

News from **Office of the Mayor**

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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UPDATE ON OAKLAND'S EFFORTS TO PROTECT WATERWAYS IN WAKE OF OIL SPILL

Lake Merritt and Marsh Land Protected

OAKLAND – November 15, 2007 – Thousands of gallons of bunker fuel continues to spread, causing damage to the cities and counties of the Bay Area. Oakland agencies, including the Port of Oakland, the Oakland Fire Department, Hazardous Materials Response, Office of Public Works, Environmental Services, the Office of Parks and Recreation, and Oakland's Office of Emergency Services have been working hard to successfully prevent the hazardous oil from entering our waterways, including Lake Merritt.

“The Bay is the centerpiece to the magnificence and beauty of the Bay Area's physical landscape. This oil spill is a tragic environmental disaster that must be met with an effective response from all levels of government. I am proud of our city staff, who have been working around the clock to ensure that the hazardous materials do not get into our treasured waterways,” said Mayor Ron Dellums.

Lake Merritt:

Two oil barriers were placed across the channel to Lake Merritt on November 9 by the City of Oakland and Alameda County to ensure that no oil came from the estuary into the Lake and/or city's creeks. Current reports indicate that no oil from the oil spill has entered Lake Merritt.

Parks and Recreation staff members have been instructed to continue to monitor the Lake for any signs of oil identified. Evidently, the rain over the weekend washed oil residue from the streets into Lake Merritt. As a result, the City of Oakland has received several calls from the public identifying “oil sheen” in Lake Merritt.

Port of Oakland:

The Port of Oakland is monitoring the situation and oil barriers were in place by Friday morning at Arrowhead March and Middle Harbor. There have been no reports of oil spotted at Arrowhead Marsh or the Birth 55 at the mouth of the estuary. Oil has been spotted at Radio beach just north of the Bay Bridge. The U.S. Coast Guard had approximately 100 people out doing clean up.

Six oiled birds have been retrieved from Lake Merritt and one from the Channel. City staff and members are continuing to look for dead or oiled birds along Lake Merritt and Oakland’s shoreline. Oiled or dead bird sightings should be reported to the Rotary Nature Center at 510-238-3739.

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