

**From:** ["Amrolia, Armin" <Armin.Amrolia@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Armin.Amrolia@vancouver.ca)

**To:** ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)

**Date:** 12/14/2023 3:36:08 PM

**Subject:** Memo to Mayor and Council - False Creek Spill Update - December 14, 2023

**Attachments:** Memo to Mayor & Council - False Creek Spill Update - Dec 14 2023.pdf

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Dear Mayor and Council

The attached Memo to Council provides a progress update on response and recovery efforts underway in response to the recent False Creek spill. The memo provides background information about the spill and status of current conditions. It also outlines activities that have been conducted to-date and that are underway as part of a multi-jurisdictional effort being led by the Coast Guard that have included the City and Park Board.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to Armin Amrolia at [armin.amrolia@vancouver.ca](mailto:armin.amrolia@vancouver.ca) or 604.873.7627.

Thank you,

**Armin Amrolia** - Deputy City Manager (she/her)

[armin.amrolia@vancouver.ca](mailto:armin.amrolia@vancouver.ca)

The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̍əm/Musqueam, Skwxwú7mesh/Squamish and səliłwətał/Tsleil-Waututh nations

## MEMORANDUM

December 14, 2023

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager  
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager  
Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager  
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk  
Maria Pontikis, Chief Communications Officer, CEC  
Teresa Jong, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy, Mayor's Office  
Trevor Ford, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Lon LaClaire, General Manager, Engineering  
Steve Jackson, General Manager, Vancouver Parks Board  
Magnus Enfeldt, Chief Safety Officer  
Daniel Stevens, Director of Vancouver Emergency Management Agency  
Margot Davis, Manager, Environmental Services

FROM: Armin Amrolia  
Deputy City Manager

SUBJECT: False Creek Spill Update

RTS # N/A

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### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this memo is to provide an overview of the False Creek spill, including conveying what is currently known about the spill and status of response and recovery efforts.

### **Current Status Summary**

Source(s) remain unknown but no ongoing source of pollution is occurring. Majority of on-water recoverable product has been removed and efforts are being directed toward assessment of impacts. Moderate sheen (non-recoverable) remains throughout False Creek. The sheen is degrading and is anticipated to be best addressed through natural attenuation. The City is supporting a multi-agency response team being led by the Coast Guard.

## **Spill Synopsis**

On Tuesday, December 4th, a large sheen was observed throughout most of False Creek.

The Coast Guard, the lead agency responsible for responding to marine spills, has been leading a multi-agency response effort, inclusive of federal and provincial agencies, Host Nations, and the City. On-water recovery efforts have largely been completed for the identified recoverable material.

Response activity is continuing with on-water monitoring of conditions and recovery of small pockets of recoverable material that remain. Efforts are also now being directed towards conducting environmental assessments to assess impacts and support recovery efforts.

The City and Parks has been working closely with the Coast Guard and Vancouver Coastal Health to ensure that public safety is protected. Access has been restricted along the seawall adjacent to Habitat Island but will be removed this week.

## **Nature of the Spill and Potential Sources**

While initial reports identified a large sheen, further inspections found additional substances including small patches of black oil and large areas of emulsified hydrocarbon-based material. All observable black oil has been removed and the emulsified hydrocarbon-based brown material has also been largely removed, with only small patches remaining. It is estimated that approximately 200 L of total material was present. Approximately 225 bags of absorbent material used to recover the spilled product have been collected to-date.

No source(s) have been able to be identified. On-water assessments conducted by the Coast Guard were not able to identify any potential sources. City assessments were also not able to identify any potential land-base source(s) of discharge. Environment Canada is conducting analysis of the material with results expected shortly to help inform both what potential sources could have been and guide recovery efforts.

## **Environmental Impact Assessment**

The areas most affected were Heather Civic Marina, Alder Bay, Habitat Island and Spruce Marina. Coordinated multi-agency environmental impact assessments are currently underway with Canadian Wildlife Service overseeing impact assessments to wildlife and Environment Canada leading shoreline assessment efforts. To-date, three deceased birds have been found. It is not known if mortalities are connected to the spill and Canadian Wildlife Service is investigating potential causes.

## **Communications**

To-date, the City has received minimal inquiries about the spill. Inquiries are being directed to the Coast Guard as the lead regulatory agency and in alignment with Coast Guard communication protocols. City communication staff have maintained close contact with Coast Guard communications.

## **City Involvement**

The City has been actively involved in the spill response efforts, advocating for expeditious response and recovery efforts by the Coast Guard, undertaking source investigation inspections (during initial phases of the response activity when it was unknown if source(s) was ongoing), conducting shoreline assessments to inform and guide response efforts, and implementing measures to safeguard public safety in accordance with guidance from Vancouver Coastal health.

### **Next Steps**

City staff will continue to play an active role, helping to ensure that impacts are minimized, and recovery efforts are implemented effectively and safeguard local interests.

Please do contact me should you have any questions or wish for any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Armin Amrolia', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Armin Amrolia  
Deputy City Manager

| [armin.armolia@vancouver.ca](mailto:armin.armolia@vancouver.ca)