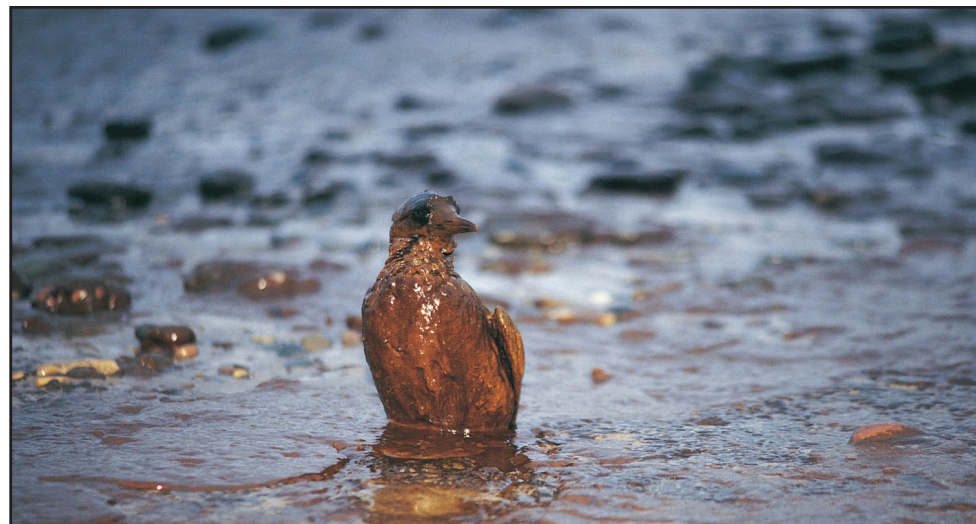


EarthTalk



Between 1973 and 1990, an average of 11.8 million gallons of oil spilled each year in American waters. Since then, the average has dropped to just 1.5 million gallons, though oil spills in U.S. waters have risen again over the past decade, with 134 incidents in 2008 alone. Image by Getty Images.

From the Editors of E/The Environmental Magazine

Dear EarthTalk: I haven't heard much of late about big oil spills like the infamous Exxon Valdez. Has the industry cleaned up its act, or do the media just not report them?

-- Olivia G., via e-mail

In the wake of 1989's massive Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska's Prince William Sound, when 11 million gallons of oil befouled some 1,300 miles of formerly pristine and wildlife-rich coastline, much has been done to prevent future spills of such magnitude.

For starters, Congress quickly passed the 1990 Oil Pollution Act which overhauled shipping regulations, imposed new liability on the industry, required detailed response plans and added extra safeguards for shipping in Prince William Sound itself. Under the terms of the law, companies cannot ship oil in any U.S. waters unless they prove they have response and clean-up plans in place and have the manpower and equipment on hand to respond quickly and effectively in the case of another disaster.

Also, the law mandates that, by 2015, all tankers in U.S. waters must be equipped with double hulls. The Exxon Valdez had only one hull when it ran aground on Bligh Reef and poured its oil into Prince William Sound, the southern end of the oil pipeline that originates 800 miles to the north at Prudhoe Bay. By comparison, a 900-foot double-hulled tanker carrying nearly 40 million gallons of crude oil did not leak when it crashed into submerged debris near Galveston, Texas in March 2009.

According to the U.S. Coast Guard, average annual oil spill totals have dropped dramatically since new regulations took effect in 1990. Between 1973 and 1990, an average of 11.8 million gallons of oil spilled each year in American waters. Since then, the average has dropped to just 1.5 million gallons, with the biggest spill (not including those resulting from Hurricane Katrina in 2005) less than 600,000 gallons

Despite these improvements, critics say the industry still has more work to do. While protections have been beefed up in Prince William Sound, other major American ports still lack extra precautions such as escort tugboats and double engines and rudders on big ships to help steer them to safety when in trouble.

Another area that the 1990 law doesn't cover is container ships that don't transport oil as their cargo but which carry a large amount, anyway, for their own fuel for the considerable distances they travel. Such ships could also cause a major spill (anything more than 100,000 gallons, by Coast Guard standards). Yet another concern is the great number of smaller oil spills that occur every day at industrial locations (including but not limited to oil refining and storage facilities) and even in our own driveways. These will continue to add up to a heavy toll on our environment, even if another oil tanker never spills at sea again.

And while the total number and volume of oil spills is down dramatically from bygone days, the trend of late warrants concern.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) Office of Response and Restoration reports that oil spills in U.S. waters have risen again over the past decade, with 134 incidents in 2008 alone. Green leaders worry that if Bush administration plans to expand offshore oil drilling are not overturned by President Obama, oil spills in U.S. waters could remain a sad fact of life.

