

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

**United States
Coast Guard**



Director
United States Coast Guard
National Pollution Funds Center

US COAST GUARD STOP 7100
4200 WILSON BLVD STE 1000
ARLINGTON VA 20598-7100
E-mail: [REDACTED]@uscg.mil
Phone: [REDACTED]

5890
7/08/2013

Sent Via Email: [REDACTED]@dhec.sc.gov

State of South Carolina
Department of Health and Environmental Control
ATTN: Ms. Elizabeth Shawanese
2600 Bull Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Re: Claim Number 913070-0001

Dear Ms. Shawanese;

The National Pollution Funds Center (NPFC), in accordance with the Oil Pollution Act (OPA) (33 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.), has determined that \$16,347.17 is full compensation for OPA claim number 913070-0001.

This determination is based on an analysis of the information submitted. Please see the attached determination for further details regarding the rationale for this decision.

If you accept this determination, please sign the enclosed Acceptance/Release Form where indicated and return to the above address.

If we do not receive the signed original Acceptance/Release Form within 60 days of the date of this letter, the determination is void. If the determination is accepted, an original signature and a valid tax identification number (EIN or SSN) are required for payment. If you are a Claimant that has submitted other claims to the National Pollution Funds Center, you are required to have a valid System for Award management (SAM) record prior to payment. If you do not, you may register free of charge at www.SAM.gov. Your payment will be mailed or electronically deposited in your account within 60 days of receipt of the Release Form.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the matter, you may contact me at the above address or by phone at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Alyssa Lombardi
Claims Manager

ENCL: Claim Summary / Determination Form
Acceptance/Release Form
Audit of Costs

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ARLINGTON VA 20598-7100

E-mail: [redacted]@uscg.mil

Phone: [redacted]

Claim Number: 913070-0001	Claimant Name: State of South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
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I, the undersigned, ACCEPT this settlement offer of \$16,347.17 as full and final compensation for removal arising from the specific claim number identified above. With my signature, I also acknowledge that I accept as final agency action all costs submitted with subject claim that were denied in the determination and for which I received no compensation.

This settlement represents full and final release and satisfaction of the amounts paid from the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 for this claim. I hereby assign, transfer, and subrogate to the United States all rights, claims, interest and rights of action, that I may have against any party, person, firm or corporation that may be liable for the amounts paid for which I have been compensated under this claim. I authorize the United States to sue, compromise or settle in my name and the United States fully substituted for me and subrogated to all of my rights arising from and associated with those amounts paid for which I am compensated for with this settlement offer. I warrant that no legal action has been brought regarding this matter and no settlement has been or will be made by me or any person on my behalf with any other party for amounts paid which is the subject of this claim against the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund (Fund).

This settlement is not an admission of liability by any party.

With my signature, I acknowledge that I accept as final agency action all amounts paid for this claim.

I, the undersigned, agree that, upon acceptance of any compensation from the Fund, I will cooperate fully with the United States in any claim and/or action by the United States against any person or party to recover the compensation. The cooperation shall include, but is not limited to, immediately reimbursing the Fund for any compensation received from any other source for those amounts paid for which the Fund has provided compensation, by providing any documentation, evidence, testimony, and other support, as may be necessary for the United States to recover from any other person or party.

I, the undersigned, certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief the information contained in this claim represents all material facts and is true. I understand that misrepresentation of facts is subject to prosecution under federal law (including, but not limited to 18 U.S.C. §§ 287 and 1001).

_____	_____
Title of Person Signing	Date of Signature
_____	_____
Typed or Printed Name of Claimant or Name of Authorized Representative	Signature

_____	_____
Title of Witness	Date of Signature
_____	_____
Typed or Printed Name of Witness	Signature

_____	_____	_____
DUNS Required for Payment	Bank Routing Number	Bank Account Number

CLAIM SUMMARY / DETERMINATION FORM

Claim Number	: 913070-0001
Claimant	: South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
Type of Claimant	: State
Type of Claim	: Removal Costs
Claim Manager	: Alyssa Lombardi
Amount Requested	: \$19,235.42

FACTS:

- 1. *Oil Spill Incident:*** The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC) reports that on February 6, 2013, a log truck and a passenger vehicle collided on a bridge at US 601 and Gatehill Road, in Eastover, SC. The crash caused a fire and a fuel leak that was washed off the bridge during the fire response. The bridge runs over Bates Old River, which is a tributary to the Congaree River, a navigable waterway of the US, as well as a wetlands area of the Congaree Swamp. The incident was reported to the National Response Center (NRC) via Case # 1037739¹ that same day.

