



**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES**



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**COASTWIDE BEACH CLEANUP THIS SATURDAY
VOLUNTEER BASIC SAFETY TRAINING OFFERED FRIDAY AND SATURDAY
Prepare to protect Mississippi's beaches, help keep them clean!**

(BILOXI, Miss.) – The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), the Department of Marine Resources (DMR), and the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) are leading a coastwide beach cleanup day from western Hancock County to the east side of Jackson County this Saturday, May 8, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Each county is designating meeting points for volunteers to sign in and to pass out trash bags and gloves. These meeting points will be posted on the MDEQ, DMR and MEMA websites Friday. Volunteers will be directed to cover specific areas near the sign in station. Safety guidelines will be posted and should be followed. Protection of Mississippi's beaches starts with keeping them clean.

Pre-impact beach cleanup is essential to aid in remediation should any material from the spill in the Gulf reach Mississippi's coastal beaches. Removing trash, vegetative debris, and other waste reduces the amount of potentially contaminated material, remediation time, cost of post-impact cleanup, and human exposure to possibly harmful material.

The beach cleanup is open to everyone. Groups and families are welcome. There are no age restrictions; however, parents must accompany children and are responsible for them.

SAFETY TRAINING OFFERED TO VOLUNTEERS

Basic safety instruction is being offered by BP at locations in Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson Counties. These 30 minute classes do not give participants any certification and are intended to provide safety information to volunteers who want to participate in organized beach cleanup prior to possible oil spill impact.

Sessions are scheduled Friday and Saturday in Harrison and Jackson Counties and in Hancock County it's Friday only. The times are 2:00, 4:00, or 6:00 p.m. After the session, participants are invited to join a beach cleanup in their county from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. The cleanups are also open to the public. MDEQ staff and other volunteers will be on the beach handing out trash bags and gloves. There are no age limits to participate in the instruction or beach cleanup; however, parents are responsible for their children at all times.

The schedule is as follows:

FRIDAY ONLY, May 7, 2010; 2:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m., or 6:00 p.m.

Hancock County – Pearl River Community College Hancock County Center (Waveland)

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, May 7 and 8, 2010; 2:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m., or 6:00 p.m.

Harrison County – Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College – Jefferson Davis Campus (Gulfport)
Room U202

Jackson County – Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College - Jackson County Campus (Gautier)
Warner Peterson Building

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