

Recommended Minimum Training Levels for Oiled Wildlife Responders

Introduction:

For the purpose of guidance, the following set of minimum training levels are recommended for any personnel who may be involved in oiled wildlife response. Due to various federal safety regulations enforced by either the US Coast Guard or the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), some of these minimum training levels may be REQUIRED for certain activities involving petroleum products which are classified as a hazardous material. These regulations are for the personal safety of any personnel that may come in contact with these substances and/or their vapors or products such as dispersants used in cleanup and remediation efforts. First and foremost, human health and safety is the highest priority in any spill response. Additional training recommendations are made for the benefit of wildlife response operators to enhance their understanding of typical response operations organizational structures and procedures. Finally, it should be clear that wildlife response operators should have a strong grasp on the behavior and biology of the specific species or species groups of animals that they will be working with. While at this time there are no known certification programs for oiled wildlife response in the State of Florida, these curricula may be developed in coordination with wildlife response organizations around the state at a later date following the June 2012 publication of this Wildlife Contingency Plan for Oil Spill Response.

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1. **24 Hour HAZWOPER Certification:** HAZWOPER - HAZardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Standard is an OSHA standard that is concerned primarily with worker safety in emergency response situations. HAZWOPER requires employers to protect the safety and health of three specific groups of workers: those involved in emergency response or cleanup at hazardous waste sites; those involved in emergency response at treatment, storage, and disposal (TSD) sites; and those involved in emergency response to incidents involving hazardous substances. HAZWOPER 24 Hour is required for personnel visiting an Uncontrolled Hazardous Waste Operation - Meets OSHA 29 CFR 1910 Requirements. There are several means by which to obtain this training certification, but the best means is to work with your employer and have them contact either the local US Coast Guard Sector (regarding volunteer operations) or the Florida Department of Environmental Protection – Emergency Response Office or the Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute to be notified of upcoming training opportunities.
2. **National Incident Management System (NIMS), also known as Incident Command System: Level 100-200 ICS Orientation:** Incident Command System (ICS) Orientation is designed to help the student understand the principles of the Incident Command System and to briefly acquaint the student with the basic ICS structure and terminology. ICS Orientation is intended for personnel assigned to an incident or event who have a limited understanding of ICS. This course introduces the student to ICS Organization, Basic Terminology and Common Responsibilities. The student will acquire the skills necessary to perform in an ICS support role. For additional information, see US Coast Guard COMDTINST 164712. This training is available free of charge online from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at:
<http://training.fema.gov/IS/NIMS.asp>

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3. **National Response Framework (NRF) Introduction:** FEMA hosts training and short introduction videos on the National Response Framework, a part of which is the National Contingency Plan (NCP - the National Plan for Oil and Hazardous Material Spills) at:
<http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nrf/training.htm>
4. **Specialized Education, Training, or Experience with the species or species group the responder will be working on:** It will be expected that each individual wildlife responder have adequate education, training, or experience in handling and working with the types of wildlife with which they will be working with. These guidelines may be expanded upon in further revisions of this contingency plan.
5. **Understanding Environmental Sensitivity Index (ESI) Atlases:** A wealth of information is available on the NOAA Office of Response and Restoration ESI Website to introduce wildlife responders to the primary atlas used in oil spill response, the Sensitivity of Coastal Wildlife and Habitats to Spilled Oil Atlases (generally known as Environmental Sensitivity Index (ESI) Atlases). These atlases map out shoreline types and habitats based upon their sensitivity to spilled oil as well as wildlife presence/absence, relative abundance by season, life stage activity by season, and Threatened or Endangered Status at the Federal or State Level. They are particularly useful in identifying Resources At Risk from a real or potential oil spill anywhere in Florida. The NOAA OR&R ESI Website is located at: <http://response.restoration.noaa.gov/esi>. Florida's ESI Atlases are available online at: <http://ocean.floridamarine.org/esimaps>.