The Responsible Party (RP), Mr. Louis F. Grabowski, died of a heart attack on-scene, and did not have current insurance at the time of the incident.

- 2. *Description of removal actions performed:*** The Claimant, SC DHEC, responded to the incident and hired HEPACO for cleanup and removal activities. Once the logs had been removed from the roadway, HEPACO team members used a sweeper to move the absorbent material and debris to a collection point. The material was placed into 55-gallon drums by crew members with hand tools. Absorbent material was again spread on the roadway to remove any remaining fuel, and then disposed of into the drums.

Between February 7 and 8, 2013, boom was placed at four points along the river, wherever standing oil and diesel fuel was found under the bridge. On February 15, 2013, the site was deemed clean and the boom was removed and was disposed of properly.

- 3. *The Claim:*** On June 13, 2013, SC DHEC submitted a removal cost claim to the National Pollution Funds Center (NPFC), for reimbursement of removal costs in the amount of \$19,235.42 for the services provided from February 6 through February 5, 2013. This claim is for removal costs based on the rate schedule in place at the time services were provided. A copy of the vendor rate schedule is provided in the claim file.

The review of the actual cost invoicing and dailies focused on: (1) whether the actions taken were compensable "removal actions" under OPA and the claims regulations at 33 CFR 136 (e.g., actions to prevent, minimize, mitigate the effects of the incident); (2) whether the costs were incurred as a result of these actions; (3) whether the actions taken were consistent with the NCP or directed by the FOOSC, and (4) whether the costs were adequately documented.

¹ See NRC Report # 1037739, dated 2/06/2013.

APPLICABLE LAW:

Under OPA 90, at 33 USC § 2702(a), responsible parties are liable for removal costs and damages resulting from the discharge of oil into navigable waters and adjoining shorelines, as described in Section 2702(b) of OPA 90. A responsible party's liability will include "removal costs incurred by any person for acts taken by the person which are consistent with the National Contingency Plan". 33 USC § 2702(b)(1)(B).

"Oil" is defined in relevant part, at 33 USC § 2701(23), to mean "oil of any kind or in any form, including petroleum, fuel oil, sludge, oil refuse, and oil mixed with wastes other than dredged spoil".

The Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund (OSLTF), which is administered by the NPFC, is available, pursuant to 33 USC §§ 2712(a)(4) and 2713 and the OSLTF claims adjudication regulations at 33 CFR Part 136, to pay claims for uncompensated removal costs that are determined to be consistent with the National Contingency Plan and uncompensated damages. Removal costs are defined as "the costs of removal that are incurred after a discharge of oil has occurred or, in any case in which there is a substantial threat of a discharge of oil, the costs to prevent, minimize, or mitigate oil pollution from an incident".

Under 33 USC §2713(b)(2) and 33 CFR 136.103(d) no claim against the OSLTF may be approved or certified for payment during the pendency of an action by the claimant in court to recover the same costs that are the subject of the claim. See also, 33 USC §2713(c) and 33 CFR 136.103(c)(2) [claimant election].

33 U.S.C. §2713(d) provides that "If a claim is presented in accordance with this section, including a claim for interim, short-term damages representing less than the full amount of damages to which the claimant ultimately may be entitled, and full and adequate compensation is unavailable, a claim for the uncompensated damages and removal costs may be presented to the Fund."

Under 33 CFR 136.105(a) and 136.105(e)(6), the claimant bears the burden of providing to the NPFC, all evidence, information, and documentation deemed necessary by the Director, NPFC, to support the claim.

