

THIS IS A DRILL * THIS IS A DRILL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Huntington Beach, CA, May 1, 2014 – The Unified Command coordinating the response to the Queen’s Gate incident announced today that the oil released from the affected vessel was fully contained as of 9:00 a.m. PST with no further release. A fire that was reported this morning at 10:00 a.m. is also fully contained. Additional updates about cleanup and containment were provided from coordinating agencies that included ConocoPhillips, the United States Coast Guard and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The spill occurred on April 30th at 11:50 p.m. PST when the tanker POLAR INTREPID was struck by another vessel during transit into the port of Long Beach, due east of the Long Beach breakwater. The damage to the tanker’s hull resulted in a release of approximately 1,176,000 gallons of crude oil into the surrounding water. No injuries have been reported. Deployed resources to date include vessels, helicopter support and skimmers to aid the cleanup.

“First, I want to say how much ConocoPhillips regrets this incident has occurred. A full investigation will be conducted and we will keep you updated on the details as they become available,” said Captain Doug Lamson, Incident Commander, ConocoPhillips. “Second, I want to assure everyone that we remain singularly focused on our key priorities: 1) the safety of all personnel involved; and 2) ensuring sensitive areas are protected from possible environmental impact.”

The incident response has been executed in accordance with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Contingency Action Plan and so far includes 41 vessels, helicopters, skimmers and trained volunteers. “The Coast Guard, our agency partners and industry members conduct multiple exercises every year to prepare for events like this and the lessons that we’ve learned from past incidents should prove invaluable during this response,” said Sean Haley, Lieutenant Junior Grade and Public Information Officer for Unified Command. “Our coordinated response reflects this.”

Containment and cleanup efforts to date include deployment of more than 21,000 feet of containment boom that has been deployed from Cabrillo to Newport Beach to protect sensitive areas and wildlife. “It’s my job to ensure that all of the parties implement a coordinated response,” stated Captain Jennifer Williams, United States Coast Guard and the Federal On-Scene Coordinator in Unified Command. According to Williams, The Port of Long Beach is expected to remain open. “At this time we have no plans to close the Port of Long Beach. However, we are urging small vessels to stay out of the affected area. We will address the transit needs of larger vessels on a case-by-case basis.”

Potentially affected wildlife includes shore birds, water birds, black abalone, whales and dolphins. In response to the spill and containment efforts The California Department of Fish and Wildlife issued a Declaration of Fisheries closed prohibiting catch and consumption of fin fish and shellfish in waters from Cabrillo to Anaheim Bay.

“The state is highly committed to working with our partners to protect the wildlife in the area,” said Lieutenant Sean Moe, California Fish and Wildlife and State On-Scene Coordinator. He went on to explain that the Oil Wildlife Network has been activated and any affected wildlife will be treated at their facility. He also urged the public to report any animals requiring attention to the Oil Wildlife Care Network at 1-877-823-6926.

According to Williams, “The Unified Command remains committed to using the most appropriate response techniques and technologies based on prevailing conditions to protect the environment. We want people to understand that we have a lot of work ahead of us. This is a complex and fast moving situation, but Unified Command is committed to using all resources to respond to this incident as safely and rapidly as possible.”

For More Information: Joint Information Center 832-931-4959

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