

Focus on: Wildlife Response Service Providers



More information

Contingency plan holders use wildlife response service providers approved by the Department of Ecology. For more information or to apply please visit

<https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Plans-policies/Contingency-planning-for-oil-industry/Wildlife-response-service-providers>.

Contact information

Spills Program
360-407-7455
ecology.wa.gov/SpillsProgram

ADA Accessibility

To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-407-7211 or email at ecyadacoordinator@ecy.wa.gov, or visit. <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341

Wildlife response service providers

Wildlife response service providers (WRSPs) are companies with trained personnel who are qualified to staff and manage wildlife response activities during an oil spill. Ecology approves WRSPs to allow them to be cited in industry oil spill contingency plans. During spills, these providers coordinate with state, federal, tribal, and other response partners to conduct wildlife responses in accordance with applicable federal and state regulations, and the Northwest Area Contingency Plan.

Planning commitments for WRSPs

The requirements for approval as a WRSP include:

- Having a process to provide 24-hour per day contact for spill management.
- Beginning mobilization efforts immediately upon notification but no later than two hours from notification of a spill.
- Assisting plan holders in meeting requirements for plans and drills.
- Implementing and using the contingency plan(s) to which they are contracted during a spill and substantial threat of a spill, and training personnel to implement the plan.
- Working in unified command to ensure that all personnel and equipment will be called out to clean up the spill safely, and to the maximum extent practicable.
- Providing written notification to Ecology and plan holders within 24 hours of any significant change to the approved application.

What is the relationship between a contingency plan holder and a WRSP?

Washington State requires oil-handling facilities, pipelines, commercial vessels, and railroads to have state-approved oil spill contingency plans. These plans describe the plan holder's ability to respond to oil spills. Plans include information on spill response procedures, equipment, safety, communications, and training.

A plan holder must plan to respond to and care for wildlife injured or endangered by oil spills. It is the plan holder's responsibility to meet the wildlife response planning standards found in WAC 173-182 and WAC 173-186.

This responsibility includes access to contracted personnel to coordinate the wildlife response in the command post and additional personnel and equipment to conduct and manage field response activities such as reconnaissance, deterrence, capture, stabilization, and rehabilitation operations. Ecology verifies wildlife response personnel through WRSP applications.

In addition to the personnel necessary to support a wildlife response, the contingency planning rules also require plan holders to have access to wildlife response equipment. Ecology verifies wildlife response equipment through primary response contractor applications. More information on primary response contractors is on our website at <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Plans-policies/Contingency-planning-for-oil-industry/Primary-response-contractors>.

What are the drill requirements for a WRSP?

WRSPs participate in oil spill drills under their contract with contingency plan holders. Drills are designed to ensure that all contingency plan components function together for a coordinated response to oil spills.

Plan holders must demonstrate a wildlife deployment drill at least once every three years. The drill may be planned to deploy wildlife equipment and WRSP personnel. Contingency plan holders may also ask their contracted WRSP(s) to participate in tabletop drills, particularly to staff the wildlife branch in worst case discharge scenarios.

How do WRSPs apply?

To apply to become a WRSP, complete the form found on our website at <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Plans-policies/Contingency-planning-for-oil-industry/Wildlife-response-service-providers> and send the completed application to contractorapp@ecy.wa.gov.

What does it mean when a WRSP is approved?

A WRSP applies to Ecology to be approved to be cited in an oil spill contingency plan. When we receive an application, we verify the information provided, including the 24-hour personnel call out procedures, and post the application for a 30-day public review and comment period.

Approved WRSPs will be listed on our website at <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Plans-policies/Contingency-planning-for-oil-industry/Wildlife-response-service-providers>. Contingency plan holders interested in contracting a WRSP should review this website for the names of companies they may contract with to meet their contingency plan requirements. Companies may contract an approved WRSP to support all of the plan holder wildlife response personnel needs or may only fill a few key positions. Ecology is not involved in the contracting process.