Under 33 CFR 136.105(b) each claim must be in writing, for a sum certain for each category of uncompensated damages or removal costs resulting from an incident. In addition, under 33 CFR 136, the claimant bears the burden to prove the removal actions were reasonable in response to the scope of the oil spill incident, and the NPFC has the authority and responsibility to perform a reasonableness determination. Specifically, under 33 CFR 136.203, "a claimant must establish -

- (a) That the actions taken were necessary to prevent, minimize, or mitigate the effects of the incident;
- (b) That the removal costs were incurred as a result of these actions;

(c) That the actions taken were determined by the FOSC to be consistent with the National Contingency Plan or were directed by the FOSC.”

Under 33 CFR 136.205 “the amount of compensation allowable is the total of uncompensated *reasonable* removal costs of actions taken that were determined by the FOSC to be consistent with the National Contingency Plan or were directed by the FOSC. Except in exceptional circumstances, removal *activities* for which costs are being claimed must have been coordinated with the FOSC.” [Emphasis added].

DETERMINATION OF LOSS:

A. Overview:

1. FOSC Coordination has been established via US EPA Region IV.²
2. The incident involved the report of a discharge of “oil” as defined in OPA 90, 33 U.S.C. § 2701(23), to navigable waters.
3. In accordance with 33 CFR § 136.105(e)(12), the claimant has certified no suit has been filed in court for the claimed uncompensated removal costs.
4. The claim was submitted within the three year statute of limitations. 33 U.S.C. § 2712(h)(1).
5. The RP has been identified, but is deceased. 33 U.S.C. § 2701(32).
6. The NPFC Claims Manager has thoroughly reviewed all documentation submitted with the claim and determined that all removal costs presented were for actions in accordance with the NCP and that the costs for these actions were indeed reasonable and allowable under OPA and 33 CFR § 136.205.

B. Analysis:

NPFC CA reviewed the actual cost invoices and dailies to confirm that the claimant had incurred all costs claimed. The review focused on: (1) whether the actions taken were compensable “removal actions” under OPA and the claims regulations at 33 CFR 136 (e.g., actions to prevent, minimize, mitigate the effects of the incident); (2) whether the costs were incurred as a result of these actions; (3) whether the actions taken were determined by the FOSC, to be consistent with the NCP or directed by the FOSC, and (4) whether the costs were adequately documented and reasonable.

The Claims Manager validated the costs incurred and determined what, of these costs, were reasonable, necessary and performed in accordance with the National Contingency Plan (NCP). The Claimant states that all costs claimed are for uncompensated removal costs incurred by the claimant for this incident from February 6 through February 5, 2013. The claimant represents that the costs it paid are compensable removal costs, payable by the OSLTF as presented by the claimant.

After a review of the file and reports written by both the state and US EPA Region IV personnel on-scene for this incident, the response by SC DHEC appears reasonable and justified to mitigate any further damage the oil may have caused.

² See SC DHEC Concurrence Letter, signed by Mr. David Andrews, US EPA Region IV, and dated 2/07/2013.

As SC DHEC amended the HEPACO invoices when submitting its claim (from the HEPACO total amount of \$20,915.42 to the claim amount of \$19,235.42) due to contract pricing matters, the amount approved for Insurance costs claimed was adjusted accordingly. Additionally, as the "Reimbursement Terms and Conditions" referenced in the "Fuel Surcharge" section (Exh A, F1) was not provided with the claim, fuel costs could not be determined. A total of \$2,888.25 has been denied (see enclosed Audit of Costs spreadsheet).

On that basis, the Claims Manager hereby determines that the claimant incurred \$16,347.17 of uncompensated removal costs and that that amount is properly payable by the OSLTF as full compensation for the reimbursable removal costs incurred by the claimant and submitted to the NPFC under claim #913070-0001.

C. Determined Amount:

The NPFC hereby determines that the OSLTF will pay \$16,347.17 as full compensation for the reimbursable removal costs incurred by the Claimant and submitted to the NPFC under claim 913070-0001. All costs claimed are for charges paid for by the Claimant for removal actions as that term is defined in OPA and, are compensable removal costs, payable by the OSLTF as presented by the Claimant. \$2,888.25 in claimed costs are denied.

AMOUNT: \$16,347.17

Claim Supervisor: ~~Donna Heuberg~~ 

Date of Supervisor's review: 7/8/13

Supervisor Action: *Approved*

Supervisor's Comments: