

UMR Hazardous Spills Coordination Group

Spring Meeting (Virtual) – April 21, 2026

Chair Kurt Levetzow welcomed participants and led introductions. Attendees of the virtual meeting are listed below, following these notes.

AGENCY UPDATES

Illinois

Tony Falconio said that Illinois EPA has no significant updates to report.

Iowa

Kurt Levetzow noted that Ed Tormey retired on March 26 from his position as Division Administrator, which is now filled by Amie Davidson. Davidson previously filled the Land Quality Bureau Chief position, which is now open. Staff are still working to meet the requirements of Executive Order 10, which tasked the agency with re-evaluating roles and rules related to spill cleanup.

The NextEra Nuclear Generating Plant (formerly Duane Arnold Generating Plant) near Cedar Rapids is set to come back online in 2029. This is due largely to increased demand made by data centers.

Levetzow noted that no major spills impacted the Mississippi River since the last meeting, though the Grain Processing Corporation had a small spill of corn mash at the river that had minimal impact.

Minnesota

Dorene Fier-Tucker said that MPCA's Carly McGinty is presently responding to the spill in Upper Mississippi River (UMR) Pool 4 at ADM in Red Wing, Minnesota. The facility reported a release of 3,000 gallons of corn oil when something went wrong in the process of loading a barge. The cause is still under investigation. Responders set up three areas for containment on the river. Members of Red Wing CAER are helping to deploy boom. The oil spread less than a mile downstream before response was underway. Cleanup by power washing the shore is being evaluated by Minnesota DNR, who are on-site to help with decision-making and to determine if a Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) is needed. Fier-Tucker then shared pictures of the incident.

Jayson Schrank said the MPCA Preparedness Unit is preparing for field season and facility inspections are now underway. Three staff will handle investigations and enforcement.

Missouri

Rick Gann said Missouri DNR is back to having three On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs) in the Saint Louis area. These staff have been working with USEPA Region 7. The only incident of note was a

helicopter crash in January in the Meramec River at a remote, hard-to-reach site. The helicopter sank and fuel recovery downstream was led by DNR staff.

Wisconsin

Kaylin Felix said that Wisconsin DNR has no significant updates to report.

USEPA Region 5

Andy Maguire shared a view of the USEPA Region 5 spill reporting dashboard. Since the last meeting, there were sixteen releases attended by OSCs but none were along the UMR. He added that the agency has seen more frequent mercury spills over the past two years, mainly in homes and schools. Annual Level A Hazardous Materials training was held in March for agency OSCs.

Staff will be busy with a time-critical lead removal action in Galena, Illinois, on several properties and in a creek. The project will start in June with completion scheduled for September; cleanup is being run by a contractor of the Responsible Party (RP).

Maguire added that nationally, USEPA is implementing a new position for Incident Command System (ICS) Data Support Coordinator. Data has proven to be critical in response, so the agency is focusing on its importance. Maguire will teach an ICS 300 class for Wisconsin DNR staff this year; the date has yet to be set.

Adam Vrabec said that USEPA Region 5 is overseeing the removal of a stockpile of dioxin-based material resulting from agent orange production. The agency is waiting for a consent agreement with the Potential RP before beginning. At another site, PCB contaminants are currently being removed from a creek across the Mississippi River from Saint Louis. The local flood zone was reclassified from a 25-year to a 100-year zone, so staff are working to determine if the original action plan is still appropriate.

Vrabec added that the Great Rivers Sub-area will hold a June 9-12 exercise sponsored by Department of the Interior (DOI). Contact him or Nick Goeke of Tetra Tech if interested. Goeke clarified that the 10th and 11th are full-day exercises. On the first and fourth days there are field visits to the exercise scenario site and a lead mine; there will also be an exercise component on NRDA to teach the DOI process. Vrabec is also working with St. Clair County, Illinois, to put on a hazardous substance training later in 2026.

Barbi Lee said all Region 5 OSCs have been sent an email about a new addition to the Inland Sensitivity Atlas (ISA). The new jurisdictional boundaries layer is for users to determine who has jurisdiction at any point within USEPA Region 5 and adjacent counties. Mark Ellis shared visuals of the data. Joe Krauska is now assisting with RRT7 and stated that he is interested in helping update the Region 7 contacts.

