

Seeing no levels of concern, EPA curtails emergency air monitoring at BP refinery fire site near Bellingham, Washington

SEATTLE – As cleanup begins in earnest at the BP refinery fire site, 20 miles northwest of Bellingham, Washington, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's air monitoring team is standing down after seeing no measurable threats to public health from airborne pollutants related to the fire.

As EPA responders arrived at the scene last night, a team of four EPA contractors, accompanied by a BP Industrial Hygienist, conducted air monitoring at several locations around the perimeter of the facility, including locations downwind.

The sweep was completed by midnight and the results were compared to similar locations that BP responders had monitored earlier in the day. EPA measured for elevated Volatile Organic Compounds, particulate matter, hydrogen sulfide, and carbon monoxide. According to Andy Smith, EPA Federal On-Scene Coordinator, "No readings were found to be above background or demonstrate any level of concern."

Once the site was stabilized and secured, EPA and Department of Ecology responders completed their assessment and demobilized.

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