

THE NEWS ROOM

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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.

With BOEMRE's approval and after a safety evaluation, Apache personnel have re-boarded the platform and are preparing equipment to begin work to contain the source of the gas leak. BOEMRE engineers are completing final reviews of source control procedures. A remotely operated vehicle (ROV) will maintain continuous monitoring of conditions to ensure that the work can proceed safely. In accordance with BOEMRE's direction, Apache is continuing preparations for the drilling of a relief well to be used in the event that the source control procedures from the platform are not successful.

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.

From Apache's observation there have been no significant changes to the bubbling and discolored water initially found near the platform. The discolored water may 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.

Contact: [BOEMRE Public Affairs - Gulf](#)