

Sheriff Michael A. Adkinson, Jr.

Walton County Sheriff's Office



“Commitment to Excellence”

For Immediate Release

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Health Advisory Issued for Six Miles of Walton County Beaches

Santa Rosa Beach, FL (June 23, 2010) The Walton County Health Department issued a health advisory this afternoon, following a report by the Walton County Emergency Operations Center of oil substances coming ashore along a six mile stretch of Walton County Beaches.

The advisory covers beaches from the Miramar Beach access point eastward to the east end of Top Sail State Park.

Crews were dispatched immediately to begin the cleanup efforts. There is a total 280 workers all ready assigned to this six mile stretch of affected beaches.

The health department will continue to work with the Emergency Operations Center, and will notify the public, through the media and its website www.waltonso.org when the health advisory is no longer in effect.

Consider the following tips for avoiding negative health impacts from an oiled shoreline:

- Avoid entering areas where oil can be seen or smelled (no wading, swimming or entering the water).
- Avoid direct skin contact with oil, oil-contaminated water and sediments.
- Avoid contact with dead or dying fish or other aquatic life.
- Do not swim or ski in areas affected by the oil spill, and if traveling through the area by boat take precautions when hoisting the boat anchor. If oil makes contact with the skin, wash it off with soap and water.
- Do not fish in oil spill-affected waters.
- Do not harvest or eat dead fish, fish with oily residue, or fish that have a petroleum odor.
- Avoid boating through oil slicks or sheens.
- Young children, pregnant women, people with compromised immune systems, and individuals with underlying respiratory conditions should avoid the area.
- Prevent pets from entering oil-contaminated areas.
- Those near Florida's Gulf Coast may detect an odor because of the oil spill. Some people are more sensitive to these odors and may experience nasal irritation and feelings of nausea. In combination with seasonal allergies, such as sensitivity to pollen, or pre-existing respiratory conditions such as asthma, some people may experience more severe symptoms.
- Individuals experiencing respiratory symptoms that are aggravated by the odors from the oil spill should consider:
 - Staying indoors in air-conditioning and avoiding strenuous outdoor activity.
 - If symptoms do not improve, contact a primary care physician or other health care provider for medical advice.
 - Individuals who have pre-existing medical conditions such as asthma or other respiratory illnesses should contact their healthcare professional if feeling symptomatic.

North Walton Office

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www.waltonso.org

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P: 850.267.2000

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The health department is posting signs at the affected area; a copy of the sign is attached. Residents can participate in activities that are above the high tide line. If they experience respiratory problems, they should leave the area and contact a physician, as they deem necessary.

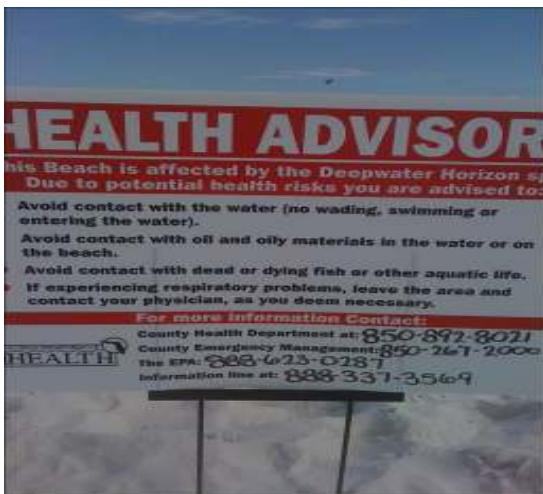
The health department will continue to work with the Emergency Operations Center, and will notify the public, through the media and its website www.waltonso.org, www.bswupdate.com, and www.swfd.org when the health advisory is no longer in effect.

Oil is a hazardous substance. **DO NOT handle or clean any type of oil from the beach.** Crude oil, like motor oil, **MUST** be disposed of properly. Call 850-267-2000 or 1-866-448-5816 immediately if you spot tar balls or oil on any of Walton County's 26 miles of beaches.

For regular updates on the status of conditions visit www.waltonso.org, www.swfd.org, or www.bswupdate.com. To report tar or oil on any of Walton County's 26 miles of beaches, call 850-267-2000 and 1-866-448-5816. For more information, contact the Walton County Sheriff's Office at 850-267-2000.

For more information on health questions, contact the Walton County Health Department at 850-892-8015 or visit www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/health.htm.

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