



Offshore Drilling

Using the BP Horizon oil rig blast as an indicator of the dangers of Offshore Drilling here are some statistics from that environmental disaster to consider:

11 Lives were lost in the initial blast.

More than **200 million gallons of crude oil** were pumped into the Gulf of Mexico between the initial blast and the day the well was finally sealed. This is the largest oil spill to date. The gushing well was finally capped on July 2010, but oil is still washing up on the shores and still causing health issues for those living on the Gulf Shore. Over **30,000 people responded to the disaster**, working to clean up the oil, clean the beaches, and help care for animals. As of October 10th, 2016 **thousands** of people are sick along the Gulf Shore.

The methods of treating the oil spill were “in-situ burning” or burning oil in a contained area on the surface and “dispersants” which like liquid dish soap added to a greasy pan filled with water simply pushes the oil away. Both methods have **negative effects on the environment**. They are both as caustic as the oil that they are intended to remove. Exposure to organic solvents cause the same damages as lead poisoning.

16,000 miles of coastline were affected, including the coasts of Texas, Louisiana, Alabama and Florida. The adverse effect on the fishing and tourism industries to those states included the loss of 8,000 animals (mammals, birds and turtles). The cost to fisheries could total **\$8.7 Billion by 2020**.

The economic damage from this spill was assessed at **\$40 Billion, plus \$16 Billion** in clean-up costs that were charged to BP thanks to the Clean Water Act. Unfortunately, the current administration and the former head of the EPA have severely relaxed their required payment. However, when these environmental damages are factored into the cost of oil as an energy source, the true cost of this fuel skyrockets – this environmental cost will eventually be placed upon either consumers or taxpayers.

Studies show that **offshore wind would create 17,000 sustainable jobs**, while **offshore drilling would create only 2,000**. True renewables like offshore wind or solar do not cause pollution, risk expensive spills, or disrupt the tourism and fishing industries with seismic blasting. A recent report indicates that **seismic blasting kills up to 60%** of the zooplankton within at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of the blasts. These creatures form the **base of the oceanic food chain**, and seismic testing would cover hundreds of square miles off the Georgia coast. This would have significant, long-lasting and widespread impacts on the reproduction and survival of fish and marine mammal populations.

In summation, Offshore Drilling poses serious danger to Georgia, not only in damage to the environment, but also to human health and the economics of other industries that thrive along our shores. Imagine the results of a BP Horizons type spill on the economic, health and environmental stability of residents of Tybee Island, or the Port City of Savannah.

Finally, surveys of the **oil and gas deposits off the Georgia coast indicate that these resources would meet demand for 1 day each**. It's simply not worth the risk.