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FLORIDA DEEPWATER HORIZON RESPONSE MAY 28, 2010

TALLAHASSEE – Under the leadership of Governor Charlie Crist, the State Emergency Response Team and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) are actively coordinating and responding to the Deepwater Horizon incident.

The following is a summary of state and BP response actions to date, as well as tips for residents and visitors to take precautions both pre and post-landfall.

Landfall Predictions:

- Currently, there have been no confirmed oil impacts to Florida's more than 1,260 miles of coastline and 825 miles of sandy beaches. Residents and visitors are encouraged to visit a Florida beach or coastal community this Memorial Day weekend.
- Winds/currents continue to keep the plume away from the Florida coast for at least the next 72 hours.
- Latest observations by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) indicate that a small portion of the oil slick has reached the Loop Current in the form of light sheens.
- Currents in the Gulf have formed an eddy, a circular current, which may cause the loop current to pinch off at the Florida straits and move oil to the west. Learn more at the [NOAA website](#).
- Florida continues to monitor the location of the loop current based on NOAA's daily projections.
- Impacts to Florida's coastline, if any, could include [tar balls, oil sheen or tar mats](#). If oil is sighted on Florida's coastline report it to the State Warning Point at 1-877-2-SAVE-FL (1-877-272-8335) or by dialing #DEP from most cell phones.

On Site Actions:

- Current projections estimate Deepwater Horizon's discharge at 12,000 to 19,000 barrels per day. Learn more at <http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com/go/doc/2931/569235/>.
- BP continues to evaluate numerous options to contain the oil discharge and is continuing efforts to drill a relief well.
- On May 26, 2010 BP began pumping "[top kill](#)," heavy drilling mud, followed by cement, into the leaking well to stop the oil discharge. That effort is ongoing.

- At this time, there are no plans to use dispersants in Florida. If dispersants are ever considered in state waters, the determination to use the chemical would be evaluated by DEP with input from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute and EPA.

State Actions:

- The State Emergency Operations Center remains activated at a Level 2 or Partial activation.
- On May 28, Governor Charlie Crist issued [Executive Order 10-115](#), authorizing two free fishing weekends to help draw visitors to the Sunshine State. Both residents and nonresidents in Florida can fish for saltwater species around the state without a license during the upcoming Memorial Day weekend, May 29 to May 31, and the weekend of June 5 and 6, which is the first weekend after the popular red snapper season opens in the Gulf on June 1, 2010. All other fishing rules apply.
- On May 25, Governor Charlie Crist announced Florida's receipt of \$25 million from BP for Visit Florida and local tourist development councils to air a tourism marketing campaign reflecting the accurate condition of Florida's beaches. Governor Crist also announced the finalization of a Memorandum of Understanding between the State of Florida and BP. Learn more at: http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/files/052510_tourism_mou.pdf.
- Governor Charlie Crist has issued three [Executive Orders](#) since April 30, 2010 declaring a state of emergency in 26 coastal counties that may see impacts from the incident.
- DEP issued an [Emergency Final Order](#) to accelerate preparedness and restoration in the counties under the Governor's state-of-emergency Executive Orders.
- BP has opened claims offices in Florida. Visit the [BP Claims Page](#) to learn more.
- On May 18, 2010 the Small Business Administration (SBA) opened eight offices in the Panhandle. To date, these offices have issued a total of 109 applications. The SBA offices are open Monday – Saturday. Find office locations at: http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/files/small_business_admin.pdf
- DEP conducted water and sediment sampling to use as a baseline and is monitoring air quality data. Statewide air quality monitoring is conducted in coordination with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Learn more at <http://www.airnow.gov/> or <http://www.epa.gov/bpspill/>.
 - Air quality reports for Thursday, May 27, revealed that air quality was considered good for ozone and particulate matter throughout most of the North Florida coastal area. "Good" means the air quality is satisfactory and air pollution poses little or no risk. Panama City air quality is considered moderate. "Moderate" means air quality is acceptable for most people.

