



News Release

Pinellas County Communications Department
333 Chestnut Street • Clearwater, FL 33756
(727) 464-4600 • FAX (727) 464-4432
www.pinellascounty.org

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Contact: Camille Evans
Public Relations Specialist
(727) 464-3849

Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Update

Director of Emergency Management to Update County Officials

What action is Pinellas County taking to address the potential impact of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill? Sally Bishop, director of Pinellas County Emergency Management, will provide an update on the county's role in preparing for potential impacts of the oil spill at the Tuesday, June 15, Board of County Commissioners meeting. The meeting begins at 3 p.m., with the presentation scheduled during the county administrator's report.

Although there is no imminent threat of oil making landfall, staff is preparing for the possibility that oil could reach the Pinellas County shoreline in the future. Preparations by Pinellas County staff include:

- **Communication:** Staff is briefed daily by U.S. Coast Guard officials and other representatives at the Unified Command, which is the lead agency for this incident. Updates are distributed to key county staff and municipal leaders.
- **Area Contingency Plan:** Staff recently helped update the Coast Guard's Area Contingency Plan to identify environmentally sensitive areas in Pinellas County, such as mangroves, estuaries and bird rookeries. The Coast Guard will utilize this plan to deploy oil booms.
- **Baseline monitoring:** Current sediment and water quality samples of Pinellas County shorelines and waterways have been taken in coordination with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in order to document pre-impact conditions. Also, aerial photos of local shorelines have been acquired by the Property Appraiser for baseline data.
- **Environmental analysis:** Staff is conferring with counterparts in the Florida Panhandle to evaluate their current operations and strategies.
- **Disposal:** Staff is working in cooperation with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection on a solid waste management plan.
- **Tourism:** Convention and Visitors Bureau staff requested \$2.5 million in marketing funds from Gov. Charlie Crist, and launched the "Book with Confidence" program.
- **Business support:** Staff is posting information to the Economic Development website regarding business claims to BP, bridge loans and Small Business Administration Loans. See www.pced.org.
- **Volunteer recruitment:** Staff is promoting recruitment of volunteers for local organizations involved in the oil spill response.
- **Website:** Current information and links related to the oil spill, such as fact sheets, news releases, volunteer opportunities and key phone numbers, are posted on the Pinellas County website. See www.pinellascounty.org/oilspill.

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