



## Kriss Worthington

Councilmember, City of Berkeley, District 7  
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# 41

### CONSENT CALENDAR

July 13, 2010

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Councilmember Kriss Worthington  
Subject: Support the Food and Water Watch's Spill the Truth campaign to temporarily shut down the BP Atlantis Oil rig

#### RECOMMENDATION

Send a letter to President Barack Obama, urging him to direct Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar to temporarily shut down the BP Atlantis oil platform until federal regulators can prove the rig operates safely.

#### BACKGROUND

It has come to the attention of many that the oil industries must take more action and precaution in preventing disasters such as the current Deepwater Horizon oil spill, and therefore must take those regulations and safety requirements which make prevention possible seriously.

According to Bloomberg BusinessWeek, Kenneth Abbott, a former employee who was in charge of BP Atlantis' engineering documentation database confirms BP lacks important safety measures on specifications used to build the oil rig. According to Food and Water Watch (FWW), 89% of the engineer-approved safety documentation is either missing or not up to date. Unless the BP Atlantis oil rig meets safety requirements their facility will continue to endanger the economy, environment, and majority of the most vulnerable communities in the Gulf region.

Statistics presented by the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders document that the Gulf Coast region contributes \$3 billion to the economy while providing the nation with one third of its seafood. Further, findings suggests that failures to comply to necessary safety measures that prevent catastrophic disasters like the Deepwater Horizon spill will not only disrupt the seafood industry, but it will continue to threaten the survival of nearly 80 percent of the thousands of Southeast Asian families in that region who depend on the waters to generate income and community resources.

Over the past few years, FWW has made numerous requests to Mineral Management Service (MMS) to investigate BP Atlantis in order to affirm that it is safely operating yet MMS has taken no action. According to FWW, when independent engineer Mr. Mike Sawyer evaluated the BP database, he concluded that "BP's failure to maintain proper documents could lead to a catastrophic failure, and recommends [the] platform be shutdown until problems are fixed."

In an August 2008 BP communication acknowledged that "catastrophic Operator errors" could result from turning over incomplete documents.

It is imperative this issue is addressed immediately by urging the Berkeley City Council to continue pressuring the President and Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar that the BP Atlantis oil platform is thoroughly investigated and meets all safety requirement regulations before they operate. Neglecting such necessary measures would mean neglecting the best interest of the public and the nation at large.

According to the Food and Water Watch:

- In August of 2008, a BP contractor made a startling discovery about Atlantis: The company was operating the massive Atlantis platform without proper up-to-date and engineer-approved documentation, stating:

- More than 6,000 critical documents for pipelines, flowlines, wellheads and other important systems did not have the required engineering documentation.
- Many of its safety shutdown system logic diagrams were not up to date
- An industrial process safety engineer's analysis of the Whistleblower's BP claims revealed that: Over 85 % of subsea piping and instrument documents and over 95% of the subsea welding specifications have no final engineer approval.
- In March 2009, a Whistleblower notified Minerals Management Service that BP did not have the proper engineer-approved documents for its subsea components before Atlantis started production in October 2007.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

#### CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Kriss Worthington	510-981-7170
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Dear Honorable President Barack Obama,

Our communities in the Gulf of Mexico are drastically suffering from the recent oil spill and will be for decades. It has come to the attention of many that the oil industries must take more action and precaution in preventing disasters such as the current Deepwater Horizon oil spill, and therefore must seriously take those regulations and safety requirements which make prevention possible.

According to Bloomberg BusinessWeek, Kenneth Abbott, a former employee who was in charge of BP Atlantis' engineering documentation database confirms BP lacks important safety measures on specifications used to build the oil rig. According to Food and Water Watch (FWW), 89% of the engineer-approved safety documentation is either missing or not up to date. Unless the BP Atlantis oil rig meets safety requirements their facility will continue to endanger the economy, environment, and majority of the most vulnerable communities in the Gulf region.

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It is imperative this issue is addressed immediately by pressing Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar to close the BP Atlantis oil platform until it is thoroughly investigated and meets all safety requirement regulations. The inability to close a rig that is operating without any evidence of safety, especially in light of the Deepwater Horizon catastrophe, makes it appear that Secretary Salazar is serving oil interests, not the public interest.

The Berkeley City Council urges you to recognize the dangers in which passively allowing the BP Atlantis oil rig to operate poses to the American public. Please direct Secretary Salazar to close down the BP Atlantis oil rig until there is evidence verifying that it has met all safety standards and regulations preventing future disasters. Neglecting such necessary measures would mean neglecting the best interest of the public and the nation at large.

Sincerely,

Berkeley City Council

Cc: Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar

