

NEWS RELEASE

Incident Name: BPXA Flow Station 1 Drill Site 2 Well 3 Discharge, Prudhoe Bay, Alaska

Source: Unified Command Joint Information Center

Contact: Alaska DEC PIO 907-465-5009 / U.S. EPA PIO 206-900-3309 / BPXA PIO 907-301-8726

BPXA, Alaska DEC, U.S. EPA and North Slope Borough Form Unified Command in Response to Oil and Gas Well Discharge Near Prudhoe Bay, Alaska

Report as of 3:00 pm AKDT on 15 April 2017, Note: All times are Alaska Time

A Unified Command, consisting of responders from Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), the North Slope Borough, and BP Exploration Alaska (BPXA) has been established to respond to the BP Flow Station 1 Drill Site 2 Well 3 natural gas and crude oil discharge near Prudhoe Bay, Alaska. The Unified Command will ensure safe and efficient coordination of resources and information amongst BPXA and state and federal regulators. To date, there have been no injuries and no reported impacts to wildlife.

BPXA Well 3 is located in the Greater Prudhoe Bay area, approximately 5 miles from the Deadhorse Airport on Alaska's North Slope. On April 14, 2017, at approximately 7:30 am, BPXA employees discovered an uncontrolled gas release from the top of Well 3. At approximately 8:15 am, BPXA confirmed the crude spray from the top of the well house and reported the spill to ADEC via the Fairbanks spill reporting line and to U.S. EPA via the National Response Center.

The well is currently venting gas, which caused a spray of crude to impact the well pad. A Forward Looking Infrared or FLIR overflight shows that the crude spray plume did not leave the pad, however, the situation is not safe yet for responders to access the area and confirm that there have been no impacts to adjacent tundra. No volume estimate for crude spray released is available at this time. Two leaks have been identified on the well, one near the top and one further down the well assembly. The top leak was misting oil in conjunction with releasing natural gas, but the activation of the surface safety valve has stopped the release from this point. The bottom leak is currently leaking gas as well as some minor amount of crude oil. The well structure is housed in a metal "well house" which is helping to contain any oil spray.

ADEC and U.S. EPA have mobilized response personnel to the Unified Incident Command Post located on the North Slope. Responders attempted to secure the well last night, however, this operation was unsuccessful due to safety concerns and damage to a well pressure gauge. Continuous air monitoring has been established around the well, and the situation remained stable overnight. Responders are not able to safely assess the impacted area until the well has been controlled.

The Unified Command continues working to formulate a plan to bring the well under control. Once well control has been achieved, BPXA will work with their Oil Spill Response Organization, Alaska Clean Seas (ACS), to delineate the impacted area. Cleanup plans will be developed through the Incident Command System and with guidance from the Unified Command.

The cause of the discharge is unknown at this time. ADEC and U.S. EPA are coordinating with BPXA and the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission to investigate the cause of the discharge, following the securing of the well.

More information:

http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/ppr/response/sum_fy17/170414301/170414301_index.htm

See incident photos below.

###



###