Contacts: NOAA Office of Response and Restoration, www.response.restoration.noaa.gov; U.S. EPA Oil Pollution Act Overview, www.epa.gov/OEM/content/lawsregs/opaover.htm.

Send your environmental questions to: EarthTalk, P.O. Box 5098, Westport, CT 06881; earthtalk@emagazine.com. Read past columns at: www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/archives.php.

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Council

from front page

Council also agreed to move \$1.2 million out of a "naming rights" fund that was set up to eventually replace artificial turf at the Campus El Segundo Athletic Fields (money for the project will instead be allocated out of the general fund in \$100,000 annual increments over the next decade). The City will also save more than \$400,000 by running short by the one overtime-related firefighter position agreed upon thus far.

On Tuesday, the Council (minus Mayor Pro Tem Eric Busch, who is traveling) did not take any action on the new budget proposals but did engage in a lengthy discussion on the matter of processing fees currently tacked onto business license taxes.

Mayor Kelly McDowell reported that a number of home-based business owners have contacted him complaining about paying what he described as a "ridiculous"

\$40 processing fee that actually exceeds the total of the tax itself. Councilmember Carl Jacobson expressed his desire to eliminate the processing fee in multiple areas, though McDowell and Councilmember Bill Fisher looked to do so only for home-based businesses. In any case, shelving the fee for the home businesses would mean a slight (approximately \$20,000) revenue reduction from the upcoming budget. McDowell cautioned that if revenue projections continue to drop, the Council may eventually be forced to bite the bullet and consider cutting salaries and/or taking away jobs—a scenario he hopes won't materialize.

In the meantime, a public hearing on the budget will take place at the next Council meeting on September 1, with a continued public hearing and final adoption of the document scheduled for September 15. •



Safe Dog Park Visit

In Long Beach, we are fortunate to have a dog beach and dog parks. These are wonderful spots for dog owners to visit. However, caution and common sense must be used when going to any of these places.

Last week I had a client walk into my hospital with an emergency. They had been at the dog beach with their seven-pound Yorkie. The Yorkie encountered a 55-pound pit bull mix. As we know, many small dogs, including my four-pound Chihuahua Alejandro, have no fear of larger dogs.

When the two dogs approached each other, the owners noticed the dogs stiffen up when they were nose to nose. However, there was no growling or barking.

The attack happened in a split second. The Yorkie was grabbed around its neck and back and shaken. The pit bull dropped the smaller dog as soon as it went limp. The owners said the entire attack took just a few seconds.

The Yorkie arrived at my hospital in terrible shape. At first glance, the dog did not seem alive. It was limp, cold with pale mucous membranes. His eyes were fixed and dilated and did not appear to be breathing. There was a large deep laceration that extended from one side of the dog over the back to the other side. The skin had been peeled back and nearly half of the deep tissue over the back was exposed. The back of the neck was also missing skin and the muscles, tendons and ligaments of the neck were completely macerated.

My team jumped into action immediately. Oxygen, I.V. catheter and fluids, urinary catheter, blood pressure, and a cornucopia of drugs were administered within a minute. An x-ray was taken and to everyone's relief, there were no broken bones and the chest cavity looked intact. Although alive, the little dog was still in severe shock and wasn't out of the woods. The neurologic exam had us feeling fairly confident the spine wasn't severed but we were concerned that he had a concussion. It was also too early to tell if any internal organs were damaged or functioning properly.

By this time, the entire extended family had assembled at my hospital to stand vigil over their critically injured pet. I explained that the massive bite wound injuries they had seen could not be surgically repaired right away because he was not a stable patient. We had started cleaning the wounds but could only bandage at this point. Our main concern was to keep the blood pressure up

and all the vital organs working.

As the afternoon progressed the Yorkie improved slightly but could not raise its head. Most of the muscles and ligaments that hold the head up were severely damaged.

72 hours, a half dozen specialists, a long surgery and lots of Fentanyl pain medicine later, our little dog attack victim was ready to go home. There will still be some follow up care and it remains to be seen if there is any permanent damage to the neck muscles, but it appears to be looking up for our Yorkie friend.

It's important to point out that neither dog had a history of aggression or fights. This is very common. The larger dog may have seen the Yorkie as a play toy and not a threat. There is no way to tell. What we do know is that these attacks are preventable in many cases.

One way to avoid conflicts is by staying alert and keeping your dog under a short leash and voice control at all times. Some owners take the additional step of not allowing their dog to look or sniff at another dog.

