

Diesel Spill Event Similkameen Falls Area

The Incident

- On April 4, 2016 just after 08:00 a.m. ministry staff were notified of a motor vehicle incident on Highway 3 involving a transport truck.
- The incident occurred on Highway 3 in the Similkameen Falls area, south of Princeton and east of E.C. Manning Provincial Park's east gate.
- The cab and trailer were separated in the incident, with the trailer leaving the road surface and moving approximately 100 feet down an embankment.
- It is estimated that the trailer lost approximately 20,000L of diesel fuel with an undetermined amount entering the water at the Similkameen River.



Google Earth map with yellow pin noting crash site.

Initial Response

- The Ministry of Environment has Environmental Emergency Response Officers (EEROs) and other staff on site and has activated its Incident Management Team to support, monitor and provide oversight of the response.
- Alchemist Specialty Carriers has hired three environmental response contractors to assist at the site and the Incident Command Post – RAM Environmental, Keytone Environmental and Polaris.
- Response crews removed the remaining diesel from the trailer and removed the trailer from the riverbank. Booms remain in place at the spill site to help contain product seeping from the bank.
- Boom has been set up in four places: near Bromley Rock Provincial Park, 2 km east of Bromley Rock, at the Placer Creek Bridge, and 300ft of boom at the spill site. The response contractor continues to change out booms at locations where it has become saturated with diesel and augment boom where required.
- The response contractor has established two collection points downstream of the spill site. Both will use boom to direct the diesel towards natural collection points near shore where it can be removed using vacuum trucks.

- An environmental unit is providing technical guidance and oversight to the responsible party. Polaris has been contracted to conduct the Shoreline Clean-up Assessment Technique process.
- Sampling has been conducted at three locations along the river as well as sampling the content of the trailer for comparison. A further sampling plan is being developed.
- Two overflights were conducted of the spill scene and the river downstream to assess the spill's impacts and crews are surveying the river by boat today to determine where fuel has pooled.
- The Upper Similkameen First Nations, Lower Similkameen First Nations and First Nations Health Authority continue to be engaged in the response.
- Washington State has been notified as a precautionary measure, in case the spilled material moves across the border.
- As a precaution, Interior Health is advising residents who draw water from the Similkameen River downstream of the spill site to be on the lookout for signs of fuel contamination. Do not use the river water if it smells or tastes like fuel. This includes for irrigation or agricultural purposes.



Crash site at Highway 3 above Similkameen River with containment boom visible along the shoreline, April 5, 2016.



Damaged pup trailer on Similkameen River bank, April 4, 2016.

Information provided here is considered preliminary, pending confirmation from ministry staff attending the scene. Updates will be made to this report as information becomes available.