USEPA Region 7

Joe Krauska summarized regional activities for the March 25, 2026, RRT7 meeting. Since then, there have been three National Response Center (NRC) reports and two facility drills along the

UMR. There have been more spills in Kansas, including a several-thousand-gallon spill of crude and brine into a ditch.

Joe Davis has been working on World Cup preparation in Kansas City and Saint Louis for chemical security monitoring at events in June and July, 2026. Staff are working with state and federal partners, including FBI and local police, on data coordination.

Davis said that ICS training for Data Support Coordination roles, as mentioned by Andy Maguire, is also being considered by USEPA Region 7. Incident Management Team implementation plans have recently been updated.

Joe Krauska held training for boating and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) skill building. Region 7 PPE is usually folded into other trainings; this year staff trained specifically on Level B PPE due to numerous unknown drum removal projects. The upcoming boat training in Saint Louis will include practice for attendees to trail boom.

Valerie Wilder is a backup to the sub-area OSCs. She responded to a Saint Louis Kinder-Morgan Terminal spill of 3,000 gallons of transmix oil from its tank into secondary containment. No product was release from the site. She and Anna Dismang also sampled for agency Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) staff at a Saint Louis industrial facility to determine if they were properly handling and disposal materials.

USFWS

Aleshia Kenney said Trina Soyk, based in Wisconsin, is currently covering for a vacancy in Minnesota. DOI is leading the Great Rivers Sub-area training mentioned earlier by Nick Goeke. Leslie Lueckenhoff has been one of the planning members developing the training.

USACE

Jeff McCrery oversaw a spill of 100 gallons of corn syrup at a derailment into Butcher Creek, which flows into Lake Red Rock near Des Moines. BNSF did well to clean it up. During the first week of March, a contractor was doing rehabilitation work in the UMR Dam 19 lock chamber. An excavator hydraulic hose ruptured and 5 to 10 gallons of hydraulic oil went into the water. Response was immediate and cleanup was done well. The contractor has a good Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) plan and reacted immediately to clean up the spill. After the cleanup, the contractor discussed what went wrong and how to prevent it in the future.

Last month McCrery gave SPCC training to twelve USACE park rangers at the Mississippi River Project Office in Pleasant Valley, Iowa. Weather did not cooperate for field deployment, so attendees used spill kits to clean up a mock spill of packing peanuts indoors.

Responding to a question about emergency permits, McCrery shared a link to the USACE website; <https://www.mvs.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx>

USCG

LT Jayna Brunetti has not seen many spill cases at USCG Sector UMR. The Unit is working to get enforcement capabilities in Saint Louis. This will include weapons and Boarding Officer capability. Next month there is a chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear training scheduled for staff. This will include a PPE component to bring staff up to date.

LT Shannon Young sent an update for MSD Saint Paul by email. Staff are unable to attend today due to training commitments. The detachment is overseeing the corn oil spill in Red Wing, Minnesota. ADM deployed a boom skimmer and the National Response Corporation was called in to assist with the cleanup. USCG responders are in contact with the facility despite being called off-site today.

Tetra Tech

Nick Goeke said that on June 3-4, 2026, USEPA Region 7 is holding a two-day oiled wildlife response workshop in Hutchinson, Kansas. The Central Kansas Wetlands Sub-area includes Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. International Bird Rescue is providing the training. Attendees will learn about the required resources, logistics, and safety concerns, which take extensive time and resources to run successfully. Goeke shared a link to the workshop: [Oiled Wildlife Response Workshop](#)

Goeke also provided a registration link to the Hazardous Materials Exercise being held in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, on June 10-11, 2026: [Hazardous Materials Spill Exercise](#)

Illinois/Iowa American Water

Ted Kratschmer had no updates but said he is preparing for potential harmful algal blooms (HABs) in the summer.

PLANNING UPDATES

Inland Sensitivity Atlas (ISA)

Mark Ellis provided an overview of ISA updates. Tribal Fact Sheets, which provide basic information about contacts and tribal interests so that responders know who to call and include in decision-making within Incident or Unified Command, have been linked within the Tribal Lands data. Ellis also added two parcels in Illinois that went missing during a recent update; these are lands held by the Prairie Band Potawatomi of Kansas. These updates have been sent to USEPA Region 5 and should be in the state map viewers soon.

