Oil Spills: Array of Potential Human Effects

**Primary Stressors**

- Loss of Livelihood
- Uncertainty - Ambiguity
- Hazards Exposure
- Influx of Outsiders
- Interpersonal Toxicity
- Compensation Processes
- Compensation Outcomes

**Psychological Health**
- Mental
  - Anxiety
  - Depression
  - PTSD
  - Suicide ideation

**Physiological Health**
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Respiratory distress
- Cardiovascular disorders
- Eye problems
- Dermatitis
- Hypertension

**Sociological Effects**
- Decline in social capital
- Increased social conflict (deviance, intolerance, insularity)
- Corrosion associated with short-term influx of outsiders
- Population displacement
- Reduced trust in others (both fellow community members and gov’t officials)
- Loss of community identity

**Economic Effects**
- Primary Individual Effects
  - Income loss
  - Job loss
  - Depletion of savings
  - Property damage (waterfront, boats)
  - Increased costs (healthcare, gas, seafood)

- Primary Community Effects
  - Reduced tax revenue
  - Market impairment (decline in demand for seafood and tourism)
  - Brand damage

**Other Important Considerations**

Assessments of the impact of stressors should account for pre-existing conditions that can exacerbate negative health, well-being, and/or resilience outcomes; such conditions may include poverty, unemployment, ill health, declining social capital, crime, domestic disharmony, etc.

Effects will vary by population subgroup:
- Oil spill cleanup workers
- Workers in resource-dependent occupations
- Those living closest to the coastline
- Vulnerable populations (children, elderly, etc.)

These oil spill effects can also create heightened vulnerability to other stressors:
- Natural disasters
- Other technological disasters
- Economic recession
- General life stressors (health, family, job, etc.)

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Human Impacts of Oil Spills: Selected Bibliography