Teaching a dog early on that he can't visit with every other dog he meets is one good way owners can prevent leash aggression. Teach the dog not to pull on the leash, and to sit and wait for permission before greeting another dog. Basic obedience training can help prevent fights.

Along with leashing and good training, owners can avoid conflicts by keeping their pets from roaming, neutering young dogs before six months of age, and socializing their dogs during the critical puppyhood stage between six to eight weeks of age.

If you own a very small dog, use caution around any larger dog. Your tiny dog may resemble the big dog's favorite squeaky toy.

Many fights occur with little warning, but watch for these behavioral cues to see if a fight is imminent:

A hard, unwavering, targeted stare.

Dominance posturing, such as mounting. Stiff body movements.

Extreme body language: the tail held stiffly up or down, lips pulled tight against the teeth.

Dog parks and beaches are a great place to play with your dog and using common sense and training will make your visit safer.

If you have a specific question or topic you would like me to write about, please email me at cats.dogs@verizon.net.

Dr. Greg Perrault owns and operates Cats & Dogs Animal Hospital in Long Beach, CA. •

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

DATE: Tuesday, September 1, 2009

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: City Council Chambers
350 Main Street
El Segundo, California

TAKE NOTICE that the El Segundo City Council will hold a public hearing at the time and place indicated above on the following:

Environmental Assessment No. 819, General Plan Amendment (GPA 08-02), Zone Change (ZC 08-01), Lot Line Adjustment (LLA 09-04), and Off-Site Parking Covenant (MISC 09-01).

Address: 900, 950 and 960 Sepulveda Blvd. and 901 and 915 Selby Street
Applicant: The Boeing Company
Property Owner: The Boeing Company

Project Summary

The proposed project is a request by The Boeing Company to change the zoning and general plan designation of the property located at 900, 950 and 960 Sepulveda Boulevard and 901 and 915 Selby Street on the block generally bounded by Sepulveda Boulevard to the west, Selby Street to the east, Imperial Avenue to the north, and Walnut Avenue to the south. The General Plan Amendment request is a re-designation of the project site from General Commercial to Corporate Office. The re-zoning request is to change the property from the General

Commercial (C-3) Zone to the Corporate Office (CO) Zone. Currently the 256,606 square-foot project site is developed with four buildings totaling 159,803 square feet that contain a mix of warehouse, storage and office uses. The project involves the conversion of warehouse and storage uses in the existing buildings into office uses. The project includes a building addition of 40,791 square feet of office uses for a total of 198,874 square feet of total development on the project site.

Additionally, the project includes a lot line adjustment to merge the three existing parcels into one parcel and an off-site parking covenant for 283 parking spaces to comply with El Segundo Municipal Code parking requirements. The proposed project would meet all development standards of the Corporate Office (CO) Zone. The zone change to the Corporate Office (CO) Zone would reduce the maximum allowable floor area on the project site from a floor area ratio (FAR) of 1.0 to 0.8. The proposed project would increase the total floor area to an FAR of 0.8.

Mitigated Negative Declaration

An initial study of environmental impacts was prepared pursuant to 14 California Code of Regulations § 15063 ("CEQA Guidelines"). A Mitigated Negative Declaration of Environmental Impacts is proposed for this project pursuant to CEQA § 15070. An Addendum to Negative Declaration was also prepared. The public review and comment period for the Negative Declaration began on June 26, 2009 and ended on July 27, 2009.

On August 13, 2009, the Planning

Commission recommended to City Council to approve the Mitigated Negative Declaration of Environmental Impacts and the Addendum to Environmental Assessment No. 819, General Plan Amendment No. 08-02, Zone Change No. 08-01, and the Planning Commission approved Miscellaneous File No. 09-02 for off-site parking, subject to the conditions contained therein.

The file for the above-mentioned proposal including the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Addendum are available for public review, Monday through Thursday and alternating Friday, between 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. in the City of El Segundo Planning and Building Safety Department, located at 350 Main Street, El Segundo CA 90245. Any person may give testimony at the public hearing at the time and place indicated above. Please contact Masa Alkire, Principal Planner, in the City Planning Division at (310) 524-2371 for further information. Note that any appeal of a decision made following a public hearing may be limited to the issues raised by evidence submitted before or during that public hearing.

Greg Carpenter
Planning and Building Safety Director, and
Secretary to the Planning Commission
City of El Segundo

Mailing Date: August 20, 2009
Publication Date: August 20, 2009
Posting Date: August 20, 2009

ES HERALD: 8/20/09 H-21026