The jurisdictional boundary data discussed earlier has also been sent to USEPA for inclusion in the state viewers. However, Ellis noted that there are still some pending edits. Users can click on a location and get contact information for key agency personnel with jurisdiction at that location.

Greater Saint Louis

Joe Krauska aims to hold a meeting in May, the date to be determined. He is now making an agenda with case studies and is collaborating with other agencies and partners. The Sub-area Plan was

updated in December 2025 and is now available on the EPA OSC site profile (see: https://response.epa.gov/site/site_profile.aspx?site_id=11518) and RRT7 profile (see: https://response.epa.gov/site/site_profile.aspx?site_id=16501). The agency has improved efficiency using recent Esri dashboard updates by hosting the map viewers as a single package instead of multiple instances. Sub-areas dashboards include tools to help their response communities. Nick Goeke is the Tetra Tech point of contact for that work. Goeke said the new package just went live on Friday, April 17, 2026. The Mississippi River Viewer page now links to the new viewer. Contact Krauska to request access.

Final touches are being done to the response strategy data developed over the last few years for the lowest 230 miles of the UMR. Tetra Tech is now making a print tool in the viewer. This will let users print a page of the strategy and related information for field use. USEPA Region 5 staff expressed interest in getting the response strategies to host in their map viewers, even if still in draft form.

Recent incidents include a mercury spill at a house in Valley Park along the Meramec River. The RCRA support mentioned earlier by Valerie Wilder was at Renew Chemical, a container cleaning operation in Saint Louis. This project showed a great partnership with the Metropolitan Sewer District and Missouri DNR OSCs. Crews sampled data for the storm sewer to support the cleanup.

Krauska shared an example of a GRP for Grafton, Illinois. Teams went out in the field to record data using Survey123 and determine the best response techniques to recommend. The site form shows all the relevant information and graphic depictions of boom. Digital data is in the Esri dashboard; the PDF pages are in development. Great Rivers Sub-area held site visits in the summer of 2025, which was the last field verification to complete the project. Barbi Lee suggested holding a call to get the UMR GRPs added to the USEPA Region 5 data. Mark Ellis noted that Gustavo Orosco of Tetra Tech has been managing the data and should be included in the conversation.

Great Rivers

Nick Goeke reported that the Great Rivers Sub-area met in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, on October 23, 2025. The next meeting was scheduled for today but was postponed until April 28, 2026. He reiterated the upcoming June 9-11, 2026, exercise led by DOI at Shawnee Park Center in Cape Girardeau. The partnership includes USEPA, USCG, DOI and USFWS, the states, local agencies, non-governmental organizations, and industry. It is being presented as an opportunity to learn about response at all three levels of government. The training will highlight cultural and historical resources, wildlife, recreation, and other impacts.

On June 9 is an optional half-day training to visit the spill scenario location. On June 12 is an optional field trip to visit the lead mine sites that have gone through cleanup and restoration. To register, see: <https://www.ttemiprod.com/hazmat-spill-ex/exercise/index.cfm> .

Minneapolis/Saint Paul

David Morrison said the sub-area has been expanding and will need a new name. Historically it included only the 7-county Twin Cities metropolitan area. It has grown to include the Saint Croix

National Scenic Riverway (SACN) and source water protection areas for Saint Cloud, Minneapolis, and Saint Paul water intakes. New stakeholders and tribes have been added. Morrison will suggest changing the name to the East Central Minnesota – Northwest Wisconsin Sub-area; the proposal will be made to RRT5 in the April 29-30, 2026 meetings.

Morrison said a priority last year was to make a shortlist of the most important GRPs that need to be exercised. Many GRPs have been made for the major rivers in the Sub-area, but few have been exercised. He is reaching out to pipelines and other facilities to work on this. One pipeline company will test a Saint Cloud water intake protection strategy in their next exercise. Morrison would like others to consider a similar focus in their plans. Development of area planning stems from the Clean Water Act; a key phrase is to work with agencies and officials to enhance their capacity to respond. Morrison is working to evaluate industry ESF 10 plans to see where quality can be enhanced and consistency with the National Contingency Plan (NCP) improved.

Polk County, Wisconsin is hosting a spill exercise on May 11-12, 2026 for the SACN. CPKC Railway is hosting an exercise at Prairie Island Indian Community in June for a derailment and oil spill.

