

www.OilSpillVolunteers.com

Press Release for Immediate Distribution

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With nearly 7,000 volunteers registered into their database in just over four days, the founders of the www.OilSpillVolunteers.com web-site, are appealing to management at BP to make use of the resource they have developed and to assist them in coordinating a more proactive response to the effects of the destroyed Deepwater Horizon oil rig.

Don Abrams, a retired engineer who developed the web-site, is frustrated at the lack of significant response, "We have a database that identifies individuals with oil spill clean-up experience, identifies those who have HAZWOPER training as required by OSHA, identifies volunteers with boats. I gave a first list identifying trained volunteers to BP representatives Sunday morning," he stated.

Abrams, along with his neighbor Melanie Allen, have worked to bring national governance and media attention to the disaster, developing their web-site into a recognized resource for the public to get information, links to resources, and volunteer for a proactive response to what they see as coming. "Organized and proactive is our mission," said Allen," Don and I do not want to wait before training and education comes to the community."

Abrams offered BP representatives an opportunity to work with him on an oil containment "Boom Monitoring Network" utilizing volunteers to track the conditions of the booms deployed in the four state region. When his offer was declined by BP, Abrams released the system himself, and it is now available at the web-site. A report posted this morning identifies where containment booms have become unmoored and washed ashore in one location. "We offered BP the eyes of local people who can see these booms from their living rooms and front porches, and they declined," said Abrams.

Allen has identified on-line HAZWOPER and hazardous material training courses. "There is limited need to set up venues for this training. It is available on-line right now. And for those persons in need of in person training, as we have told the BP representatives with whom we were able to speak, we can give you the information identifying experienced instructors willing to teach the classes and in partnership with the City, can provide the venues. Why re-invent the wheel? Let's deliver the education to the public in the most effective and efficient manner to expedite the process. We want to be proactive, not reactive. Lets reduce the lag time between the event and the constructive action plan. When we first spoke with BP representatives, we were told there would be no hazardous material training for volunteers. This morning the BP spokesman Andrew van Chau has announced that the four-hour crash course will be offered once logistics are arranged. An OSHA spokesman said Monday that adequate hazardous materials training and protection is foremost. We agree and are ready to assist in facilitating that process."

“I hope that someone in upper management at BP will take note and get the gears of their bureaucracy moving. We are offering BP a valuable resource that will help them mitigate the problem they have created”, said Abrams. “We are not emotional and extreme in our approach. Our web-site is logically designed to enroll volunteers into a sort able database that identifies skills and training that can be put to work now. We are not pointing fingers, or raising our voices. We want to be at the table, joining hands to mitigate this problem as efficiently as possible.”

As of 11 this morning, the [www. OilSpillVolunteers.com](http://www.OilSpillVolunteers.com) web-site is about to top 7,000 registered volunteers in their database. The Audubon Center in Moss Point has registered more than 4,000 volunteers, many previously trained in wildlife rescue. Abrams received a call from BP this morning inquiring about the structure of their website’s database, and he hopes this will lead to ongoing constructive dialogue and collaboration.

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