

OIL SPILL RESPONSE: DISPERSANTS

A Workshop for Policy Makers, Responders, and Marine Stakeholders

June 13, 2017 10:15am – 4:00 pm
Friday Harbor Grange, Friday Harbor, San Juan Island

Overview

Chemical dispersants are one of several oil spill treatment methods that may be used in Washington waters, with authorization by state and federal agencies. San Juan County Emergency Management has organized this workshop to provide an opportunity for interested stakeholders to learn more about the technical and regulatory framework for dispersant use in our region, and to foster open discussion about local priorities and concerns.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this workshop is to convene a group of stakeholders, subject matter experts, and oil spill response authorities to elicit feedback and build consensus about local priorities for dispersant use decision-making.

Workshop objectives are to:

- Review the state-of-knowledge regarding chemical dispersant use for marine oil spills, summarize consensus science, and identify knowledge/information gaps.
- Provide an overview of national and state-level policies and guidance on dispersant use in Washington State and in the San Juan Islands.
- Explain the dispersant use decision-making process and benefits/drawbacks of dispersants as an oil spill response technique.
- Explore stakeholder opinions and concerns about dispersant use to guide San Juan County emergency management staff in providing feedback or articulating concerns during dispersant use decisions during drills, exercises, and oil spill incidents.

Discussion Format

This workshop will include a mix of presentations from subject matter experts, panel discussions, and full group discussion. We encourage participants to come to the workshop prepared to engage with speakers and fellow participants.

Draft Agenda

Time	Topic	Presenters
10:15 am	Welcome Remarks	Brendan Cowan, SJC Emergency Management
10:20	Group Introductions	Elise DeCola, Nuka Research (facilitator)
10:30	Framing the Discussion	Elise DeCola
10:40	Presentation <i>Dispersants: the Basics</i>	Sue Saupe, Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council
11:30	Break	
11:45	Group discussion <i>Dispersants: the Basics</i>	Facilitated question and answer/discussion with Sue Saupe (See pg 3 for discussion question ideas)
12:15	Lunch	<i>Not provided; many nearby options</i>
13:00	Presentation <i>Dispersant Authorization and Decision-Making in Washington waters</i>	Sonja Larsen, Washington Department of Ecology
13:25	Presentation <i>Federal Policies and Operational Considerations for Dispersant Use Authorization</i>	Brandon Todd, U.S. Coast Guard Sector Puget Sound
13:40	Presentation <i>Beyond the Headlines: NOAA's Role in Compiling Science and Data to Support Response Decision-making</i>	Gary Shigenaka, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
14:15	Break	
14:30	Panel Discussion <i>Evaluating Trade-offs and Considerations for Dispersant Use Decision-making in the San Juan Islands</i>	Brendan Cowan, Sue Saupe, Sonja Larsen, Brandon Todd, Gary Shigenaka, and Elise DeCola (moderator)
15:15	Group Discussion <i>Dispersants in Your Backyard: Takeaways from Today's Workshop</i>	Facilitated discussion (See pg 3 for discussion question ideas)
15:45	Wrap-up	
16:00	Adjourn	<i>We will adjourn in time for people to make the 16:15 ferry</i>

Topics to Consider for Group Discussions

Participants are encouraged to come ready to ask questions and discuss issues. The following topics are suggestions to help get the discussion started, but you are welcome to come with your own ideas or questions.

How dispersants work (morning presentation)

- Did Sue Saupe's presentation help to enhance your understanding of how dispersants act on an oil slick?
- What types of factors would impact whether dispersants would be effective in Washington waters?
- Is there anything that San Juan County stakeholders could learn from Cook Inlet RCAC's experiences in Alaska?

Decision-making process (afternoon presentations – after lunch)

- Is it clear to you how representatives of local, state, federal government contribute to dispersant use decisions?
- How can stakeholders provide input ahead of oil spills and make sure that their concerns are known and represented during the response process, when there may not be time for consultations?
- Is the decision-making process that is sometimes acted out during drills and exercises consistent with what goes on during an actual incident?
- How did the information presented today change or confirm your understanding about dispersant usage and the decision making process?
- Does the current science on dispersant effects and toxicity answer the questions that you would have at the time of the spill?

Panel discussion (afternoon, after the break)

- What have panelists learned from their personal experiences related to dispersant use decisions during real-world incidents?
- How do decision-makers from different organizations evaluate and weigh available information to make dispersant use decisions?
- If you (participant) were part of the dispersant use decision, what would be most important to you?
- How can participants use the information they have heard today to inform their constituents or leadership about dispersants?
- How can stakeholders communicate their interests or concerns to decision-makers before and/or during an oil spill, in an effective and constructive manner?