

DEC responds to fuel oil spill on St. Paul Island

The Department of Environmental Conservation is helping respond to a large fuel oil spill at the Coast Guard LORAN Station on St. Paul Island, according to DEC officials.

An engineer from DEC's Anchorage office was dispatched to oversee the cleanup activities of an estimated 14,000 gallons of fuel oil which leaked underground over a period of days earlier this month.

The cause of the spill appears to be the disturbance of a buried fuel line during ongoing construction activity at the site by a contractor for the U.S. Coast Guard.

The contractor has assumed responsibility for the cleanup and has hired an Anchorage consulting firm to map the underground plume, contain the spill and clean it up. Some recovery of spilled fuel has already occurred.

DEC officials said the spill was considered serious because it could affect the only fresh-water supply for those who live on the island. This fact and the proximity of the City of St. Paul's water supply made rapid containment critical.