





DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

"When People Put the Environment First, Development Lasts."

*Contact Person: Edgar Ek
Deputy Chief Environmental Officer*

 *7552 Hummingbird Highway, Belmopan*

 *Tel: 501-822-2548/ 2819*

 *Email: enforcement@environment.gov.bz*

 *Website: www.doe.gov.bz*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Release

Oil Spill Response in Benque Viejo

Belmopan, Belize. October 12, 2022. Today, personnel from the Department of the Environment (DOE), within the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, conducted an inspection at a site located on George Price Boulevard in Benque Viejo del Carmen being managed by Westline Bus Co. An oil spill, which was not reported by the bus company, was observed on the land and discharging into a nearby drain.

It was determined that a container having a capacity of about 1,100 gallons and storing waste oil, which is classified as a hazardous substance under the Environmental Protection Act (EPA), had ruptured resulting in the oil spill. The site in question is located on a slope causing the spilled oil to run into a drain, which leads into the Mopan River. The exact quantity of oil spilled cannot be determined at this time as the company has no record of the amount of oil that was stored. There is no indication at this time that the oil has entered the Mopan River; however, it is possible that contamination can occur once the floodwaters recede.

The DOE's team on the ground has been able to contain the spill, along with employees of the bus company, and will continue to supervise the clean-up activities in the coming days. In the interim, the DOE has issued a pollution abatement notice to the company to ensure the necessary measures are implemented to avoid further environmental impacts, and subsequently seek legal advice in the prosecution of the offence and/or levying of applicable penalties under the EPA.

END

For more information contact:

Chief Environmental Officer

Department of the Environment, Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change
and Disaster Risk Management

7552 Hummingbird Highway, Belmopan

Tel: 822-548/2819

Fax: 822-2860

Email: envirodept@btl.net or envirodept@environment.gov.bz

Website: www.doe.gov.bz