

California Department of Fish and Game News Release

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Increase in oil spill drills maximizes California's response readiness

The Department of Fish and Game's Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) increased the number of oil spill drills they conducted with industry last year by 13 percent.

"The increase in drills and our participatory oversight reflects the dedication the administration has to ensuring California is prepared for oil spills," said Thomas Cullen, OSPR Administrator. "Our goal is to attain 'best achievable protection' of the environment and these drills go a long way toward maximizing prevention and fine-tuning our response capabilities."

OSPR conducts an annual review of its Drills and Exercises Program. The most recent review showed that in 2011:

- The total number of drills increased from 150 in 2010 to 169 in 2011.
- OSPR increased staff participation in drills by 40 percent.
- OSPR staff attended 83 percent of all drills in 2011 compared to 68 percent in 2010.

OSPR conducts drills with maritime shippers of petroleum and other products, refineries and fueling facilities to practice equipment deployment and refresh first responders to ensure they are prepared for spills. While drills and exercises are critical to readiness, spill response takes priority and can affect participation. In 2010, several OSPR field staff were dedicated to the Deepwater Horizon event, and in March 2011, the response to the tsunami in Crescent City and Santa Cruz took precedence over drills and exercises.

The annual report on OSPR's Drills and Exercises Program is available at:

<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=56333>

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