

Update on Strawberry Creek Fuel Cleanup

January 13, 2012

Update to UC Berkeley Neighbors About Recent Fuel Spill in Strawberry Creek

Officials announced on January 11 that the active diesel fuel cleanup effort at Strawberry Creek has concluded and the response to the diesel spill that occurred on December 10 at UC Berkeley is now moving to a monitoring and maintenance phase.

That decision was reached by the coordinating agencies and entities involved in the clean-up effort, including the University of California, Berkeley; the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; the U.S. Coast Guard, the state Department of Fish and Game; and the city of Berkeley.

During the monitoring phase, authorities will continue to inspect the creek and will address any areas of concerns, as needed.

A few floating spill booms with absorbent pads will likely remain in some locations along the creek and its San Francisco Bay outfall for several more weeks, to capture any small amounts of residual fuel that might still be released into the creek. These locations will continue to be closely monitored by the university and the city of Berkeley and the booms will remain in place as long as necessary to protect the creek and the bay.

Although natural conditions such as storm flows and biodegradation are expected to remove any residual amounts of fuel from the creek and bay, evidence of the spill may be present in some areas for weeks or months. This could include light sheens of diesel or occasional odors near the creek channel and culverts.

Residents and visitors to the creeks are still advised to avoid contact with the water until at least one significant storm passes through the region. In addition, officials note, it is always a good idea for residents to wash their hands should contact with urban creek water occur.

Future updates and information related to the spill will be posted on the university's Strawberry Creek web site (<http://strawberrycreek.berkeley.edu>). Any questions or concerns may be addressed to ehs@berkeley.edu or by calling (510) 642-3073.