



CHARLIE CRIST  
Governor

SECRETARY MICHAEL W. SOLE  
Florida Department of Environmental Protection

DAVID HALSTEAD  
State Coordinating Officer

**MEDIA ADVISORY: THURSDAY, MAY 20, 2010**

**CONTACT: PUBLIC INFORMATION (ESF 14): (850) 921-0217**

## **FLORIDA DEEPWATER HORIZON RESPONSE MAY 20, 2010**

**TALLAHASSEE** – Under the leadership of Governor Charlie Crist, the State Emergency Response Team and the 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:**

- On Wednesday, May 19, the U.S. Coast Guard confirmed that tar balls collected from Fort Zachary Taylor State Park in Key West are not related to the Deepwater Horizon incident.
- In 2008 and 2009 there were 667 and 681 reports respectively of oil and petroleum incidents along Florida's waterways and beaches so these occurrences are not unusual. Specifically in the Florida Keys (Monroe County) there were 53 incidents in 2008 and 72 incidents in 2009 of oil and petroleum products being reported in their coastal waters.
- Deepwater Horizon continues to discharge an estimated 5,000 barrels (210,000 gallons) per day.
- BP continues to evaluate numerous options to contain the oil discharge and is continuing efforts to drill a relief well.
- Winds/currents continue to keep the plume away from the Florida coast for at least the next 72 hours.
- Florida continues to monitor the location of the loop current and make preparations to safeguard the state's shoreline.
- Latest observations on May 19, 2010 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 to very light sheens. Learn more at the [NOAA website](#).
- Impacts to Florida's coastline could include [tar balls](#), [oil sheen](#) or tar mats. Individuals that observe oil on Florida's coastline should report the incident to the State Warning Point at 1-877-2-SAVE-FL (1-877-272-8335) or by dialing #DEP from most cell phones.
- BP has opened eight claims offices in Florida. For locations and more information, please visit the [BP Claims Page](#) on the Deepwater Horizon Response webpage.

### **State Actions:**

- The State Emergency Operations Center remains activated at a Level 2 or Partial activation.
- On May 17, 2010, Governor Crist announced that BP will provide Florida an additional \$25 million for a national tourism advertising campaign. These funds are in addition to the \$25 million Florida has already received for preparation efforts.
- On May 14, 2010, Governor Crist announced that the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) approved disaster loan funds for businesses along Florida's Gulf coast that have been impacted by the Deepwater Horizon incident. ([Press Release](#)) Learn more at: <http://www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance/>.
- On May 12, 2010, Governor Crist directed DEP to issue an [Emergency Final Order](#) to accelerate preparedness and restoration in the 19 coastal counties under the Governor's state-of-emergency Executive Orders.
  - Government entities, BP and its contractors making emergency permit application requests pursuant to the Emergency Final Order can obtain DEP's emergency application form at:  
<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/beaches/publications/pdf/emergency/DEP73-303EmPerApp-w-insts.pdf>
  - The following link provides additional information about activities that may take place seaward of Coastal Construction Control Line:  
[http://www.dep.state.fl.us/beaches/default.htm#DEEPWATER\\_HORIZON\\_-\\_Gulf\\_Oil\\_Spill](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/beaches/default.htm#DEEPWATER_HORIZON_-_Gulf_Oil_Spill).
- The Florida Oil Spill Information Line, 1-888-337-3569, has been activated to provide Floridians with response information and resources about the Deepwater Horizon oil incident 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).
- 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 Wednesday, May 19, revealed that air quality was considered moderate for ozone in at St. Andrews State Park in Panama City and good throughout the rest of the panhandle area. The fine particulate matter (PM) measurements were all considered good. "Good" means the air quality is satisfactory and air pollution poses little or no risk. "Moderate" means air quality is acceptable for most people.

### **Boom Placement:**

- To date, an estimated 224,800 feet of boom has been placed in Florida and an additional 51,000 is staged.
- Placement of boom is based on tides and where the oil is threatening, as well as direction given in each region's area contingency plan.
  - To view the Coast Guard Mobile Area Contingency Plan visit:  
<http://ocean.floridamarine.org/ACP/MOBACP/StartHere.html>.

- To view the Coast Guard St. Petersburg Area Contingency Plan visit: [http://research.myfwc.com/features/view\\_article.asp?id=3482](http://research.myfwc.com/features/view_article.asp?id=3482)
- The Unified Command Operations Group is asking boaters to avoid damaging boom. Boom cut or broken due to boater traffic jeopardizes the protection that has been set up for the environmentally sensitive areas across the coast.
- 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. If contact occurs, wash the area with soap and water. Learn more at: [http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/files/faq\\_doh\\_051010.pdf](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. [Press Release Florida saltwater fishing regulations](#) remain in effect as usual. Learn more at [www.MyFWC.com/Fishing](http://www.MyFWC.com/Fishing).
- The recreational red snapper season in the Gulf will remain closed until June 1. However, FWC will use federal funds to survey Gulf charter boat catches each week during the 53-day season to see if catch rates are lower than previously anticipated. If so, state and federal fisheries managers could use that information to determine if the season can be extended or if an additional period of harvest can be allowed later in the year. Learn more at: [http://www.myfwc.com/RULESANDREGS/Saltwater\\_Regulations\\_RedSnapperIndex.htm](http://www.myfwc.com/RULESANDREGS/Saltwater_Regulations_RedSnapperIndex.htm).
- On May 18, 2010, NOAA modified and expanded the boundaries of the closed fishing area and extended the fishing restriction until further notice. The closure affects commercial and recreational fishing in the oil-affected area of the Gulf of Mexico. More than 80 percent of the fishing area remains open. Learn more at: [http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2010/20100518\\_closure.html](http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2010/20100518_closure.html).
- 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/NEWSROOM/10/statewide/News\\_10\\_X\\_OilSpill2.htm](http://www.myfwc.com/NEWSROOM/10/statewide/News_10_X_OilSpill2.htm)

### **Tourism:**

- Florida's pristine beaches and famed fishing grounds remain open to residents and visitors. Currently, there are no impacts to Florida's more than 1,260 miles of coastline and 825 miles of sandy beaches.

- If planning a trip to the Sunshine State, VISIT FLORIDA, the state's official tourism marketing organization, encourages visitors to check with local destinations in order to get the most up-to-date information.
- Through [www.VISITFLORIDA.com](http://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/](http://www.visitflorida.com/florida_travel_advisory/).
- The Florida State Parks website, <http://www.floridastateparks.org>, will be updated daily and will list any parks that may be impacted. Visitors with camping or cabin reservations will be notified if their stay will be impacted. If you have any questions, please call 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).
- Florida's coastal businesses should be prepared to make loss of earnings claims for damages incurred as a result of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. In all circumstances, affected businesses should file a claim with BP via the hotline number at 1-800-440-0858 or claims office. 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 watch for oiled wildlife, vegetation, and beaches by becoming a Coast Watch volunteer. Learn more at [www.volunteerfloridadisaster.org](http://www.volunteerfloridadisaster.org).
- Report injured or oiled animals to the Wildlife Distress Hotline at 1-866-557-1401.
- Report oiled shoreline to 1-866-448-5816.
- 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](http://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 for information alerts on its website as well as a resources page containing fact sheets and tips. Learn more at: [www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon).
- For a list of Unified Command, BP and Florida phone numbers, visit <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/default.htm#numbers>

For additional information regarding Florida's response to the Deepwater Horizon incident, visit [www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon), or follow us on Twitter at [www.Twitter.com/FLDEPalert](http://www.Twitter.com/FLDEPalert).

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