Quad Cities

Joe Davis shared slides about the sub-area, the first in Region 7. It is not very active now but Valerie Wilder will be brought in as a backup OSC. It is limited in size to only two counties, Scott County (IA) and Rock Island (IL). There are FRP facilities both up- and downstream of the current sub-area. Davis will talk to Wilder and Emily Byrnes about expanding the sub-area to boost its usefulness. The last plan update was in 2024.

Barbi Lee helped start the sub-area, which has evolved and now includes a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) meeting. Lee added that locals talk often but it may need more federal support to be a functional sub-area. There is also a local industry spill cooperative. She suggested offering training like the 2024 DOI training, FRP training, or facility plan review to boost activity.

Davis trained with fire departments from both counties in autumn 2025, including a boom training on the river. He suggested also bringing in the FRP facilities downstream for such training events.

Regional/RRT

Barbi Lee said the RRT5 meeting is next week, on April 29-30, 2026. Illinois EPA is hosting at their office. Remote attendance will be held on Webex and an updated invitation with a new link will be shared soon.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Mark Ellis gave a recap of last year's group activity. Members did field verification of response strategies in UMR Pool 16, from Davenport to Muscatine, Iowa. The left descending bank here is Rock Island County, Illinois, within the Quad Cities Sub-area. Kirk Levetzow of Iowa DNR took part, as did USEPA Region 5, USCG, Illinois EPA, Muscatine Sheriff, and Muscatine Search & Rescue. Three boat crews visited draft strategy sites to validate suggested actions and record information.

The resulting data points were uploaded into the USEPA Region 5 geodatabase; in light of the data sharing discussed earlier, Ellis noted we should also make sure Region 7 has access to all of the strategies Region 5 has developed along the UMR.

Muscatine Search & Rescue staff said most of their activity happens downstream of Muscatine in Pool 17. They were interested in taking part in field work there in 2026. This would cover from Muscatine to Port Louisa National Wildlife Refuge. Ellis noted that with the funding troubles under the current administration, it looks uncertain. He suggested going ahead with planning for the work and see how resource availability plays out. Kurt Levetzow and Tony Falconio agreed and could make staff available to take part.

Ellis said that he and David Morrison had talked about developing response strategies and plans for the lower Minnesota River, which is entirely within USEPA Region 5. This area includes the Lower Minnesota National Wildlife Refuge, which has two pipeline crossings just upstream. The area has not been planned, let alone exercised. Also pending funding, we could proceed with planning. Dorene Fier-Tucker concurred that MPCA still sees this as a priority area.

Ellis said UMR Pool 22 is another planning gap along the river. Given that USEPA Region 5 will prioritize Pool 17 and the Minnesota River, he suggested USEPA Region 7 could consider UMR Pool 22 if they have the ability to do such planning work this year. UMR Pool 18 is another gap but there are already draft response strategies there. UMR Pool 4, which includes Lake Pepin, is the other remaining planning gap.

Ellis added that UMRBA has information about this group for new members who would like to know more: <https://umrba.org/focus-area/hazardous-spills>. He noted that the UMR Spills Group functions like a miniature RRT. Our Strategic Plan runs through 2027; next year we can begin the process of updating it for the next cycle. Ellis briefly walked through the main goals and objectives of the current plan.

REDUCED FEDERAL RESPONSE CAPACITY

Mark Ellis prompted participants to reflect on changes they have seen or expect to see with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) operating with reduced capacity and responsibility.

Valerie Wilder has not yet seen changes in her role as the USEPA Region 7 ESF 10 coordinator. However, FEMA has lost many staff, which could impact response. Responding to the tornado that hit Saint Louis in May of 2025, FEMA called late to invite USEPA for technical assistance. USEPA Region 7 coordinated with FEMA and USACE to discuss possible actions, but was then excluded from further discussions because there was no approval for a large mission assignment. The City of Saint Louis found a cheaper bid for work from a contractor.

Andy Maguire said USEPA Region 5 doesn't get many mission assignments, so it may not be as impactful. The California wildfire deployments were ESF 10 but were obviously not flood related.

Word from USEPA Headquarters is that there will be a shorter timeframe in which to do the work. Recent experience shows this may be a trend to watch.

