

# AMERICA'S OIL SPILL AND THE FORGOTTEN

**First we want to extend our deepest sympathy** to the families of the 11 men who lost their lives in the explosion in the Gulf of Mexico. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families and loved ones. May their honor and memories stay forever bright.

Lives were lost, it is said precautions were not taken, standards were not followed, and yet getting angry and shouting blame does nothing. All we can do is change what is and what will be. We all as a nation must pull together, and help restore what is being and has been destroyed.

I really don't know why they are calling it an oil "spill". That sounds like a container spilled over. This catastrophe is a gushing river of oil spewing into the Gulf of Mexico waters at the alarming rate of about 5000 barrels of oil a **DAY**. What does that really mean?

One barrel is 42 U.S. gallons. So, 5,000 x 42 is **210,000 gallons of oil per day**. This leak started the 20<sup>th</sup> of April, it is now the 14<sup>th</sup> of May. If that rate has been sustained since the rig sunk almost a month ago, that means over 5,000,000 that's **five million** gallons of oil have already poured into the Gulf.

Now, the gulf is a big body of water, with an estimated 643 quadrillion gallons of water in it. So some people are thinking, how bad can it be with only so far 5 million plus gallons of oil disbursed into 643 quadrillion gallons of water. Well considering one gallon of motor oil can contaminate ONE MILLION gallons of water, then over 5 million gallons of oil has contaminated over **FIVE TRILLION** gallons of water. That means almost **8% of the Gulf of Mexico** is now contaminated with oil.

What about the oil slick. Just one gallon of motor oil can create an oil slick eight acres in size! We already have over five million gallons of oil in the gulf, so we already have an oil slick the size of 40 million acres. To put perspective on that, it is an area about the size of Washington State.





BP has estimated that the leaks could be as much as 60,000 barrels a day. At 42 gallons per barrel, that's 2.52 million gallons of oil *per day*. Shockingly that would be 60,480,000, **sixty million four hundred and eighty thousand**. That surpassed the 11 million gallons spilled by the Exxon Valdez in 1989 after only 4 days and 9 hours. The effects of that "spill" which actually was a spill, and not a gushing river can still be seen today, 21 years later.

As we pollute our water, what does this mean to our marine and human life. Suffocating plants and animals is a direct impact of an oil spill. Marine plants can be covered in a film of oil which prevents and water exchange, causing the plants to die. As with all life, the next level of marine life which feed on these plants will now struggle to survive. Coatings of oil on the flesh of birds can suffocate them and strip the water resistant coating from their feathers.

Clams, mussels, and oysters to name a few may accumulate toxins which can kill the animals or be passed on along the food chain. Human consumers have complained that shellfish harvested from an area impact by an oil spill taste heavy and oily. Animals that rely on these for food may die as a result of consuming them. The moral of the story is our ecological system is multi leveled, so fixing a problem that essentially affects all levels is a monumental task.

Even inhaling compounds related to oil spills can also harm human and marine life, both in the long and short term. In the long term, oil spills affect marine life by interfering with the ability to breed, reproduce, grow, or perform other vital functions. Toxins in oil can also cause cancers and other illnesses in the long term. Obviously this means areas affected by oil "spills" must be restored





on multi levels. WE have damaged our own environment and WE must return it to its natural state.

This abhorrent catastrophe will be an ongoing work for our nation for many years, and the impact and cost to our children, families and ecological system is unfathomable. The force of this has been felt from the very first moment and has been growing at a break neck pace.

Everyone feels a strong empathy for each child, their family, and our ecological system affected by this tragedy. We are all in the front of the line with an inherent desire to restore what this calamity has taken away. Our charity Joyful Hearts is no exception. In fact we are on a mission to raise not only awareness of the real impact this tragedy has on our nation, but also monetary gifts from the purely generous people of America. These gifts will support our work of helping the children and families affected. You can volunteer your time with a simple donation to Joyful Hearts, Inc. Every gift, no matter what amount will help, and you can even help with the purchase of a raffle ticket. If your ticket number won, you could do even more if you wished.

As always, our mission includes infusing the recipients with the desire and power to give back to the community from which they received help. I am certain that all of us have gotten some help in some way at some time. If we all were to “pay it forward”, the results would be astounding. Please be a volunteer for our team, and donate to Joyful Hearts charity for children and families. You can donate by clicking [HERE](#). Thank you for your kindness to our children and families.