

Crude Move



GREAT LAKES WEBINAR SERIES

Spill Response Requirements and Regional Capacity: Regulations and Resources

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The 2010 Kalamazoo River oil spill in Michigan highlighted the need for planning. When Enbridge's Line 6B began to leak oil, the company didn't initially respond appropriately, resulting in the loss of more than one million gallons of crude oil. Additionally, locals were not aware of risks associated with the pipeline. When the magnitude of the spill was realized, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) led a cleanup effort that included agencies from the state of Michigan, city of Battle Creek, Calhoun County Health, Kalamazoo County Health and Enbridge. While the initial response focused on public and worker safety, over the course of three years standard cleanup measures were used to rectify water, air and soil contamination. After a continual clean-assess process, the EPA transferred control of the cleanup effort to the state, which worked with Enbridge on long-term monitoring and final cleanup/compliance. This incident highlighted the importance of planning as many players were involved in the spill, response and cleanup effort.

The planning architecture of the United States' oil spill response is broken up into national, regional and area contingency plans.

NATIONAL CONTINGENCY PLAN (NCP)

- Provides organizational structure and procedures.
- Specifies responsibilities and describes resources available for response.
- The EPA leads on inland spills; the US Coast Guard (USCG) on coastal spills.
- The National Response Center is notified when a spill occurs and relays information to the on-scene coordinators, who coordinate with federal, state, local and tribal agencies and/or private companies that have an obligation to react.

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REGIONAL CONTINGENCY PLANS (RCPs)

- Serve as a bridge between NCPs and Area Response Plans.
- Ensure effective response of all government agencies and private companies.
- Highlight useful facilities and resources in the region, like state emergency response coordinators and federal equipment available for response.
- Delineate boundaries between coastal and inland zones to determine jurisdiction.
- Maintained by Regional Response Teams (RRTs) that include state and federal government representation. RRTs are planning, policy and coordinating bodies that do not respond directly to the scene but provide assistance as requested by the on-scene coordinator during an incident.

AREA CONTINGENCY PLANS (ACPs)

- Integrate and harmonize plans that are location specific — including state and local plans, facility response plans (reviewed by the EPA), pipelines (reviewed by the US Department of Transportation) and trains (several agencies cover rail safety, led by the US Department of Transportation).
- Detail the responsibilities of local players, including owners and operators of sites or vessels, and federal, state and local agencies.

GEOGRAPHIC RESPONSE PLANS (GRPs)

- Some states, like Washington and Massachusetts, have traditionally developed GRPs for coastal areas, but others, like New York, are starting to develop them for inland areas along oil transportation corridors.
- State and federal agencies are partners in GRPs, but local governments guide what needs protecting and who is available. This entails working with local emergency response teams (police, fire and health), highway departments and water systems to ensure the plans are comprehensive.
- GRPs are often produced for population centers and environmentally sensitive areas. These plans are built using NOAA's Environmental Sensitivity Index (ESI) platform; while ESIs highlight what needs protecting, GRPs highlight how to protect it. For inland areas, where ESIs do not exist, new studies and maps need to be done to ensure sensitive areas are located and protected.
- Typically short, initial response plans, GRPs are designed around what local resources are available within the first hours of a spill.
- The plan should outline who needs to be notified and what can be done to lessen the environmental and socioeconomic impacts of a spill.



Visit the **CRUDE MOVE WEBINAR SERIES** site to watch the presentation, download slides and learn more about the transport of crude oil across the Great Lakes Basin.