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## Tar balls in Texas mean oil hits all 5 Gulf states

**AP** Associated Press

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By **JUAN A. LOZANO**, Associated Press Writer – Tue Jul 6, 9:21 am ET



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AP – Tar balls wash ashore on Texas beaches

TEXAS CITY, Texas – More than two months after oil from BP's blown-out seafloor well first reached Louisiana, a bucket's worth of [tar balls](#) that washed onto a Texas beach means the crude has arrived in every Gulf state.

Oil is still on the move, but the fleet of skimmers tapped to clean the worst-hit areas of the [Gulf of Mexico](#) is not. A string of storms has made the water too choppy for the boats to operate for more than a week off Florida, Alabama and Mississippi, even though the gusher continues.



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Video: [Tar Balls Not Foreign To Texas Gulf Coast](#) CBS 11 Dallas

The number of tar balls discovered in Texas is tiny compared to what has coated beaches in other Gulf states. Still, it provoked the [quick dispatch of cleaning crews](#) and a vow that BP PLC will pay for the trouble.

"Any Texas shores impacted by the Deepwater spill will be cleaned up quickly and BP will be picking up the tab," [Texas Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson](#) said in a news release.

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The oil's arrival in Texas was predicted Friday by an analysis from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which gave a 40 percent chance of crude reaching the area.



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"It was just a matter of time that some of the oil would find its way to Texas," said Hans Graber, a marine physicist at the University of Miami and co-director of the Center for Southeastern Tropical Advanced Remote Sensing.

About five gallons of tar balls were found Saturday on the Bolivar Peninsula, northeast of Galveston, said Capt. Marcus Woodring, the [Coast Guard](#) commander for the Houston/Galveston sector. Two gallons were found Sunday on the peninsula and Galveston Island, though tests have not yet confirmed the oil's origin.

Woodring said the consistency of the tar balls indicates they could have been spread to Texas water by ships that have worked out in the spill. But there's no way to confirm how they got there.

Galveston Mayor Joe Jaworski said he believed the tar balls were a fluke, rather than a sign of what's to come.

"This is good news," he said. "The water looks good. We're cautiously optimistic this is an anomaly."

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Hurricane Alex, which blew through the Gulf last week and made landfall along the border between Texas and Mexico, may have played a small role in bringing the oil ashore in Texas by increasing the westerly current near land, Graber said. But it was more likely due to normal coastal currents and local weather patterns.

NOAA scientists are looking at local weather, Hurricane Alex and Gulf vessels as possible sources for the tar balls, agency spokeswoman Monica Allen said Monday.

The distance between the western reach of the tar balls in Texas and the most eastern reports of oil in Florida is about 550 miles. Oil was first spotted on land near the mouth of the Mississippi River on April 29.

The spill is reaching deeper into Louisiana. Strings of oil were seen Monday in the Rigolets, one of two waterways that connect the Gulf with Lake Pontchartrain, the large lake north of New Orleans.

"So far it's scattered stuff showing up, mostly tar balls," said Louisiana Office of Fisheries Assistant Secretary Randy Pausina. "It will pull out with the tide, and then show back up."

New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu said assets would be deployed to protect the Lake Pontchartrain basin. Pausina said he expected the oil to clear the passes and move directly into the lake, taking a backdoor route to New Orleans.

The news of the spill's reach comes at a time when most of the offshore skimming operations in the Gulf have been halted by choppy seas and high winds. A tropical system that had been lingering off Louisiana flared up Monday afternoon, bringing heavy rain and winds.

Last week, the faraway Hurricane Alex idled the skimming fleet off Alabama, Florida and Mississippi with choppy seas and stiff winds. Now they're idled by the smaller storms that could last well into this week.

Officials have plans for the worst-case scenario: a hurricane barreling up the Gulf toward the spill site. But the less-dramatic weather conditions have been met with a more makeshift response.

