



NEWS RELEASE Mobile County Health Department

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251 N. Bayou St.
P.O. Box 2867
Mobile, AL 36652

www.MobileCountyHealth.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: David Mann, Public Information Officer, 690-8823, dmann@mobilecountyhealth.org

Survey will attempt to determine physical and mental health needs in coastal Mobile County related to oil spill

Following any type of disaster, public health and emergency management professionals must be prepared to respond to and meet the needs of the affected public. To that end, members of the Mobile County Health Department's Emergency Preparedness team, other Health Department employees, and representatives from AltaPointe Health Systems will join with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) epidemiologists to conduct a survey in the coastal areas of Mobile County on Friday, Aug. 27. The goal of the survey is to determine what effects the spill has had on not only the physical health but also the mental health of residents there.

Ten assessment teams consisting of two surveyors each will conduct a Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) rapid assessment survey at 210 households in the Bayou La Batre, Coden and Dauphin Island communities. The data will be analyzed by the CDC's National Center for Environmental Health Division of Environmental Hazards and Health Effects Health Studies Branch. A final report based on data collection will then be prepared.

The main objective of conducting a CASPER survey is to rapidly assess the present and potential health effects and basic needs for a population affected by a disaster. In addition, the information from a CASPER survey can improve response efforts and aid planning for future disasters.

Data gained from a CASPER survey assists public health practitioners and emergency management officials in determining the health status and basic needs of community affected by a disaster. Gathering information about health and basic needs data by using valid statistical methods allows public health and emergency managers to prioritize their responses and to rationalize the distribution of resources.

A claim for reimbursement of the costs related to Thursday's survey has been submitted to BP.

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