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Bonnie and the Oil Spill

How will the tropical system Bonnie impact the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

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Now that Bonnie is making a bee-line for the Deepwater Horizon site, experts in tropical meteorology and the oil spill are weighing in.

The good news is it's only a weak storm. The bad news is, strong winds could still carry oil near the Florida coastline.

Mark Bourassa says, "It will spread the oil around whether it goes to the east or the west and some of it will come closer to Florida."

However, as the storm gets closer, high winds may help to dissolve the oil, forming tar balls, instead of the large slicks we see now.

Dmitry Dukhovskoy says, "Because strong winds will emulsify the oil, the oil will be broken into small pieces and will be mixed into the ocean."

But with the uncertain nature of forecast, if Bonnie turns into a hurricane in the Gulf, more of an impact could be felt along the coast.


Dmitry Dukhovskoy says, "The oil is carried by the storm surge. So if there is a big storm surge which is mostly due to high winds during the hurricanes, then the bigger part of the coast will be covered by the oil."

But if forecasts are correct, even though some oil may creep closer to Florida, weather patterns after the storm is gone, are favorable to our state.

Mark Bourassa says, "The prevailing winds are going to blow it back toward Texas and Louisiana once the storm is passed."

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