



U.S. Department of
Homeland Security
United States
Coast Guard



Unified Command

Date: 2:45 p.m. Wednesday, April 15, 2020

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Unified Command continues response to Valdez Marine Terminal spill

VALDEZ, Alaska – Response and recovery work on the water and on the ground continued overnight and into today in response to the spill at the Valdez Marine Terminal (VMT).

The source of the spill has been identified as a sump located uphill from the VMT small boat harbor. There is no continuing discharge of oil from this source. The cause of the spill is still under investigation. As of 1 p.m. Wednesday, approximately 610 barrels (25,620 gallons) of water/oil mix was recovered. An overflight this morning confirmed there is no noticeable sheen outside of the boomed areas.

“As residents of the Sound, we recognize and share the concerns of communities, and those of Alaskans across the state, and we are working hard to execute this work thoughtfully and thoroughly,” said Mike Day, Incident Commander and Alyeska representative in the Unified Command. “We’ve made steady progress in a short time, which has put us in a position for further success as we continue the work ahead. We will continue to hold the safety of our responders and the surrounding communities as top priorities while we work around the clock to resolve this incident.”

Engineers, inspectors and operations technicians are working to identify the spill’s flow route. Resources are arriving on terminal to excavate the area around the sump to help identify spill boundaries and potential depth.

There are 14 Vessels of Opportunity in addition to a number of Alyeska workboats conducting response efforts on the water, placing boom and operating skimmers to collect product, providing surveillance, swapping out boom when needed, and providing logistical support such as fueling and water services. Precautionary booming to protect two sensitive areas in Port Valdez – the nearby Solomon Gulch Hatchery and the Valdez Duck Flats – is complete.

There are more than 180 people involved in the response; in the field, from the command post, and remotely. They are working in accordance with state, local and Alyeska company policies and mandates in order to protect the health of the workforce and the surrounding communities in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are no current operational impacts to TAPS. There was one personnel injury reported during overnight work. A worker accidentally struck themselves in the jaw using a tool, was seen by a medic, and released to work. One deceased seagull was collected in a boomed area overnight; numerous environment taskforces are either standing by or are on scene and continue surveying the area.

For the safety of response personnel and the public, a Temporary Flight Restriction zone has been established at 5,000 feet elevation and one mile in radius over the VMT working area.

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An oil tanker, *The California*, was loaded with Alaska North Slope Crude without incident and departed around 9 a.m. today. Another tanker *The Polar Discovery* arrived later this morning and is being loaded at VMT's Berth 5, the farthest operational berth from the spill area. The IMT determined that the spill is unrelated to VMT berth loading operations.

The main priorities of the response remain the safety of response personnel and the community, protection of the environment, and open communication with the public and stakeholders throughout the response

For information and updates on the response, visit www.alyeskaresponds.com and the ADEC site <http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/ppr/spill-information/response/2020/02-vmt-sump-oily-water-spill/>.

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