



## Region 6: South Central

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### **Valero Refining-Texas Agrees to Resolve Alleged Violations Over Corpus Christi, Texas Oil Spill**

Release date: 06/10/2008

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WASHINGTON — Valero Refining-Texas, L.P. has agreed to resolve alleged violations of the Clean Water Act stemming from a spill of 3,400 barrels of oil into the Corpus Christi Ship Channel on June 1, 2006, the Justice Department and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced today.

The Corpus Christi Ship Channel flows from Tule Lake into Corpus Christi Bay and then into the Gulf of Mexico. It is heavily utilized by barge and commercial ship traffic.

Under the consent decree lodged today in federal court in Corpus Christi, Valero will pay a \$1.65 million civil penalty and perform a supplemental environmental project that will cost approximately \$300,000. The project, as outlined in the agreement, will require Valero to design and construct a boat ramp that will aid emergency-response efforts in the vicinity of the oil spill.

The government's complaint, filed along with the consent decree, alleges that at least 3,400 barrels, or 142,800 gallons, of oil spilled from a containment berm located on the edge of the Ship Channel at Valero's Corpus Christi Refinery-West Plant into the channel. Valero has since removed the containment berm and the associated above-ground storage tank from the edge of the Ship Channel in order to prevent future oil discharges.

The Clean Water Act makes it unlawful for owners, operators, or any person in charge of onshore facilities to discharge oil or any hazardous substance into or upon the navigable waters of the United States or adjoining shorelines.

"Today's settlement furthers our enforcement mission to protect our nation's waters including the Corpus Christi Ship Channel," said Ronald J. Tenpas, Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resources.

"This agreement demonstrates EPA's commitment to a strong enforcement program and benefits the environment at the same time," said EPA Regional Administrator Richard E. Greene. "We are pleased that the company has taken action to prevent future spills and agreed to complete a supplemental environmental project that will improve the ability of local responders to address future emergencies."

The penalty paid for these spills will be deposited in the federal Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund, which is used to pay for the federal cleanups of oil spills.

The consent decree, lodged in the Southern District of Texas, is subject to a 30-day public comment period and court review and approval. A copy of the [consent decree](#) is available on the [Department of Justice](#) Web site at [http://www.usdoj.gov/enrd/Consent\\_Decrees.html](http://www.usdoj.gov/enrd/Consent_Decrees.html).

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