

THE NEWS ROOM

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BOEMRE Issues Guidelines to Offshore Oil and Gas Operators on Reporting the Effects of Hurricanes and Tropical Storms

Information Used to Assess and Manage Post-Storm Resources

NEW ORLEANS — As the 2011 Atlantic Hurricane Season gets under way, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE) today issued its annual guidance to offshore operators on reporting tropical storm and hurricane effects on oil and gas operations, and the specific information to be included in the various reports required by BOEMRE. These requirements are explained in a Notice to Lessees, NTL No. 2011-G01, which is available at: <http://www.gomr.boemre.gov/homepg/whatsnew/hurricane/index.html>.

“It is critical that oil and gas operators are fully prepared to address the threats posed by a hurricane,” said BOEMRE Director Michael R. Bromwich. “By maintaining proactive and regular communication with operators, BOEMRE can help ensure that information about oil and gas operations, as well as about infrastructure in the Gulf of Mexico, is shared with the appropriate emergency personnel.”

When a tropical storm or hurricane enters the Gulf of Mexico, offshore oil and gas operators prepare their drilling and production facilities by systematically shutting-in production activities and activating the sub-surface safety valves on each well. Depending on the severity of the storm, operators may also evacuate personnel from manned facilities.

Operators are required to report to BOEMRE on a daily basis the number of manned facilities that have been evacuated as well as their estimates of shut-in oil and gas production. After the storm has passed, operators must also report any damage to platforms, rigs and pipelines and any pollution caused by the storm. They must continue to report these statistics daily, for as long as the conditions exist.

BOEMRE uses this information to work with the U.S. Coast Guard on rescue needs and in establishing priorities and ensuring coordination of oil spill response, identifying environmental and man-made assets at risk, and notifying the media and interested public entities about shut-in production and damage to facilities.

BOEMRE will post the daily statistics on evacuated facilities and production online as needed at the link provided above.

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