Skimming across the Gulf has scooped up about 23.5 million gallons of oil-fouled water so far, but officials say it's impossible to know how much crude could have been sucked up in good weather because of the fluctuating number of boats and other variables.

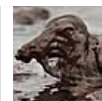
Jerry Biggs, a commercial fisherman in Pass Christian, Miss., who has had to shut down because of the spill, is now hiring out his 13 boats and 40-man crew to BP for cleanup. He said skimming is severely hampered by the weather.

"This isn't going away. This isn't a sneeze or a hiccup. This is diarrhea for a long time," he said. "My lifestyle is screwed. It's over. The thing that I love the most I'm not going to be able to do anymore."

The British company has now seen its costs from the spill reach \$3.12 billion, a figure that doesn't include a \$20 billion fund for damages the company created last month.

The storms have not affected drilling work on a [relief well](#) BP says is the best chance for finally plugging the leak. The company expects drilling to be finished by mid-August.

Associated Press writers Tom Breen and Mary Foster in New Orleans and Brendan Farrington in Pass Christian, Miss., contributed to this report.



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TexasBeachGirl 1 minute ago | [Report Abuse](#)

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What most people don't realize, including the state's land commissioner evidently, is that Texas beaches are not the nicest in the country and have always had tarballs wash up on shore due to the currents in the gulf. The nicest beaches are in South Padre. Anything above that is murky water, seaweed infested and yes tarballs. Any store, hotel, etc on the coast gives away free "targone" wipes to use on your feet and legs before you enter. While the rest of the coastline in the gulf is upsetting, the few they found on Texas beaches are very a common and everyday occurrence. I think the Texas gov'm't is just trying to pass the buck to BP to clean up so they don't have to pay it this time.

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Mosul 1 minute ago | [Report Abuse](#)

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I think Joe the Mayor of gool ole Galveston better wake up and smell the tar. better get ready for all the crap to float your way.

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Ysadfass Assm 1 minute ago | [Report Abuse](#)

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My boyfriend and i both think World Cup is about sportsmanship.. He is 10 years older than me and he is wealthy ,lol.i know him through ~(10 Ye a rG a p ))\* .\*(C0000M)~~ a nice place for younger women and older men, or older women and younger men, to interact with each other...No age gap is too wide in front of true love. . . .@love it

★★★★★

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Ghostwriter 1 minute ago | [Report Abuse](#)

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Has anyone noticed that whenever Democrats gain control that our country suffers?

Americans and America experienced 6 years of peace and prosperity under President Bush and the Republican controlled Congress and Senate.

The last two terms of President Bush, when the Democrats took control of both houses, is when things started going downhill.

The stock market crashed, the housing market crashed, unemployment became rampant, 2 mishandled wars, racial tensions escalated, illegals flocked into the country, manufacturing jobs were outsourced, millions lost their health care, and social security suddenly went bankrupt.

Domestic terrorism never happened under President Bush and the Republican watch, but once the Democrats took control we've had Ft. Hood, Russian spies and the Gulf spill.

Suddenly gay people want to marry and to openly serve in the military.

Black people are stirring up the racism and illegal Mexicans are demanding the rights of American citizens while taking American jobs and stealing from Social Security and Medicare.

Democrats cause problems in this country and should never be voted into power.

Remember to vote for Republicans from now on to save America and our American way of life. Jesus was a Republican and God is the leader of the GOP.

God Bless America.

signed-

A proud TeaBagger and loyal FOX viewer.

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Muslim\_Marxist 1 minute ago | [Report Abuse](#)

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You still blame this on Bush?

Less than four months after President Barack Obama took office, his new administration received a forceful warning about the dangers of offshore oil drilling.

The alarm was rung by a federal appeals court in Washington, D.C., which found that the government was unprepared for a major spill at sea, relying on an "irrational" environmental analysis of the risks of offshore drilling.

The April 2009 ruling stunned both the administration and the oil industry, and threatened to delay or cancel dozens of offshore projects in Alaska and the Gulf of Mexico.

