



'I'm really scared': Neighbors sound off after 600-gallon oil spill near Richmond's Chevron refinery

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RICHMOND, Calif. (KGO) -- The Chevron refinery in Richmond is investigating an oil spill Tuesday afternoon, according to city and county officials.

The spill happened in what's called the "Long Wharf" off Point Richmond, where a sheen can be seen on the top of the water at Bear Point.

It was first noticed around 3 p.m.

"It smelled like somebody spilled gasoline in front of my house it smelled very very badly for whole day," said Margaret Berczynski, who is furious that no text alert went out about the spill.

Everyone was quick to talk about the smell, "I smelled it and I thought something is going on," said Sue Dennett.

California's Office of Emergency Services (OES) says a pipeline was leaking approximately five gallons a minute until the leak was stopped around 4:40 p.m.

Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia says "close to 600 gallons" flowed into the Bay during that time. Something he calls "unacceptable."

As for wildlife that may have been in the water, Eric Laughlin of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife says, "There haven't been any oiled animals reported at this time, but we do have the oil wildlife care network on standby."

Some nearby neighbors say this happens near refineries.

"It's a necessary evil and it's not going away anytime," said neighbor Jeff Mulvihill.

Others say what happened is unacceptable and someone needs to be held accountable.

"I'm really devastated, I'm really devastated. I cannot take my kids to the water, I cannot walk on water, I cannot enjoy it. I'm really scared," says Berczynski.

As for what comes next?

"At this point we have seen sheen in the San Pablo Bay, there have been unconfirmed reports that it has reached the shoreline. We'll know more with a full assessment in the morning," Laughlin said.

The Park District closed local beaches until further notice.

It's unknown what caused the spill at this time.

Chevron says it is fully cooperating with authorities, including the U.S. Coast Guard and OSPR.

"We have issued a community notice and ask the public to remain clear of the area so crews can quickly contain and clean up the released volumes," a spokesperson said in a press release.

Bay Area Air Quality tweeted they sent inspectors to the scene.



Air District Inspectors on scene at Long Wharf near [#Chevron](#) where roughly 600 gallons of a petroleum and water mixture have leaked. There is a multi-agency response and the leak is now contained. This is an ongoing investigation. Follow instructions from local authorities.

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At the time of the spill, the Contra Costa Health Department issued a public health advisory for residents of Richmond, North Richmond and San Pablo.

That advisory has since been lifted.

For more information go to www.cococws.us.

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