

New Study Reveals Flaws in Oil Spill Response

Reader Contribution By [Lawrence Anthony Earth Organization](#) Published April 30th, 2013

This news release is reposted with permission from [Lawrence Anthony Earth Organization](#).

An entirely new approach to oil spill problems associated with drilling, transport, pipelines and storage mishaps could find surprising common ground between the oil industry and environmentalists, according to a new position paper just released entitled: A Call for a Twenty-First-Century SOLUTION in Oil Spill Response. Written and compiled by the Science and Technology Board of the Lawrence Anthony Earth Organization (LAEO), the analysis not only brings to light the dangerous flaws associated with current oil spill cleanup methods, but outlines technology they claim will not only save marine life, oceans, animals and people, but also save millions (and in BP's case could have saved billions) of dollars in damages and cleanup costs to oil companies and local economies impacted by spills.

Citing recent scientific papers showing that the industry's ineffective remedies are more destructive than the oil itself, LAEO's paper asserts the source of the problem has been the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 'misguidance' documents their investigation uncovered that have been perpetuated and enforced throughout the industry.

"These faulty guidelines and ineffective remedies for spill problems have resulted in industry officials with a 25-year addiction to chemical dispersants used in our oceans and who mistakenly think that these are the best tools for managing environmental damage and profit loss from oil spill fines," said Diane Wagenbrenner, one of the paper's joint authors and Advisory Board member of LAEO.



"Spill it, boom it, skim it, sink it, disperse it, and hide it' is a mantra that recurs throughout most oil spill incidents including now the ExxonMobil Pegasus pipeline in

Mayflower, Arkansas currently being treated with boom and adsorbents that are as ineffective as paper towels in cleaning up a massive spill," said Barbara Wiseman, LAEO's International President, another joint author of the paper. "We intend for this publication to correct the EPA's inaccurate guidance documents that have been barriers to effective clean up—and we believe, that even the oil companies will welcome it."

The LAEO paper discusses ineffective handling of the Gulf of Mexico BP oil spill disaster when predominantly treated with the industry's favorite spill killer – Corexit. Originally developed by ExxonMobil, it is a toxic, hydrocarbon-based, oil-dispersant agent. The analysis makes an undeniable case that the use of chemical dispersant violates the Clean Water Act by contaminating the water column and seabed.

"The fact is, the Gulf ecosystem is still in crisis and certain members of the EPA have been using these erroneous documents to stand in the way of our and others' efforts to get the waters truly cleaned up. BP's pension-dependent shareholders could have saved billions, if the use of non-toxic, already-EPA approved technology had not been blocked by top EPA officials who themselves violated the Clean Water Act during the Deepwater Horizon disaster," stated Jeanne Pascal, retired EPA attorney and another joint author. "Inadequate oil spill response outcomes have become the industry norm."

Alongside publishing its industry guidance reform paper, LAEO launched a government and public education and awareness campaign on 20 April coinciding with the third-year anniversary of the start of the BP Gulf Oil Spill and Earth Month. The position paper and their 'earth troops' Oil Spill Response Action Kit can be found at www.ProtectMarineLifeNow.org. The BP spill anniversary day inaugurates their Change Oil Spill Response Now campaign aimed at building a global consensus and Internet presence promoting safe, non-toxic, cost-effective oil spill response.

Photo by Fotolia/Frankix

Originally Published: 4/30/2013 11:11:00 AM