

Crews clean up oil spill reported along PCH north of Ventura

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Authorities this morning are cleaning up an oil spill along the Pacific Coast Highway north of Ventura.

Firefighters responded at 8:32 a.m. to the spill about a mile north of Faria Beach, south of Seacliff. A camper reported seeing gallons of oil seeping onto the beach, said Bill Nash, a spokesman for the Ventura County Fire Department.

Bill Barrett, production coordinator for Vintage Production, said the oil company has a small pipeline that ruptured about three-quarters of a mile up the hill from the coast. He said a small landslide caused the rupture of the pipe.

Barrett said the company got report at 8:15 a.m. about the leaking oil and took steps to stop the flow of oil to the pipeline. They also put dams along the creek to stop the oil from flowing downhill, and put a boom on the beach at the outlet of the creek into the ocean.

The spill was a mixture of crude oil and water. Barrett said he did not have an estimate of how much spilled, but noted it was contained by 9:10 a.m. The company had contractors out cleaning up the sand.

Ventura city and county firefighters responded to the spill, along with a Coast Guard boat and officials from the county Environmental Health Division and state Department of Fish and Game, Nash said.

Bryan Vanden Bossche, a division chief for the Ventura County Fire Department, said experts told them about 55 gallons of oil spilled into the water — about one barrel. They were unclear about the total spill, but believe the rupture occurred at 10 p.m. Monday.

The oil spread out about one-quarter mile parallel to the beach.