

**Unified Command: *Drift River Terminal Coordination***

## News Release

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### **Update: Oil reduction plans on hold following eruption of Mt. Redoubt**

**ANCHORAGE, Alaska** - During an early morning eruption at Mt. Redoubt, 13 employees of Cook Inlet Pipe Line Company (CIPL) on site at the Drift River Terminal and the Christy Lee platform were in nearby safe havens.

“Safety of personnel and responders is our top priority,” said Capt. Mark Hamilton, federal on scene coordinator of the Unified Command.

At about 6 a.m., Mt. Redoubt produced a significant explosive event generating an ash cloud that reached 50,000 feet and a lahar that traveled down the Drift River Valley.

All 13 personnel are safe and currently assessing the terminal and platform. Initial reports are that there was no damage to the tank farm, containment berms and the protective dike. Some water was observed flowing over the previously affected runway. Water did enter one of the industrial buildings and damaged a generator necessary for oil transfer operations. Repairs are expected to take at least a day and a half.

A Tesoro-chartered tanker scheduled to arrive earlier today at the Christy Lee platform to begin off-loading oil from the tank farm was turned around. It is currently planned to anchor in southern Cook Inlet. The Unified Command will identify an appropriate time for the vessel to return. The tanker crew is using this time to observe required rest periods.

“Reports from our crew onsite are that there were no effects to the tank farm or the berm and no oil product was released,” said Rod Ficken, Cook Inlet Pipe Line Company. “We have regular contact with our personnel through several means and they are all well. I have communicated that to their families personally today.”

Two barges from Cook Inlet Spill Prevention and Response Inc. in Seldovia are en route to the Nikiski area as a precaution. Immediately available primary response equipment in Cook Inlet is capable of handling a spill of 2.1 million gallons (50,000 barrels) a day. Additional equipment and personnel are standing by.

“Alaska Governor Sarah Palin is deeply concerned about the situation at Drift River Terminal and is receiving regular updates on conditions,” said Gary Folley, state on scene coordinator for the Unified Command. “She supports the Unified Command organization and has made available all necessary resources to protect the environment and ensure the safety and welfare of all Alaskans.”

Last night personnel working on scene at the terminal began pressure testing lines from the Drift River tank to the Christy Lee platform in preparation for oil removal. Approximately 6.3 million gallons (148,000 barrels) of oil currently remain in two tanks at the terminal. The intention to begin reducing the oil level in the tanks to about 3 million gallons of oil (80,000 barrels) from the facility today has been postponed pending the volcano’s activity.

“We are observing all necessary safety protocols as we move forward with this complex and dynamic operation,” said Hamilton.

According to the Unified Command, once the immediate actions of reducing the oil currently stored at the terminal are complete additional plans for long-term operations and the further removal of oil stored at Granite Point and Trading Bay will be considered.

For more information please visit: the Coast Guard District 17 website at <http://www.uscgalaska.com> or the State of Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation Site at [http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/response/sum\\_fy09/090324201/090324201\\_index.htm](http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/response/sum_fy09/090324201/090324201_index.htm).

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