Joe Davis added that there was an agency memo outlining a new protocol for response, which mentioned a focus on cooperative federalism. USEPA will be more reluctant to take on responses that states can lead. One element of the new policy is that there must be a completion plan at the beginning of a large response. This rapid response policy can leave more work for states to pick up. It is still unclear if the quicker completion compromises quality of response and cleanup. States will lead but can request federal funding assistance. It has already shown up in USEPA taking the lead on fewer sites than in the past.

Tony Falconio has already seen an increase in state responsibility. He said that states typically haven't had the resources to respond at large scales. Illinois has more of a hazmat consultant staff than emergency staff. The state is now looking to purchase resources to add that capacity.

Rick Gann said Missouri has a new Governor who is focused on emergency response. The DNR's roles are supported greatly by equipment and personnel and it has been able to fill positions and train new hires. Last week severe weather saw a pre-emptive emergency declaration so that state resources would be available to assist local agencies.

Brenda Kelly said that during the recent flooding events in Wisconsin, the Governor declared a state of emergency, beginning April 13, 2026. For staff that responded, it was noted that there were no funds from FEMA and expenses would come from programmatic budgets. Staff were willing to take the lead where in past circumstances they would not have. Staff were able to assist under a tight budget. However, programs that rely on taxes or license fees may not have enough funding to carry on at such a level for long.

Dorene Fier-Tucker said Minnesota has not seen much change yet but there has been a lot of turnover at Minnesota Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Some collaborations are still going on. The budget for responses and contractors has increased from \$1M to \$1.5M. Costs have been increasing, though, and cost recovery has sometimes been problematic.

Kurt Levetzow said Iowa has not yet had any need for changes but is glad for the information.

Ellis thanked participants for sharing their experiences. He asked participants to keep an eye on the situation as it develops and share any changes worth mentioning to the group.

OTHER BUSINESS

Participants shared flood outlook links:

- 2026 Spring Flood Outlook out of Wisconsin
<https://www.weather.gov/grb/springflood2026#:~:text=Minor%20flooding%20is%20likely%20for,climatolog...>
- 2026 Missouri River Basin Flood Potential Outlook (February 2026)
https://www.weather.gov/media/mbrfc/2026_presentations/mbrfc_webpage_12February2026.pdf
- Iowa flood information system: <https://ifis.iowafloodcenter.org/ifis/en/>

- [NWS Twin Cities -- 2026 Spring Flood Outlook](#)

Andy Maguire attended a drill in Wisconsin and saw Eddie Murphy of PHMSA, who talked about Transportation Rail Incident Preparedness and Response (TRIPR) training. The most recent TRIPR training around the UMR was held in Roxana, Illinois, at Phillips66 Refinery in 2024. Tony Falconio said Illinois held one in Monroe County, too. Maguire says USEPA will hold one on the Rock River this year; details are being worked out.

Maguire revisited talk about developing GRPs in UMR Pools 17 and 18. He noted that UMR Pool 4 would be different because Lake Pepin is a different type of environment and hydrology. He suggested asking an industry partner to support such work. David Morrison has been interested in this for some time but has not had much traction.

Next meeting: hold the date of Tuesday, October 13, 2026

Attendees:

Tony Falconio	Illinois EPA
Kurt Levetzow	Iowa DNR
Tyler Boley	Minnesota PCA
Dorene Fier-Tucker	Minnesota PCA
Colin Heintzeman	Minnesota PCA
Holly Lantz	Minnesota PCA
Ryan Stafne	Minnesota PCA
Jason Schrank	Minnesota PCA
Rick Gann	Missouri DNR
Kaylin Felix	Wisconsin DNR
Brenda Kelly	Wisconsin DNR
Jeff McCrery	USACE Rock Island District
LT Jayna Brunetti	USCG St. Louis
Barbi Lee	USEPA Region 5
Andy Maguire	USEPA Region 5
Emily Byrnes	USEPA Region 5
Jared Ceplo	USEPA Region 5
Corey Peaslee	USEPA Region 5
Adam Vrabec	USEPA Region 5
David Morrison	USEPA Region 5
Jude Huck-Reymond	USEPA Region 5
Joe Davis	USEPA Region 7
Joe Krauska	USEPA Region 7
Aleshia Kenney	USFWS Illinois/Iowa Field Office
Ed Karecki	USFWS Illinois/Iowa Field Office
Leslie Lueckenhoff	USFWS Missouri Field Office
Ted Kratschmer	Illinois/Iowa American Water
Mark Ellis	UMRBA