

Lost Oil 'Found' Off Gate

By Larry Dum

Most of the missing 500,000 gallons of petroleum lost in Standard Oil's tanker collision has been located.

The huge mass of oil has been churned into an emulsified seawater cocktail and is now boiling around in subsurface currents between the Golden Gate and the 11-mile Light Ship, the Coast Guard

told The Examiner late yesterday.

No one seemed certain when or where it will go when it dissipates.

Cleanup Setback

But scientists do say that if all else fails, natural bacteria within the sea will eventually eat up the mess — leaving only a small residue when it does.

Disclosure of the churning

emulsion off the San Francisco headwaters was an apparent setback to Standard Oil's cleanup operation which has been primarily based on clearing away the oil which can be seen.

Cmdr. Gordon H. Dickman, on-scene commander of Coast Guard spill operations, termed the emulsion "like a snowstorm — where the flakes swirl around in huge masses never touching ground."

He added:

"We can't be certain none of it has settled on the bottom. But we don't believe at this time that there is any evidence it has."

Fish Can Survive

State Fish and Game spokesman Frank Hubbard said that studies of the 1969 Union Oil disaster in the Santa Barbara channel indicate that there is no pressing danger to fishing

outside the Golden Gate.

"We believe the fish will just stay away from the oil," he said. "While this (the Standard Oil accident) was an awful thing, it's still a pretty big ocean, and while there was a lot of oil, it's just a drop in the bucket compared to the size of the ocean."

High Tide

Post-collision studies have turned up at least one less than dismal note.

"If this had to happen," said Cmdr. Dickman, "it couldn't have happened at a better time or place."

Most of the oil, Dickman said, was lost at the point of impact just inside the gate near high tide. When the tide went out, it carried the bulk of the oil with it.

Dickman estimated that 13,000 barrels of the 20,000

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Editor's Report

Off and Running For President

By William Randolph Hearst, Jr.
Editor-in-Chief, The Hearst Newspapers