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AK Dept of Environmental
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North Slope Borough



Unified Command: *LPC-LO3 Pipeline Spill*

Press Release

**Unified Command LPC-LO3 Pipeline Spill
Joint Information Center
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(Anchorage, Alaska) Cleanup has begun on the spilled oil and water mix near BP's Lisburne Processing Center on Alaska's North Slope. A multi-phase cleanup approach was approved by the spill response Unified Command late Monday night and work began immediately to remove contaminated snow near the leak site.

According to response officials working at the scene, worker safety is a key component to the plan.

"The unified command always makes responder safety a top priority," said Matt Carr, Federal On-Scene Coordinator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. "We've established a 10-foot safety zone around the pipeline and the cleanup is underway."

Field workers must maintain a safe distance from the pipe, because of possible danger presented by potential pipeline pressure.

The first phase of the cleanup was initiated overnight (Monday-Tuesday), and focused on removing snow contaminated by oily mist during the spill. That effort involved 12 workers, primarily using hand tools. They removed 40 cubic yards of misted snow.

"We are hopeful the first phase of the cleanup, entire removal of the snow affected by an oil mist will be completed in the next 24 hours," said James Fausett, BP incident commander.

The next phase of the cleanup will include building an ice pad to provide a safe space to stage response equipment and supplies nearer the spill site. That work is expected to begin late today.

In subsequent cleanup phases the rest of the spill will be collected and transported off site. The details of that process will be governed by a cleanup plan, as approved by the Unified Command.

"The Unified Command is committed to leading a thorough and efficient cleanup—as long as it takes," said the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation's Tom DeRuyter, state on scene coordinator

Spill response personnel now number 108, including 75 on the Slope and 33 in Anchorage. Equipment marshaled on site includes five front-end loaders and other mechanized equipment, at least 10 generators, and lights to allow workers to safely operate in the dark hours. There is less than an hour a day of daylight at Prudhoe Bay this time of year.

"We are pleased with the progress that has been made so far," said the local on-scene coordinator Gordon Matumeak of the North Slope Borough.

The spill came from an 18-inch above-ground flow line that normally carries combined oil, water and natural gas from drill pad L-3 to the Lisburne Processing Center. It was discovered by a BP oilfield employee during regular inspection rounds about 3 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 29.

Visual inspection on Monday indicated the leak had stopped or slowed to a very small rate. The volume of material spilled has not yet been determined.

It has affected approximately three-fourths of an acre of frozen, snow-covered tundra. Of that, more than half is oil-misted snow and the rest is impacted by the oil and water mix. The material is not spreading.

The cause of the spill has not been determined and is under investigation.

Editor's note: Photos and a map are available on the Unified Command website.
<http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/lisburne>

On-camera interviews in Anchorage available upon request.

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