Despite its pro-environment pledges, the Obama administration urged the court to revisit the decision. Politically, it needed to push ahead with conventional oil production while it expanded support for renewable energy.

Another reason: money. In its arguments to the court, the government said that the loss of royalties on the oil, estimated at almost \$10 billion, "may have significant financial consequences for the federal government."

The U.S. Court of Appeals reversed its decision and allowed drilling in the Gulf to proceed—including on BP PLC's now-infamous Macondo well, 50 miles off the Louisiana coast.

The Obama administration's actions in the court case exemplify the dilemma the White House faced in developing its energy policy. In his presidential campaign, President Obama criticized the Bush administration for being too soft on the oil industry and vowed to support greener energy forms.

But, once in office, President Obama ended up backing offshore drilling, bowing to political and fiscal realities, even as his administration's own scientists and Democratic lawmakers warned about its risks.

After the Macondo well blew out, sinking the Deepwater Horizon rig and causing a catastrophic spill, Mr. Obama said his administration should have been more vigilant in handling the oil industry. "More needed to be done, and more needs to be done" to tighten oversight, he told reporters recently.

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Volkan 3 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)

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OBAMA, he is out of the picture now. Before 20 billion he should dimand to stop that leak.It will be much more damage in long run. He and his cabinet they are all Clowns,Idiots.

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LawrenceP 4 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)

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Mark my words B.P. is done i'll say within a year their will be no more bp they will file bankruptcy and it will be sold off into smaller and other companies

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AndrewP 4 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)

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OH NO THEY DIDN'T!!! THEY JUST DONE MESSED WITH TEXAS!!!

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Collector 4 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)

1 1

THIS is NEWSWORTHY!!!!

I lived in Corpus Christi, Tx over 35 years ago---one could go out to Padre Island and pickup twenty buckets of tar balls from the beaches, any and every day of the week!!!

GIVE ME A BREAK!!!

When did one bucket of tar balls garner this kind of coverage? Heck, for all anyone knows it could have come off a ship or...perhaps we have situation where some wacko collected some tar balls from another state and conveniently decided to dump the bucket on a Texas beach...just to so the media would report it.

WHAT THE HELL HAS HAPPENED TO COMMON SENSE?

Answer: "It is buried in the graveyard, right next to personal responsibility, these days. ( A quote from my college roommate in 1967)

The oil spill is unfortunate, but it is what it is and things will get better over time. This 'saga" has turned into a media event, just like the Iran hostage situation and it drags on and on in the media. Obviously patience is not a virtue of the current media. The media in it's fury to be first, with the mostest, will pull the trigger on a story quicker than a hair trigger on an outlaw's gun, these days. And what did we get out of the Iran hostage situation---Night Line.

Oh yeah, we did eventually get the hostages returned---thanks Jimmy Carter.

The Gulf of Mexico has been oozing petroleum and tar balls for centuries, and the Gulf of Mexico will handle this oil spill as well. (Look at NOAA satellite photos from fifteen years ago)

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Elizabeth 4 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)

1 1

"Tar Balls In Texas!" The title sounds like a third rate off Broadway show. It feels like it too. Thousands of people out of work, the areas in the gulf a disaster,the ocean poisoned and its killing reach slowly spreading and the Feds doing the usual "lets let private industry fix it." I could have sworn I elected a DEMOCRAT! Bush was the all time worst president elected and his Katrina slop still lives on as do both of his wars and Guantanamo. Obama has inherited, fully vested with the hopes of all America in its first son of mixed racial origin- a new voice, a fresh break, a new beginning, a step toward a better future, a more intellegent future and we are seeing that the Old School is the New School and those in power remain empowered to sit on it-all down the line. November Commeth! lets shake it up, if the clowns in D.C. can't cooperate,if they can't find solution and resolve to act in the best interest of the people, lets find a few off the radar that are willing to and get us- as in the US -up and moving. Younger, more flexible less vested in the established Washington crowd. I'm for it and I'm a middle aged ol' lady!

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