

**Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
Mississippi Department of Marine Resources**

July 6, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JULY 6, 2010 MDEQ UPDATE ON OIL MATERIAL IN MISSISSIPPI

BILOXI, Miss. – Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) staff through aerial surveillance with the Mississippi National Guard, MDEQ response staff, and Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Teams (SCAT) have observed the following Tuesday (as of 7:00 p.m.) and sent to Unified Command for review and appropriate response:

Flight information:

- Area of sheen approximately one-half mile in diameter containing small amounts of tar patties no more than 1 foot in diameter off West Ship Island (N 30 14.64, W 88 59.68).
- Small area of approximately 50 by 200 yards of widely-dispersed emulsified oil patties ranging in size from a few inches to 5 feet in diameter located south of West Ship Island (N 30 12.11, W 88 58.13).
- Large concentration of tar balls of varying size south of the eastern tip of Horn Island (N 30 10.16, W 88 35.15).
- Area approximately 5.8 miles long by one to six feet wide located 2.4 miles southwest of the western tip of Horn Island consisting of emulsified oil with 1 percent coverage tar patties and possible organic material intermixed (N 30 13.26, W 88 50.05; N 30 12.17, W 88 44.39).
- Large area of light to heavy sheen with widely dispersed tar balls with less than 1 percent coverage (N 30.07.99, W 88 44.13; N 30 07.99, W 88 35.51; N 30 09.00 W 88 35.00; N 30 09.00, W 45.00).

Other information:

- Tar balls along Hancock County Beach ranging in size from one-quarter to one-half inch. Heaviest concentrations were found along the Waveland Beach area. Cleaning crews of approximately 120 to 150 people were onsite working intermittently due to stormy weather.
- A SCAT team started east of the Highway 90 Bridge at Pass Christian and continued east to the Long Beach Pier. They observed approximately one tar ball every ten meters in the segments where tar balls were found.
- A SCAT team conducted assessments by foot along the southern coastline of Deer Island with moussed oil observed in trace amounts (less than 1 percent) in the vegetation. No other significant observations were noted.

Patches of tar balls and weathered oil are skimmed and corralled by Vessels of Opportunity and BP contractors. Skimming is used to remove streams of emulsified oil, tar balls, and tar patties. Tar balls and mousse patties on land are removed with shovels and rakes.

More information and links about MDEQ's and DMR's roles in oil spill response are available at www.deq.state.ms.us/oilspill and www.dmr.state.ms.us/DMR/oil-spill.htm.

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