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News Release

Divers remove over 10,000 gallons of oil from Princess Kathleen

Unified Command: Princess Kathleen



AK
Department of
Environmental
Conservation

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Divers remove over 10,000 gallons of oil from Princess Kathleen



JUNEAU, Alaska – Dive crews have removed over 10,000 gallons of bunker oil from the Princess Kathleen wreck since commencing pumping operations Monday.

"The Unified Command is happy with the results from the labor put forth over the last few months by the many parties involved in this oil removal project," said Cmdr. Matt Jones, deputy Federal on Scene Coordinator. "As we've begun pulling this oil out, we've confirmed that it is heavy, nasty, black oil that likely would have caused a much larger problem on the beaches in Southeast Alaska."

Divers have been removing oil from tanks using a technique called hot tapping where hot water heat

exchangers are inserted in the fuel tanks to facilitate pumping. Oil collection equipment separates the bunker oil from the water before it is transferred into the fuel barge to be transported to a waste oil recycling and disposal center.

"The divers and their support team are having great success and our pollution teams are in place and routinely patrolling the spill site in preparation for any potential larger spills while mitigating minor sheening the vessel routinely produces," said Scot Tiernan, State on Scene Coordinator.

The Unified Command has also pre-positioned containment boom and response equipment in the greater Point Lena area as a precautionary measure against the unlikely event of a large release.

"Over the last week we've recovered nearly 1,000 gallons of oil that was simply free-floating inside the superstructure and over 10,000 gallons of oil from the fuel tanks," said Jones.

The ship ran aground on Point Lena in 1952, and has periodically released small amounts of unrecoverable oil in the years since. The Princess Kathleen rests on a slope at depths between 52 and 134 feet, and is a popular recreational diving site.

For more information please visit: the Princess Kathleen Unified Command website at <http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/princesskathleen>

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