



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION  
Division of Spill Prevention and Response  
Prevention Preparedness and Response Program  
**SITUATION REPORT (SITREP)**



## Savoonga AVEC Tank Farm Diesel Oil Release

**CHANGED FROM PREVIOUS SITREP ARE DENOTED IN RED**

**SITREP #:** 3

**SPILL #:** 21389906001

**DATE/TIME OF DISTRIBUTION:** March 25, 2021, at 4:48 p.m.

**POTENTIAL RESPONSIBLE PARTY (PRP):** Alaska Village Electric Coop (AVEC)

**INCIDENT LOCATION:** Savoonga Power Plant in Savoonga, (63.694988/-170.475011).

**DATE/TIME OF SPILL:** February 27, 2021, at 1:00 p.m.

**HOW/WHEN SPILL WAS DISCOVERED AND REPORTED:** The release was discovered by AVEC personnel on-site while taking inventory the afternoon of February 27, 2021. The spill was reported to the National Response Center (NRC) at 8:30 a.m. on March 1, 2021, and to the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) at 8:45 a.m. on March 1, 2021.

**TYPE/AMOUNT OF PRODUCT SPILLED:** An estimated 20,000 gallons of #2 Diesel was released from a bulk oil storage tank into secondary containment. The quantity of the spill was estimated by AVEC personnel on-site by reviewing current tank capacities against recent tank capacity records prior to the spill. Diesel has left secondary containment in three locations, potentially by wicking through snow drifts, affecting an estimated total area of 278 square feet (sq ft) outside of the lined secondary containment area (the individual impacted areas are approximately 198 sq ft, 77 sq ft, and 3 sq ft).

**CAUSE OF SPILL:** A valve was added to a header line on a 29,950-gallon bulk fuel tank as a temporary fix to alleviate an airlock. The valve was not removed at the appropriate time and left in an open position allowing diesel to flow to the ground.

**SOURCE CONTROL:** The source has been controlled; all valves were confirmed closed by AVEC personnel shortly after the spill was discovered. Fuel levels are being monitored daily to ensure that this corrective action has stopped the release. To date, no discrepancies in fuel levels have been found during daily inventory.

**RESPONSE ACTION:** AVEC has assembled an on-site cleanup crew. The crew has been continuing to collect diesel from both outside and within secondary containment. Snow from around the entire exterior perimeter of the tank farm has been excavated to delineate the extent of the fuel that migrated outside of the secondary containment, and three discrete locations were identified. There is no indication that the contamination outside the secondary containment is a result of containment failure. Contaminated snow that was collected from outside the secondary containment has been bagged and moved to within the secondary containment area.

Soil samples have been collected and screened with a photoionization detector (PID) to determine impacted areas outside of containment. A jackhammer is being used to chip out impacted soil from around the outside of the containment, and then the soil is placed in fish totes. Approximately 9 cubic feet of soil have been removed, and the fish totes are housed in a connex onsite.

Diesel recovery from within secondary containment has been weather dependent, with multiple winter storms preventing work and resulting in snow drifts. To date, 7,922 gallons of diesel pooled under snow within the secondary containment has been pumped from an excavated hole in the snow drifts at a low point within the secondary containment into an empty tank on-site. Initially, each day had yielded around 1,400 gallons of recovered fuel. On the 5 days since March 15th when fuel recovery has been possible, each day has yielded between 32 and 283 gallons. DEC and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) are monitoring off-site through phone conferences and email.

**RESOURCES AT RISK OR AFFECTED:** The spill location is approximately 450 feet from the Bering Sea and 65 feet from wetland tundra. AVEC responders on site do not believe these resources have been impacted at this time and are continuing to investigate the extent of the spill outside of the secondary containment. DEC will continue to monitor the response actions and review plans being developed to clean up contaminated soils from the area and prevent diesel oil migration to nearby resources.

**FUTURE PLANS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:** DEC will continue to work with the USCG and AVEC to develop plans for site cleanup activities and monitor for additional environmental impacts. Ongoing recovery of diesel within the containment area will continue as weather allows, and contaminated soil will be removed, containerized, and staged in the onsite connex until it can be incinerated. AVEC is developing plans to melt contaminated snow and treat the water for discharge. Contaminated snow will be placed in tertiary containment within the secondary containment and allowed to melt passively as air temperature increase; the contaminated meltwater will be filtered to capture the diesel.

**WEATHER:** Thursday: High 14° F / Low of 7° F. Mostly sunny. N 10 mph winds. Thursday night: Snow likely and areas freezing fog. E 15 to 20 mph winds. 60% chance of precipitation. Friday: High 12° F / Low of -7° F. NE 15 to 20 mph winds. Areas of freezing fog before 10am. 60% chance of precipitation.

**UNIFIED COMMAND AND PERSONNEL:**

Incident Commander: Scott Stiker, Alaska Village Electric Coop

SOSC: Sarah Moore, DEC

FOSC: Nathan Hatfield, USCG

LOSC: Leon Nayokpuk, Alaska Village Electric Coop

**DATE/TIME OF THE NEXT REPORT DISTRIBUTION:** As the situation warrants.

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT:** Sarah Moore, Environmental Program Manager II, DEC, (907) 465-5239 <http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/ppr/spill-information/response>



Photo 1. Snow removal on the west wall outside of secondary containment of the tank farm to check for additional contamination. (Photo provided by Scott Stiker, March 24, 2021)



Photo 2. Soil samples collected on the east wall where diesel was found outside of secondary containment. (Photo provided by Scott Stiker, March 18, 2021)

**AGENCY/STAKEHOLDER NOTIFICATION LIST:** Please refer to the first SITREP, distributed March 2, 2021, for the agency/stakeholder notification list. The first SITREP can be found by following the link in the **Additional Information** box above.