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Texas Tech research hopes to save endangered animals in the gulf

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By Michael Slother - [email](#)

LUBBOCK, TX (KCBD) - Texas Tech students at the Institute of Environmental and Human Health are doing some unique tests on the impact of toxins on endangered species.

Dr. Celine Godard-Codding says her lab creates cell cultures from the tissues of dead animals so that they can study toxins effects without harming the animal.

"We're going use the cell cultures that we have developed here at Texas Tech to study the same species of turtles found in the gulf and were going to look at the impact of pollutants found in oil," Godard-Codding said.

Sandy Wiggins is a Tech graduate student. She hopes the research they're doing can be useful in areas like the gulf where the turtles are being exposed to pollutants on a daily basis because of the oil.

"The goal is to see how sea turtles metabolize certain chemical certain pollutants in the environment and then that can be shown to other scientists and say ok if they're exposed to this chemical then they would react in this way," said Wiggins.

So far Tech students have re-created tissue cultures of dolphins and cell cultures of sea turtles.

"Texas Tech is one of the only universities that currently has a lab working on developing cell cultures for marine endangered species such as sea turtles," Godard-Codding continued. While she is pleased to see the project going smoothly, she worries what she'll discover. "I wouldn't be surprised of some cells deaths after exposure to contaminants."



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