strengthened prevention, planning, response, and restoration efforts. Major provisions of OPA:

• Require vessel and facility owners that handle oil as cargo to develop plans detailing steps they will take to immediately respond to an oil spill. These plans must: document agreements with oil spill cleanup organizations to respond in the event of an oil spill, be approved by the U.S. Coast Guard or U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and be tested regularly.

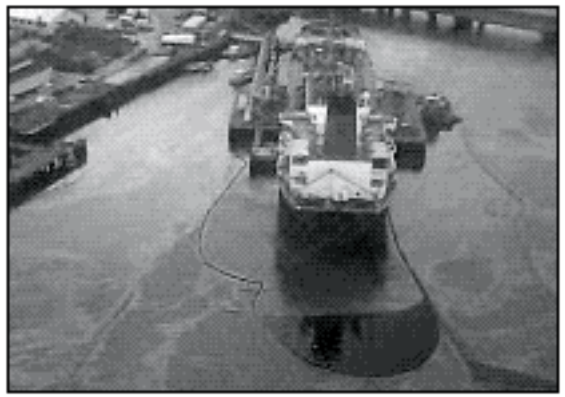
• Require new oil carrying tank barges and tank ships operating in U.S. waters to have double hulls, and require existing tankers to be phased out of this service over a 25 year period, based on the age of the vessel.

• Subject spillers to unlimited liability for gross negligence, willful misconduct, violation of any federal operating or safety standard, failure to report a spill, or failure to participate in the cleanup.

• Establish a $1 billion Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund. The fund ensures that legal or monetary issues do not impede timely spill response or reimbursement for damages. Spillers are responsible for costs paid by the fund.

• Require the Coast Guard to study navigational measures to reduce spills.

• Allow states to pass stricter laws than OPA 90, which many have already done.



Spill Response

Black oil spewing from a large oil tanker is a powerful symbol of marine pollution and human impact on the natural environment. Significant efforts on the part of government and industry are directed toward preventing oil spills and providing adequate response if prevention measures fail. During a spill, specific priorities and steps are taken to meet the challenges presented.

For most spills the general goals are to:

• Protect the safety of the public and the spill responder.

• Stabilize the source to stop the release of additional oil into the environment.

• Protect sensitive areas to limit the damage caused by the spilled oil.

• Collect and recycle or dispose of oil.

• Rehabilitate wildlife.

• Implement appropriate cleanup strategy for impacted areas.

The response techniques employed in a spill are dependent upon the product spilled, quantity, location, response time, weather conditions, responder capability, and availability of response equipment. First response efforts are improved by pre-identifying resources at risk, protection priorities, available equipment, and response personnel so that the first response is initiated while incident specific priorities are determined. This pre-spill planning is accomplished by the Area Committees that consist of representatives from federal and state governments, with input from industry, academia, environmental groups, and the community. The Area Committees have written Area Contingency Plans that identify response resources, cleanup strategies, and resources at risk within their jurisdiction. These plans also identify the appropriate conditions for the various spill response techniques, including:

• Mechanical containment and recovery

• Dispersants and other chemical countermeasures

• *In-situ* burning

• Shoreline cleanup

• Natural removal

It is important to note that these techniques are not mutually exclusive. To provide the most effective response under the widest range of conditions, oil spill response personnel may use response techniques from multiple categories. Other informational pamphlets available from the Region IV RRT will provide more detailed information on these response techniques as well as other areas of interest concerning oil spill response.