

DEEPWATER HORIZON (BRITISH PETROLEUM) OIL SPILL



What is the problem?

On April 20, 2010, a drill rig explosion caused about 4.9 million barrels of oil to spill into the Gulf of Mexico. The explosion killed 11 platform workers and injured 17. Marine and wildlife habitats were severely affected, and the fishing and tourism industries of U.S. coastal states were devastated.

What did Tracking do?

LEPHT has been developing an oil spill response plan in collaboration with CDC/ATSDR*, CDC/NIOSH+, and agencies from other affected Gulf Coast states. Survey- and map-based tracking systems were developed to capture and track health complaints and environmental monitoring results. In addition, LEPHT worked with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to make sure that outreach materials were available in several languages and available to those with limited Internet access.

Improved public health

Staff from LEPHT worked with the state health department to notify OSHA about workplace exposures and health complaints from emergency response workers. Interventions were held to educate response workers, residents, and health care providers on topics such as personal protective equipment, seafood safety, chemicals of concern, potential routes of exposure, and associated health effects.

*Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

+National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health