



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**  
Division of Spill Prevention and Response  
Prevention Preparedness and Response Program

***SITUATION REPORT (SITREP)***



**Selawik Water Treatment Plant Diesel Overfill**

**CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS SITREPS ARE DENOTED IN RED**

**SITREP # 2**

**SPILL #:** 20389933001

**TIME/DATE OF DISTRIBUTION:** 2:15 p.m. on December 8, 2020

**POTENTIAL RESPONSIBLE PARTY (PRP):** City of Selawik

**INCIDENT LOCATION:**

Water Treatment Plant (WTP) in Selawik, Alaska (Lat/Long: 66.5993755, -160.00275), approximately 610 feet from the Selawik River.

**TIME/DATE OF SPILL:** November 25, 2020, at approximately 10:00 p.m.

**HOW/WHEN SPILL WAS DISCOVERED AND REPORTED:**

An operator at the WTP discovered the overfill of a WTP diesel tank when checking the tanks at approximately 10:00 p.m. on November 25, 2020. The WTP operator reported the spill to the department at 2:30 a.m. on November 26, 2020.

**TYPE/AMOUNT OF PRODUCT SPILLED:**

The spilled product is diesel fuel that was transferred from the City of Selawik Tank #4, a 45,986-gallon aboveground tank that services the city, into an aboveground "day tank" at the WTP with a capacity of approximately 4,000-gallons. The source tank is reported to still contain approximately 35,000 gallons following the release. **Following review of fuel records the City of Selawik estimates that the spill was approximately 1,013 gallons.**

**CAUSE OF SPILL:**

A diesel fuel transfer from the Consolidated Tank Farm Tank to the WTP "day tank" was left unattended on November 25, 2020 from 2:25 p.m. until the WTP operator was notified the tank outside the WTP was overflowing and closed the valve at approximately 10:00 p.m.

**SOURCE CONTROL:**

Fuel transfer operations from the Consolidated Tank Farm to the Selawik WTP have ceased, controlling the source.

**RESPONSE ACTION:**

After initial notifications, a response crew from Selawik removed free product using a pump and sorbent materials on November 26, 2020. Recovery work has continued, with a crew shoveling contaminated snow into supersacks and recovering free product by wringing out absorbents. **The City of Selawik reports that approximately 750 gallons of diesel has been recovered including removal of most of the heavily contaminated snow. The City is transporting recovered product, contaminated snow, and oily waste to a lined containment cell built on city property outside of town for**

storage until it can be treated for disposal. The spill location is approximately 610 feet from the Selawik River and less than 100 feet from the Selawik Davis Ramoth Memorial School. The full extent of contamination appears relatively contained but continues to be under investigation due to snow cover. A National Weather Service Blizzard Warning last week temporarily stopped response efforts. No injuries have been reported.

The City of Selawik, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), United States Coast Guard (USCG) and Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) have formed a Unified Command to maintain communication and support the cleanup. ADEC is assisting the city in developing waste disposal plans, treatment plans, and with permitting as well as locating the necessary response equipment, and personal protective equipment for the response work. USCG representatives arrived in Kotzebue on November 30, 2020 and remain based from Kotzebue. Due to Covid-19 travel restrictions, the Unified Command, in coordination with local tribal, city, and borough officials, is limiting agency travel to minimal levels needed to assist the local response. The USCG representatives in Kotzebue have limited travel to Selawik to day trips.

**RESOURCES AT RISK OR AFFECTED:**

The Selawik River serves the population of Selawik and is a potential resource at risk. The location of the spill is approximately 610 feet from the Selawik River. The community drinking water intake on the Selawik River is near the spill location but is submerged and not expected to be at risk from this release. The Selawik River is listed as an anadromous stream in the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's stream inventory and the discharge itself is within brackish-water marsh habitat.

There have been no reports of impacts to wildlife or the shoreline. Sheefish and whitefish are common in the Selawik River system with eggs and larval life-stage at this time of the year. Waterfowl and the Southern DPS Spotted seal, a threatened species, could be present at this time of year.

**FUTURE PLANS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

ADEC will continue to monitor the response actions including the recovery of free diesel product and removal of contaminated snow and efforts to delineate the area of snow impacted by the release. The City of Selawik is working on developing a plan to melt snow, recover any liquid diesel product from the melt water and filter the water prior to discharge. The Unified Command will continue working with local responders to ensure they have the resources needed for the spill response and the USCG will remain onsite until they adequately assess the extent of the contamination.

**WEATHER:**

Today: Mainly sunny to start then a few afternoon clouds. High around -20F. Winds from the northwest at 4 mph, light and variable. This evening will be partly cloudy early followed by cloudy skies overnight with a low of -24F. Winds from the north-northwest at 3 mph, light and variable.

**UNIFIED COMMAND AND PERSONNEL:**

Incident Commander: Donna Harris, City of Selawik  
SOSC: Sarah Moore, ADEC  
FOSC: Dane Grulkey, USCG

**TIME/DATE OF THE NEXT REPORT DISTRIBUTION:** 2:00 P.M. DECEMBER 15, 2020

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT:** Sarah Moore, SOSC, ADEC (907) 465-5239



City of Selawik and Location of Spill (Image credit: Google Earth)



Spill site at the WTP day tank (Photo credit: Sonny Berry, USFWS)

**AGENCY/STAKEHOLDER NOTIFICATION LIST:** This situation report was distributed to the agencies listed on the standard distribution list, which includes the governor's office, State Emergency Operations Center, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other state agencies. This situation report was also distributed to the following agencies and stakeholders:

AGENCY / STAKEHOLDER	NAME	SENT VIA	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	TELEPHONE	FAX
City of Selawik	Donna Harris	Email	<a href="mailto:City_of_selawik@hotmail.com">City_of_selawik@hotmail.com</a>	484-6125	
Selawik Tribal Council				484-2225	
<b>Senate T- Nome</b>	Donny Olson	Email	<a href="mailto:Senator.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov">Senator.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov</a> <a href="#">Juneau (1/18-4/15)</a> <a href="#">Anchorage (4/20-1/15)</a>	465-3707 269-0254	465-4821 269-2031
<b>House 40</b>	John Lincoln	Fax	<a href="mailto:Representative.John.Lincoln@akleg.gov">Representative.John.Lincoln@akleg.gov</a>	465-3473	
Alaska State Troopers	Kotzebue	Fax		442-3222	442-3221
ADF&G	Todd Nichols	Email	<a href="mailto:dfg.hab.infofai@alaska.gov">dfg.hab.infofai@alaska.gov</a> <a href="mailto:todd.nichols@alaska.gov">todd.nichols@alaska.gov</a>	459-7289 or 459-7285	
USCG-Sector /ANC	USCG-Anchorage	Fax		428-4100	428-4114 (24 hr.)
US EPA	Bob Whittier	Fax/Email	<a href="mailto:Whittier.robert@epa.gov">Whittier.robert@epa.gov</a>	206-553-1263 or 206-553-1264	271-3424
Dept of Law Attorney General Office	Steven Mulder	Fax/Email	<a href="mailto:Steve.mulder@alaska.gov">Steve.mulder@alaska.gov</a>	269-5274	278-7022
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