

NIST Special Publication 935

In Situ Burning of Oil Spills Workshop Proceedings

New Orleans, Louisiana, November 2-4, 1998

William D. Walton and Nora H. Jason, Editors

Building and Fire Research Laboratory
National Institute of Standards and Technology
Gaithersburg, MD 20899-8644

February 1999



U.S. Department of Commerce
William M. Daley, *Secretary*
Technology Administration
Gary R. Bachula, *Acting Under Secretary for Technology*
National Institute of Standards and Technology
Raymond G. Kammer, *Director*



Sponsored by:
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bruce Babbitt, *Secretary*
Minerals Management Service
Cynthia L. Quaterman, *Director*

NOTICE

The statements and conclusions of this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

COVER

U.S. Coast Guard and Minerals Management Service sponsored fire-resistant oil spill containment boom performance test using a non-commercial test boom at the Coast Guard Fire and Safety Test Detachment, Mobile, AL, August 1997. William D. Walton, Photographer.

ISBN No. 1-886843-03-1

National Institute of Standards and Technology Special Publication 935

Natl. Inst. Stand. Technol. Spec. Publ. 935, 114 pages (February 1999)

CODEN: NSPUE2

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON: 1999

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402-9325

JOINT PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS

Non-Research and Development Needs

Need: Increase communication, training, and outreach on *in situ* burning.

Action: Develop and implement strategy to communicate to the public, the role of *in situ* burning in spill response in relationship to other available response measures.

Method of Implementation:

- Evaluate public perception of oil spills and *in situ* burning and how to communicate information more effectively.
 - Develop strategy with involvement from responders, government agencies, health experts, risk communicators, communication specialists, and other experts.
 - Develop materials that include core components while allowing adaption for geographical differences.
 - Build upon existing efforts of educational materials such as those developed by the Alaska and Region I regional response teams (RRT).
- Provide information in different forms or formats appropriate for varying audiences including local fire departments, air quality boards, the fishing industry and Native American communities.
- Utilize large range of outlets to reach the span of “interested parties” (e.g., annual Continuing Challenge Meeting of Emergency Responders, TV documentaries, periodicals and newspaper articles, school curricula for different grade levels).

Priority: High

Comments: The group felt strongly that the lack of public education is a major impediment to implementation of *in situ* burning. This is in addition to the education of the response community (see below). As a consequence, the group felt that a core group should be established to motivate, track, and evaluate educational activities.

Action: Educate and train decision makers on role of *in situ* burning in spill response in the context of other available response measures.

Method of Implementation:

- Hold regional workshops with decision makers, including state air quality boards.
- Provide tools for risk communication, tradeoff analysis, and *in situ* burning plan development.
- Conduct drills with *in situ* burning scenarios including the Pollution Response Exercise Program (PREP).
- Analyze existing data on oil spill effects on air quality (e.g., ozone and non-attainment issues) and compare *in situ* burning and non-*in situ* burning consequences.

Priority: High

Comments: *In situ* burning needs to be endorsed at the highest levels of policy making, in order to insure that *in situ* burning is always considered as a possible response to oil spills. Decision makers need to be clearly aware of the caveats and constraints of *in situ* burning

operations and oil spill response. Furthermore, there needs to be frequent training and testing of knowledge to maintain preparedness and appropriate application of *in situ* burning options.

Action: Better communication and sharing of *in situ* burning information.

Method of Implementation: Using the Internet:

- Maintain and update *in situ* burning bibliography.
- Develop and synthesize questions and answers on *in situ* burning for different audiences.
- Post Regional Response Team's (RRT's) activities including *in situ* burning on RRT homepage sites.
- Establish and maintain List Server for sharing *in situ* burning information.
- Expand role of National Response Team, Science and Technology Committee (NRT/S&T) to provide focal point for *in situ* burn information.
- Provide generic spill "fact sheets" to complement incident specific websites.

Priority: Medium

Comments: The Internet offers new possibilities for sharing information, as well as incorporating information from recognized expert groups into tailored documents. This should be used to increase communication on this *in situ* burning and spill response in general.