



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State prepares boom removal plan with cities and counties

BILOXI, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) and Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) met with Coast mayors and county officials on Tuesday to solicit their input on a plan to remove boom from Mississippi waters as hurricane season heats up and oil spill response operations in Mississippi move into recovery mode.

“The boom poses a greater threat to the marshes and shoreline from a significant storm event than the oil,” said DMR Executive Director Bill Walker. “BP has committed to staying until all Mississippi beaches and marshes are cleaned.”

“While we will continue to see tar balls come on shore, they are scattered events that are cleaned up by BP contractors, and they maintain the capability to quickly remove tar balls. Boom does not stop tar balls most of the time, and the placement of some boom could cause severe damage to our marshes and property damage if we have a storm. We are developing a transition plan with input from local officials to phase out the removal of boom in several weeks so that the areas the counties are most concerned about will come out last. These decisions are being made with much discussion among MDEQ, DMR, the Governor’s Office, and with input from local officials,” said Trudy Fisher, MDEQ Executive Director.

Walker asked cities and counties to submit their input to him in writing, indicating what boom should be removed and when it should be removed. Fabric fencing that is already in place is not included in the boom removal task.

Walker said he will inform county EOCs of boom removal locations in advance of their removal. The goal is to remove all boom from Mississippi waters by August 31.

Boom removal will proceed as follows:

- The first 20 percent to 40 percent of boom to be removed will be ineffective boom and secondary boom.
- The next 40 percent of boom to be removed will be boom at the mouths of bays and safe harbor locations.
- The final 20 percent of boom to be removed will be the Magnolia boom and boom in sensitive marsh areas.

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More information and links about MDEQ's and MDMR's roles in oil spill response are available at www.deq.state.ms.us/oilspill and www.dmr.state.ms.us/DMR/oil-spill.htm. Water sampling information available at: <http://opcgis.deq.state.ms.us/oilspillmap> and air monitoring data at: <http://gulfcoast.airnowtech.org>.

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PHOTO CAPTION:

10-100-LST.jpg: Boom washed ashore at Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Jackson County. Displaced boom will be removed from all Mississippi marsh and shoreline areas as soon as possible.

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