

Tulane University Experts Available to Discuss Oil Disaster as Anniversary Nears

April 19, 2011 12:30 PM Mike Strecker
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Where is the oil from last year's BP blowout now? What are the physical and mental health impacts of the oil disaster? Is seafood from the Gulf safe to eat? How has the BP oil disaster affected the price of gas as well as the national and local economies? What are the legal ramifications? Will the Gulf Coast ever be the same?

Experts from Tulane University are available to answer these and other questions as the one-year anniversary of the BP-Deepwater Horizon oil disaster approaches.

Where Has The Oil Gone?

Brad Rosenheim, assistant professor in Tulane's Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, is leading a team of researchers tracking oil that came ashore on Grand Isle and Barataria Bay in Louisiana. He can comment on how the beach appears clean and oil free, but plenty of oil is buried in the sand and marshes.
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Kyriakos Papadopoulos, a chemical and biomedical engineering professor at Tulane University, is working on manufacturing microbes derived from bacteria that can eat the oil that has fouled the beaches and marshes of the Gulf Coast.
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Vijay John, a chemical and biomolecular engineer, can discuss microbial/nutrient and other chemically-enhanced cleanup methods used to clean up oil.
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Is Seafood From The Gulf Safe To Eat?

LuAnn White, director of the Tulane Center for Applied Environmental Public Health, can talk about the environmental science of this type of oil, its reaction to the water, the way it will integrate with the ecosystem and its toxicity. She can talk about remediation and the science behind oil and dispersants.

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Mental Health Impact:

Charles Figley is an internationally renowned expert in disaster-related mental health. He can discuss the mental health of fishermen and coastal residents whose livelihoods and heritage have been affected by the BP oil disaster.

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Michael S. Scheeringa has expertise in assessment of individuals exposed to trauma, implementation of evidence-based interventions for posttraumatic stress and adversity, especially in children.

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Will The Gulf Coast Ever Be The Same?

Hank Bart, director and curator of fishes, Tulane Museum of Natural History and an associate professor of ecology and evolutionary biology, can discuss how organisms and communities respond to environmental degradation and contamination. A major emphasis of his research is biotic changes in large rivers, including the lower Mississippi River.

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Alexander Kolker, a geologist in Tulane's Department of Earth & Environmental Sciences, can talk about coastal ecosystems and the impact of the oil

on this fragile system.

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Michael J. Blum, assistant professor in Tulane's Department of Earth & Environmental Sciences who has also worked with the EPA, can discuss the oil's impact on coastal marshes and wildlife.

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Doug Meffert, deputy director for policy for the Center for Bioenvironmental Research, can discuss the oil spill in the context of Louisiana's urgent need for coastal restoration.

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Torbjorn Tornqvist, professor in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, can discuss the oil spill in relation to sea level and climate change, coastal subsidence and coastal and deltaic sedimentology.

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Public Health:

Maureen Y. Lichtveld, professor and Freeport McMoRan chair of environmental policy, can comment on the public health risks, and the potential dangers for relief workers cleaning up the oil.

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Doug Swift, clinical associate professor for Environmental Health Science at Tulane, can comment on oil's impact on human health.

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What Are The Legal Issues?

Mark S. Davis, senior research fellow and director of Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy, Tulane Law School.

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Martin Davies, a professor of maritime law and Director of Tulane's Maritime Law Center.

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What Is The Spill's Economic Impact?

Peter Ricchiuti, assistant dean of Tulane University's A.B. Freeman School of Business, can discuss the financial impact the spill is having on the Louisiana economy and the oil industry.

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Eric Smith, associate director of Tulane Energy Institute and a former oil industry executive who ran exploration operations for a major local independent energy firm, can discuss the economic impact of the spill and the effect of new federal regulations on oil exploration, production and price.

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