



**State of Louisiana**  
Department of Health and Hospitals  
Office of the Secretary

June 4, 2010

David Michaels, Ph.D., MPH  
Assistant Secretary  
Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
U.S. Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20210

Sent via email to [deborah.tackett@osha.gov](mailto:deborah.tackett@osha.gov)

Dear Dr. Michaels:

As the response to the Deepwater Horizon spill off Louisiana's coast continues to expand, there are emerging threats we feel compelled to relay to you. Reports of injuries and illness among workers hired by British Petroleum and its subcontractors are steadily increasing. As the Louisiana agencies charged with protecting the health and environmental exposure risks of Louisianians and our guests, we are requesting that you conduct a full investigation of worker conditions for those involved in the oil spill response effort.

We are told that BP is looking to bring some 3,000 more people to our coast to aid in the clean-up efforts. Combined with those already engaged, we are increasingly concerned about the provisions being made to protect the health and safety of those who are exposed to the oil and other elements associated with the spill. Specifically, we want to ensure people involved in the clean-up are provided with training and protective equipment and supplies appropriate for the type of exposure they are sustaining.

The Department of Health and Hospitals is now engaged in an aggressive surveillance and monitoring system to catalog worker-related illnesses and exposure complaints. We also are receiving daily reports of other injuries and illnesses that have us concerned that proper protections are not being taken and protocols followed. The Department of Environmental Quality shares DHH's concerns of worker safety. Specifically, with regard to the investigation the state is requesting of OSHA, we request:

- An official report detailing that review, method of investigation, findings and any citations issued or recommendations made.
- Details of OSHA's footprint in the area including how many people are on site to monitor worker safety and plans for regular inspection and monitoring of worker safety.
- A list of any worker complaints made directly to OSHA and the disposition of those complaints.
- A comprehensive review of training protocols for workers that includes an investigation of how consistently and fully that training is done.
- A strategy for providing regular reports to us outlining ongoing monitoring, complaints and citations.
- Any information on monitoring, such as air monitoring, on vessels and other work sites as it pertains to worker safety.

We know that you have had monitors in place and we are aware of recent visits by your executive staff to ascertain the ongoing work. We are pleased OSHA is engaged in this issue, and we believe it is critical we

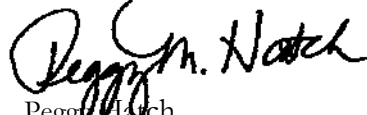
work collaboratively with you as a partner in our mutual goal of ensuring the safety of these people who are working so hard.

We are available to discuss this request and look forward to your swift response.

Sincerely,



Alan Levine  
Secretary  
Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals



Peggy Hatch  
Secretary  
Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality