

Oil and Hazardous Material Spill Response Preparedness Planning



State of Oregon
Department of
Environmental
Quality

Emergency Response Program

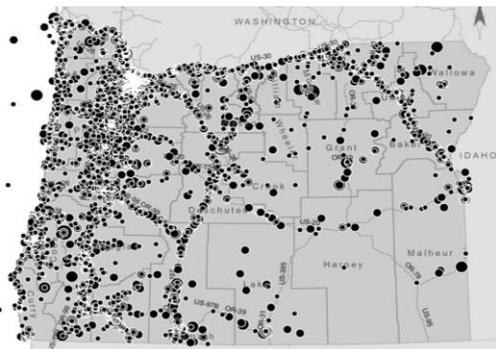
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Background

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality is a regulatory agency charged with protecting the quality of Oregon's environment. It is responsible for participating in response as it relates to the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan, frequently called the National Contingency Plan. The NCP is the federal government's blueprint for responding to both oil spills and hazardous substance releases and it promotes coordination among the hierarchy of federal, state and local responders.

Management of Emergencies in Oregon

The Office of Emergency Management maintains an emergency services system as prescribed in ORS 401 by planning, preparing and providing for the prevention, mitigation and management of emergencies or disasters that present a threat to the lives and property of citizens and visitors to the state. Under the State's Comprehensive Emergency Response Plan, DEQ is designated as a lead agency in response to oil and hazardous material spills in Oregon.



Oil spills can happen throughout the State of Oregon

Federal & State Roles

The NCP establishes general responsibilities of the response organization, including federal and state On-Scene Coordinators and establishes National and Regional Response Teams. RRTs coordinate preparedness, planning, and response at the regional level. The RRT consists of representatives of federal agencies that are a member of the National Response Team and state and local government representatives. DEQ is a member of the Region 10 RRT.

DEQ works with industry, state agencies, and federal agencies including the USCG and EPA, and local communities through the Northwest Area Committee and Regional Response Team to develop and maintain the NW Area Contingency Plan for oil spill response in Oregon, Washington and Idaho.

An important element of the NWACP is the development of response strategies for sensitive natural or cultural resources requiring protection identified to be at risk from a significant spill of oil or hazardous materials. These preplanned response strategies are referred to as "Geographic Response Plans". The NWACP incorporates GRPs and different response types and techniques (Marine Firefighting, for example).

GRPs have been developed for navigable waters of the state, which include the Willamette River below Oregon City and the Columbia River. The response strategies are incorporated into annual updates to the Northwest Area Plan, which DEQ and its partners use during an incident response.

The NWACP serves as the oil and hazardous materials response plan under the Oregon Emergency Management Plan.

DEQ Regulatory Responsibilities

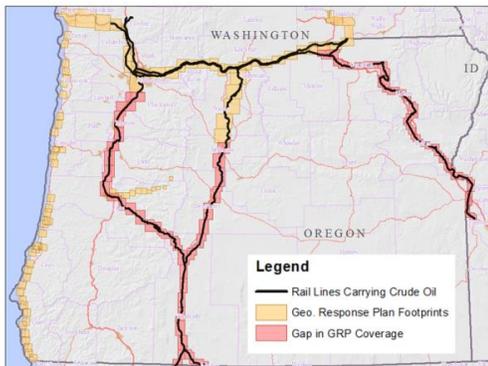
As the lead state agency for cleanup oversight, DEQ actively responds to oil spills from train derailments or other causes on a round-the-clock basis. ORS 466.610 through 466.680 describe DEQ's authority relating to the cleanup of oil and hazardous materials. When notified by the Oregon Emergency System or the National Response Center, DEQ initiates communications with local, tribal, state and federal partners and rail carriers to commence a timely and coordinated response.

DEQ spill response staff is trained in the National Incident Management System. This gives them the technical skills required to evaluate and respond to spills of crude oil and other hazardous materials. DEQ has an emergency response on-scene coordinator located in each region of the state. For large complex incidents, DEQ draws additional

response personnel from other staff in the environmental cleanup programs provided they have training and have participated in spill response drills.

DEQ is also responsible for administering ORS 468B.345 through 468B.390 that requires an oil spill contingency plan for facilities that transfer oil over water; liquid petroleum pipelines, including inland pipelines; tank ships carrying petroleum in bulk, including barges; and commercial vessels over 300 gross tons. These plans provide details on response equipment and personnel to implement the GRPs developed under the NWACP; documents training, drills, and exercises conducted by the plan holder; and the plan holder's capability to implement a quick and effective response.

Transport of crude oil by rail through Oregon was not prevalent when the state's spills and emergency response laws were developed, but the laws ensure storage facilities and transporters of large volumes of oil are prepared to respond to spills. Trains consisting of 100 or more tanker cars are carrying over 3 million gallons of crude oil along the routes shown in the figure below. These crude oil shipments involve varying types of oil from the Bakken Formation primarily in North Dakota, tar sands from Alberta, Canada, and waxy crude from Utah. Each of these products have unique chemical properties that may require different response strategies.



Geographic Response Planning Areas

In Oregon, GRPs have not been developed for significant portions of the primary railroad transportation routes in Oregon. Railroads have not completed oil spill contingency plans that address protection of sensitive areas along those areas due to the absence of GRPs. Whatever strategies that may exist have not been tested and verified by DEQ.

Pre-Planning for Oil Spills

Protection of human life and safety are the highest priorities during response to oil or hazardous material spills or releases. Pre-planned response strategies reduce impacts to public, natural and cultural resources and provides for an efficient and effective response during the chaotic crisis phase of the incident.

Likewise, understanding how railroads are prepared to respond through contingency plans, similar to those prepared by vessels and facilities, will provide information on personnel and equipment availability and protection strategies for sensitive areas along their rail corridors. Drilling and training between agency and industry personnel will lead to a well-coordinated response.

DEQ is responsible for developing an interagency response plan for oil or hazardous material spills in certain waters under ORS 468B.495. The elements of the plan are outlined under ORS 468B.500 include development of geographic response strategies.

Legislation enacted in 2015 and codified under ORS 453.392 directed the State Fire Marshal to adopt by rule a plan for the coordinated response to oil or hazardous material spills or releases that occur during rail transport. This legislation did not require railroads to develop a spill contingency plan or development of response strategies to protect sensitive areas along hundreds of miles of rail shown in the figure illustrating those areas.

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Alternative formats

Documents can be provided upon request in an alternate format for individuals with disabilities or in a language other than English for people with limited English skills. To request a document in another format or language, call DEQ in Portland at 503-229-5696, or toll-free in Oregon at 1-800-452-4011, ext. 5696; or email deqinfo@deq.state.or.us.