



News Release

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Ecology, U.S. Coast Guard and Ballard Diving and Salvage continue response to boat that ran aground near Leadbetter Point

WILLAPA BAY — The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), U.S. Coast Guard and Ballard Diving and Salvage are working to remove fuel from the 61-foot fishing vessel Genesis A that ran aground on a sand bar early this morning near Leadbetter Point at the entrance to Willapa Bay.

The Coast Guard rescued four people and their dog from the vessel about 3:37 a.m. No medical attention was needed.

Responders were working during low tide tonight to pump as much fuel as possible off the boat, and will return during tomorrow morning's low tide to continue pumping fuel from the boat. There were an estimated 1,200 gallons of fuel and oil onboard when the vessel ran aground. The boat is leaking diesel fuel and hydraulic oil, and sheen is visible in the surf. There is no current estimate of how much oil has leaked.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is closing a mile-long section of the beach on the northwest end of the Long Beach Peninsula to keep razor clam diggers away from the beached crab boat.

The closed area starts about 6.3 miles north of the Oysterville Road approach on the Pacific coast.

Today is the first day of a three-day evening clam dig at Long Beach. WDFW is advising diggers to stay out of the closed area and avoid eating clams from that area for the next few days.

About 90 percent of the beach will remain open to digging.

The vessel owner is on scene. He is assisting responders and also attempting to recover a catch of crab in the vessel's fish hold.

The cause of the grounding is still under investigation.

Oil spilled to water can form oily patches that spread out quickly. These "oil slicks" can cover many acres of water.

All oil spills cause environmental damage, regardless of size. Oil is toxic to the environment and the damage starts as soon as the oil hits water. A single quart of oil has the potential to foul more than 100,000 gallons of water.

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Ecology Spills Program: www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/spills/spills.html

Ecology homepage: www.ecy.wa.gov/

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Razor Clam Information:
<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/shellfish/razorclams/current.html>