

Health Effects:

The Department of Health (DOH) and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) are closely monitoring health and environmental impacts to Florida's beaches and will provide an advisory if conditions become unsafe. At this time, there are no indications of any health risks to Floridians due to the Deepwater Horizon incident.

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

- Avoid entering areas where oil can be seen or smelled.
- Avoid direct skin contact with oil, oil-contaminated water and sediments.
- 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 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.

Impacts to Florida's coastline could include tarballs – fragments or lumps of oil weathered to a semi-solid or solid consistency. Tarballs feel sticky, and are difficult to remove from contaminated surfaces. Should individuals observe tarballs or other evidence of oil on Florida's coastline, they should leave the area and report the incident to (866) 448-5816.

Symptoms:

Should Florida's coastline become affected by the incident, avoid entering areas where oil can be seen or smelled. If any oil is sighted or smelled, leave the area right away.

Also, if you are close to Florida's Gulf Coast, you 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 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 illness should contact their health care provider if feeling symptomatic.

For More Information:

The Florida Emergency Information Line provides Floridians information regarding the Deepwater Horizon Response and will operate from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. until further notice. The number for residents to call is: (800) 342-3557

For more information DEP has established an email sign-up for information alerts on its website as well as a resources page containing fact sheets and tips pertaining to health, safety, wildlife, and pre and post-landfall preparations.

- To view tips, photos, press releases and fact sheets and sign up for email updates, visit www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com
- A toll free number is available to report oiled or injured wildlife. To report affected wildlife, call (866) 557-1401.
- Individuals should not attempt to help injured or oiled animals, but to report any sightings to the toll free number.
- Twitter: <http://twitter.com/RobertLAJIC>
- Facebook: Deepwater Horizon Response