Boom Placement:

- To date, an estimated 193,750 feet of boom has been placed in Florida.
- Placement of boom is based where the oil is threatening, as well as each region's area contingency plan.
- The Unified Command Operations Group is asking boaters to avoid damaging boom. Boom cut or broken due to boater traffic jeopardizes coastal protection.

- Stolen or misplaced boom should be reported to local authorities.

Health Effects:

- At this time, there are no indications of any health risks to Floridians due to the Deepwater Horizon incident. The Department of Health and DEP are closely monitoring health and environmental impacts to Florida's beaches and will notice an advisory if conditions become unsafe.
- For most people, an occasional brief contact with a small amount of oil, while not recommended, will do no harm. Learn more at:
http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/files/faq_doh_051010.pdf

Fisheries & Seafood:

- The fisheries, wildlife and seafood off of Florida's coast in state waters are safe and there are no alerts at this time. Learn more [here](#). [Florida saltwater fishing regulations](#) remain in effect as usual. Learn more at www.MyFWC.com/Fishing.
- On May 25, 2010, NOAA modified and expanded the boundaries of the closed federal fishing area to match Louisiana state water closures. This leaves more than 77 percent of Gulf federal waters, and all of Florida's state waters, still open for fishing. Learn more at:
<http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com/go/doc/2931/565219/>.
- Fishermen who wish to contact BP about a claim should call 1-800-440-0858.
- FWC urges citizens to report oiled wildlife to the Wildlife Distress Hotline at 1-866-557-1401.
- For the safety of the public as well as the safety of animals, rescues should be conducted by trained responders. Learn more at:
<http://www.myfwc.com/OilSpill/index.htm>.

Tourism:

- Through www.VISITFLORIDA.com, vacationers are able to view live Twitter feeds and read up-to-the-minute information on the status of any city or region in Florida. Learn more at http://www.visitflorida.com/florida_travel_advisory/.
- The Florida State Parks website, <http://www.floridastateparks.org>, is updated daily and will list any impacts. Learn more by calling 1-850-245-2157.

Tips for Homeowners:

- While the state appreciates the concern expressed by Floridians and the ingenuity of those seeking alternative measures to help protect the state's shoreline, the following tips are offered to ensure that these measures are helpful and not harmful to Florida's coasts, wildlife and water resources: [Tips for homeowners](#).

Tips for Businesses and Consumers:

- The Attorney General's fraud hotline is open to receive any reports of fraud or price gouging. The hotline is 1-866-966-7226.
- The Florida Agriculture and Consumer Services Commissioner gas price-gouging hotline is also operational. The toll-free hotline number is 1-800-HELP-FLA (1-800-435-7352).

- Coastal businesses should make loss of earnings claims for damages incurred as a result of the oil spill. Businesses should file a claim with BP by calling 1-800-440-0858. Learn more at <http://www.myfloridacfo.com/> or by calling 1-850-413-3089 or toll-free at 1-877-MY-FL-CFO (1-877-693-5236).

Volunteer Opportunities:

- The Governor's Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service is encouraging Floridians and visitors to become a Coast Watch volunteer. Learn more at www.volunteerfloridadisaster.org.
- Report a change in Air Quality to <http://www.epa.gov/bpspill/>.
- For information on scheduled beach cleanups and other volunteer opportunities, visit <http://www.volunteerfloridadisaster.org/>.
- BP has established a volunteer program and set up a toll-free number for those interested in volunteering. Learn more by calling BP's community information line at 1-866-448-5816.

Learn More About Florida's Response:

- DEP launched a Twitter account, www.Twitter.com/FLDEPalert, dedicated to providing updates on Florida's response to the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill.
- DEP in coordination with the state Emergency Operations Center established an email sign-up and a comprehensive website at www.deepwaterhorizonflorida.com.
- For a list of Unified Command, BP and Florida phone numbers, visit <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/default.htm#numbers>
- The Oil Spill Information Line is available at 1-888-337-3569 from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. seven days a week. Additional phone numbers have also been established for persons with disabilities: (800) 955-8771 (TDD) or (800) 955-8770 (voice).

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