



State of Utah

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Environmental Quality

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NEWS RELEASE

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Oil Spill Samples

First Water Quality Test show no Immediate Threat

Salt Lake City, Utah – Initial test results for petroleum-based compounds in the water sampled along the Red Butte Canyon oil spill do not indicate an immediate threat to human health and aquatic life. However, more extensive testing is ongoing to determine the full extent of the contamination from other components of the oil and the longer term effects on the environment.

“It appears the most toxic components sampled have dissipated and we aren’t seeing anything acutely harmful to human health or aquatic life based on the data we have so far,” said Walt Baker, director of Water Quality (DWQ). “We, however, continue to sample a more comprehensive number of contaminants to give us a better indication for harmful components that remain in the waters,” he added.

DWQ on Monday sent a dozen water quality samples to the Unified State Lab. Samples were taken at various locations along the length of Red Butte Creek, from the spill through Liberty Park, and where the water enters the Jordan River. Another set of samples at these and additional locations was taken late Monday to a commercial lab for testing. Results will be ready on Wednesday.

There are many potentially harmful elements in petroleum products. Future sampling will give us a more complete picture of impacts of the spill to the environment.

Results of the tests will be posted at: <http://www.deq.utah.gov/Issues/redbuttespill/index.htm>

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