



Kearl EPO Update #9 – April 12, 2023

Imperial is committed to complying with an environmental protection order that was issued by the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) related to industrial wastewater at our Kearl oil sands operating site. We regret these incidents and are making every effort to learn from it and apply preventative measures.

Imperial will provide regular updates to communities and potentially affected stakeholders. Updates will be posted to Imperial's website weekly and notifications will be sent via e-mail.

There are two separate incidents included in the order issued on Feb. 6. We are working with the regulator on next steps for both.

Imperial implements measures to prevent future drainage pond overflow at Kearl

Imperial today provided an update on its investigation into a drainage pond overflow at the Kearl site earlier this year. Following extensive review, the company has determined that the overflow was caused by a combination of equipment problems and process failure.

“This incident should not have happened. We have identified the issues and are taking actions to prevent potential reoccurrence,” said Simon Younger, Senior Vice President, Upstream. “We recognize the concerns that this incident has raised with local communities, and we sincerely apologize. We are working to share information and answer questions as we work to rebuild trust.”

Cleanup work from the overflow is complete and soil sampling to confirm is underway. Based on the company's monitoring, released fluids did not enter any river systems and water sampling continues to show that there have been no impacts to local drinking water sources. There is no indication of impact to wildlife.

Imperial's investigation determined that measurement equipment was not providing accurate pond level information to the central control room. Because the equipment was not accurately reading the pond level, a normally automatic pump was in a manual operation mode and was not activated to pump down the level of water.

This pond collects water from surface water drainage systems and the seepage interception system, which is primarily natural groundwater and precipitation, with a small amount of industrial wastewater. It also receives water, silt and sediment from the surrounding area, which accumulates over time. There was a gradual buildup in sediment materials, which impacted accurate measurement of the pond level.

Routine operator inspection rounds did not initially detect the high pond level due to winter conditions and low visibility. The release was identified on Feb. 4 and immediately reported to the Alberta Energy Regulator.

Imperial is taking the following actions to prevent reoccurrence at all drainage ponds:

- Inspected and re-programmed all level measurement equipment around the ponds
- Enhancing processes for sediment management
- Increased inspection requirements during regular operator surveillance
- Conducted additional training for all operators working in this area

The update was shared with community leadership earlier today, as well as with the Alberta Energy Regulator.

Seepage mitigation and prevention

Work continues to complete mitigation measures to address seepage located in areas near the Kearl lease boundary. About 200 people continue to work on related activities at the site.

There continues to be no indication of impact to wildlife or fish. As a precaution, additional fencing continues to be installed as work is completed to prevent potential access by wildlife. Wildlife monitoring is ongoing, with regularly scheduled sweeps in the area. We are working in collaboration with communities to incorporate their feedback on our monitoring plans.

Water quality

Earlier this week, we received information from the Alberta Energy Regulator on additional sampling data from Waterbody 3 located primarily on the Kearl lease showing detections of F2 hydrocarbons and naphthenic acids. We continue to actively monitor the waterbody and will be working with the regulator to confirm these results.

Our ongoing third-party sampling analysis in Waterbody 3 continues to meet aquatic life guidelines for F2 hydrocarbons. No guidelines exist for naphthenic acids.

We continue to take actions to prevent potential impacts to downstream waterbodies. Last week, we put forward a plan to the regulator to install additional recovery equipment and accelerate an already planned recovery program. We are also enhancing our monitoring efforts and are evaluating an additional precautionary step to install a barrier at the outflow of the waterbody.

We have created an [informational video](#) featuring Imperial's water lead that provides information regarding our ongoing water sampling and monitoring program.

Meeting with communities

Imperial continues to engage directly with Indigenous community leaders and other community members to answer questions, provide information and begin to rebuild trust. We recognize that we still have work to do in this area and are committed to improving our communications in the future.

We continue to share information directly with communities and to hear their feedback. We have shared our mitigation and monitoring plans with communities and have offered for them to complete their own independent reviews of our technical work. We are also seeking input from communities on our plans to improve our communications going forward.

Additional information

We have also shared a factsheet about Imperial's response at Kearl on our website: [Getting the facts - Imperial response at Kearl \(imperialoil.ca\)](#)