



**Governor's Office of  
Homeland Security &  
Emergency Preparedness**

---

**JOINT INFORMATION CENTER**

State of Louisiana News Desk #: 225.358.5361

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 19, 2010

**Louisiana DHH Releases Oil Spill-Related Exposure  
Information**

*290 Exposure-Related Cases; Officials Continue to Monitor Health  
Impacts*

**BATON ROUGE** - Two hundred and ninety oil spill exposure-related cases have been reported to the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) to date, according to its seventh surveillance report released today. Two hundred and sixteen of those cases involved workers on oil rigs or workers involved in the oil spill clean-up efforts, while 74 were reported by the general public.

The Department is gathering data reported through its surveillance network of doctors, clinics, emergency care locations and medical facilities, which are reporting illnesses and injuries related to the oil spill for the ongoing database. Each exposure-related complaint is followed up on by DHH Office of Public Health staff.

There was an increase in exposure-related cases due primarily to new data accumulated by the Louisiana Poison Center, which had received additional case information for the time period of June 3 to July 14, 2010 from the Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center toll-free line, previously contracted by BP to field exposure-related questions and complaints. Some additional data is a result of new reporting from Acadian Ambulance, which has been operating EMS medical stations located at various work sites specifically serving oil spill workers. The number of cases may change again as more detailed

investigations are completed on the newly reported cases.

This week's report also includes updated summaries of air surveillance and seafood surveillance data generated by state and federal agencies, including the EPA, the Center for Toxicology and Environmental Health, a private company working with BP, and the Louisiana departments of Wildlife and Fisheries, and Environmental Quality. The seafood data shows that 467 samples of various kinds of seafood have been sampled and tested for chemicals present in hydrocarbons.

#### Breakdown of Cases by Category:

- ? Of the workers who reported illnesses, 194 were male, 22 were female. Of the general public, 27 were male, while 47 were female. Most of those individuals who reported illnesses were between the ages of 18 and 64.
- ? Most workers and members of the general public either utilized an emergency room, or urgent care center, clinic or physician's office (107 and 82, respectively). Eighty-seven individuals called the Louisiana Poison Center's hotline. Seventeen individuals with mild symptoms had short hospitalizations.

Questions about exposure-related illnesses can be directed to the Louisiana Poison Center: 1-800-222-1222. The Poison Center is staffed 24-hours a day and can provide medical management advice. To report an exposure-related illness, call 1-888-293-7020.

The full Oil Spill Surveillance Report is available [here](#). The report will be generated by DHH weekly and posted on [www.dhemergencynews.com](http://www.dhemergencynews.com).

DHH's Office of Public Health, Section of Environmental Epidemiology & Toxicology gathers and analyzes information provided by surveillance sites, including hospital emergency departments, outpatient clinics, physician's offices and the Louisiana Poison Center.

###