

THE NEWS ROOM

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THE BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY
MANAGEMENT,
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Office of Public Affairs

**UPDATE: BOEMRE Continuing to Respond to Natural Gas Leak in
the Gulf of Mexico**

NEW ORLEANS – The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE) is continuing to oversee Apache Corp.'s source control efforts for a natural gas leak near East Cameron Block 278 Platform B. The platform is located approximately 93 miles offshore Louisiana, south of Lake Charles, in about 173 feet of water. The platform, which has not been in production for nearly a decade, is currently used to process natural gas and condensate from other facilities.

Under the oversight of BOEMRE, Apache Corp has deployed a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) to evaluate the safety issues associated with re-boarding the platform. If the platform can be re-boarded safely, source control measures can be taken using equipment on the facility. Planning has begun for the drilling of a relief well in the event the platform cannot be re-boarded.

A BOEMRE Lake Charles District engineer initially received the report of a potential leak on January 16, at approximately 10 a.m. According to Apache's report, the operator was in the process of permanently plugging its associated non-producing natural gas wells when workers spotted what appeared to be natural gas bubbling to the surface near the platform. The platform was safely evacuated and the associated pipelines and facilities have been successfully shut in.

BOEMRE inspectors conducted a second aerial review of the site today, January 18. They observed no apparent changes to the bubbling and discolored water initially found near the platform. The discolored water may possibly be a mixture of sediment from the ocean floor, gas, and formation water. Oil is not believed to be present other than in small amounts of condensate, which quickly evaporates.

BOEMRE has notified other agencies and is continuing to closely oversee the situation. BOEMRE will also conduct an investigation of the incident.

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