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Tech scientists studying effects of Gulf oil spill

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ALABAMA (KCBD) - Scientists from Texas Tech are on the Gulf coast to help track the effects the oil spill is having on both the environment and human health.

The crew is currently in Alabama, and was in Louisiana Thursday, collecting samples that have washed ashore. The scientists are also looking at the changes the oil after it rises from the rig and is exposed to air, sun, chemical dispersants and seawater.

A TV crew in Alabama helped them locate a quarter pound of beached oil that had completely changed in appearance. Ernest Smith, an associate professor in Tech's Department of Environmental Toxicology, says the sample "is like gold for the study of environmental and human health."

They will take the oil to the Institute of Environmental and Human Health and compare the chemistry of it to the oil retrieved from the water. The Tech researchers had a hard time getting access to the Louisiana wetlands so they're continuing their work in Alabama.



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