



## **NRC 1158584, Pelham Pipeline Spill Pelham, Shelby County, Alabama**

### **SITUATION REPORT #3**

1800, September 12, 2016

#### **INCIDENT DESCRIPTION**

On September 9, at 1449 hours, Colonial Pipeline reported a gasoline spill from a 36" subsurface transmission line to the National Response Center. The gasoline traveled overland for approximately 500 feet to a pond (Pond 2 on the attached Figure) that feeds into Peel Creek, a tributary of the Cahaba River. The initial report to Colonial was made by the property owner, but there was no volume estimate. The exact amount of the release was unknown; however, Colonial Pipeline initially reported to the responding OSC that between 1000 and 2000 gallons of gasoline entered the pond (the spill volume has been updated to 100,000 gallons in the pond – See "Current Operations" for more information).

The local fire department responded and established a secured zone around the spill site. Dangerous explosive gas levels have been detected around the spill location. Shelby County Emergency Management responded and confirmed that there are no public or private drinking water sources threatened by the spill. Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) has integrated into Unified Command and is coordinating with State and County Agencies. An Incident Command Post was established in Hoover, Alabama. The spill location is in a remote area, and no evacuations are necessary. The nearest residential neighborhood is located two miles from the spill location.

Colonial Pipeline has confirmed that the affected transmission line has been shut down. Environmental contractors for Colonial Pipeline are on site to conduct air monitoring and remediation activities. Work to remediate the spill is delayed due to the high concentrations of volatile organic compounds (VOC) emitted for the large areas of pooled gasoline. Weather reports indicate that there is an increased risk of rain for Sunday and Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>.

Threatened and endangered (T&E) species in the area of the spill have been identified and communicated to Unified Command. No T&E species have been reported impacted from the spill, although several common species have been impacted.

At this time, a Regional Response Team 4 (RRT4) activation is not planned. The appropriate members were engaged during the initial response notification process. A RRT4 call will be held if conditions change.

#### **INCIDENT MANAGEMENT**

On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Chuck Berry was deployed to the Incident Command Post and has integrated into Unified Command. The Unified Command structure includes the EPA, Colonial, ADEM, and Shelby County EMA. OSC Williamson, and four US Coast Guard Gulf Strike Team members have been deployed to assist within field observations. A Public Information Officer (PIO) was requested and will assist in the Joint Information Center.

Due to limited overnights operations, OSC Englert demobilized today.

Current number of EPA Personnel Assigned: 2

Current number of United States Coast Guard Gulf Strike Team (USCG GST) Members: 4

### **REPORTING SCHEDULE**

Situation Reports (SITREPS) will be delivered 1800 EDT daily.

### **CURRENT OPERATIONS**

Although the pipeline pumps are shut off, the pipeline continues to drain into Pond 2. The flow rate has decreased over the last day, but visually appears to be approximately three gallons per minute. Colonial has installed one of the stopples and is currently installing the second. Once the stopples are installed, the fuel will be vacuumed from the line and into trucks for shipment to the Colonial Pelham terminal. Evacuation of the pipeline will be followed by a nitrogen purge to remove all fuel from the line.

The high level of explosive vapors is the greatest limiting factor to recovery operations. Colonial contractor CTEH is on site providing air monitoring services. They have set up an AreaRAE network and are providing roving and escort services for response personnel working inside the hot zone. All personnel entering the hot zone are required to have flame resistant clothing and an air monitoring escort. Action levels for benzene, VOCs and explosive vapors have been established. The work is frequently stopped due to excessive benzene and LEL readings thus slowing recovery operations. Today's highest VOC level is roughly half of yesterdays, peaking at 1,564 ppm. The highest LEL levels also dropped to 95%. Benzene levels peaked at only 8ppm thus allowing for more recovery work today.

Colonial has managed to remove approximately 40,000 gallons of liquid from Pond 2. Of that volume 5,500 gallons of oil have been separated and 34,500 gallons of mixed oil/water remain. Colonial established a new pumping area on the north end of the pond where vapor levels were lower. Vacuum trucks continue to pump from this location. Colonial is currently planning on placing "frac" tanks in a new location to the north to cut down on transit circuit time for those trucks needing to off-load and return.

The diversions designed for Pond 3 are in place, which include a substantial underflow dam at the pond's outfall. No oil sheening is visible along the shoreline at Pond 3. Colonial continues to monitor the pond and will notify UC if any petroleum is noted.

EPA/GST is incorporated into Operations and air monitoring. OSC Englert and two GST members observed site operations overnight. Colonial has increased its Safety Personnel and air monitoring staffing levels based on input from EPA field personnel. OSC Williamson and two GST members spent the day on site monitoring safety and response progress. EPA/GST assisted Colonial with planning and installation of the Pond 3 augmentation and will continue to coordinate in those efforts. Two GST members will man the overnight shift as FOSCRs.

OSC Berry has reviewed several plans developed by the Planning Section, including an Impacted Wildlife Management and Waste Management plan. There were several revisions needed in the Waste Management Plan. Approval is expected tomorrow.

### **PLANNED RESPONSE ACTIVITIES**

- Continue to participate in UC
- Monitor removal activities
- Monitor safety air monitoring
- Prepare for and coordinate a transition to a removal phase