



Overview of Health Literature Search and Database

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The Consortium for Resilient Gulf Communities (CRGC) is working to assess and address the impact of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill and the health, social, and economic wellbeing of Gulf Coast communities. To better understand the health effects of the spill on communities, the CRGC designed and administered a community-based telephone survey of residents. In designing that survey, it was vital that the team consult the available literature to understand what was known about the health effects of oil spills. Researchers therefore conducted a literature review on the health impacts of oil spills to identify both what was already known about the effects of oil spills and gaps in our knowledge. This document describes the literature search we undertook, and the corresponding database presents the results from that search. A document summarizing findings is presented elsewhere (Parks and Ramchand, forthcoming).

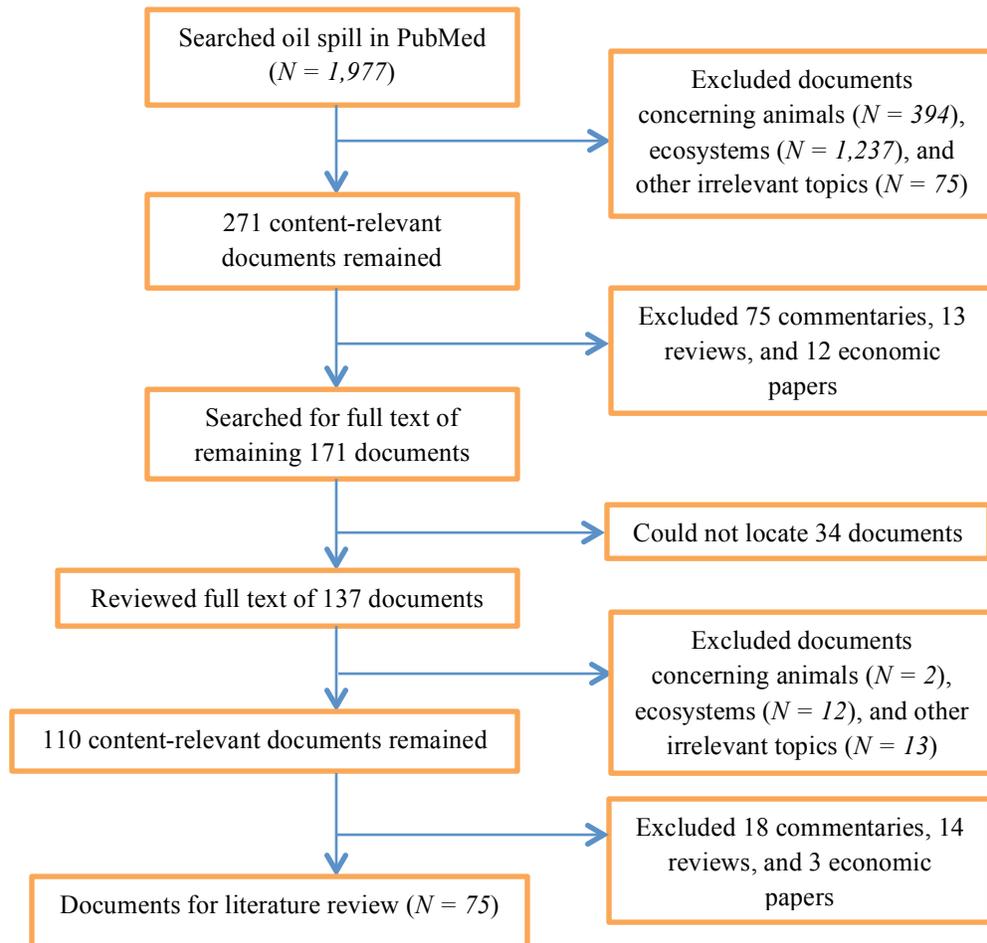
Although the Oil Spill Health Literature Database was designed primarily to inform the CRGC survey instrument, it has many other uses. It can aid researchers, health care professionals, policymakers, community leaders, and residents in their efforts to

- **summarize what is known about public health after oil spills.** By presenting consolidated information in an easy-to-use format, the database allows audiences to extract and summarize relevant information to help orient their work within extant literature.
- **identify knowledge gaps relating to public health after oil spills.** By describing what previous research has accomplished in the area of public health and oil spills, the database also helps researchers recognize what gaps still exist in the literature and where additional research efforts are needed.

Literature Review Strategy

CRGC researchers searched peer-reviewed medical literature in June 2016 to identify what had been published about public health after oil spills. We searched PubMed with no exclusion dates, using the term *oil spill*, which yielded 1,977 results. Then, we reviewed titles and abstracts to exclude irrelevant articles. We excluded papers primarily concerning animals ($N = 394$), ecosystems ($N = 1,237$), and other irrelevant topics ($N = 75$). Commentary ($N = 75$), reviews ($N = 13$), and economics papers ($N = 12$) were also excluded. Thus, 171 results remained after applying the exclusion criteria. We could not locate 34 articles, so our full text review includes 137 papers that address public health impacts after oil spills.

FIGURE 1: Literature Review Selection Process



Database Construction

Prior to reading the papers, we identified several categorical domains, which included the referent oil spill, year of data, sample size, population, indicators of exposure, outcome measures, analytic strategy, and results. We created an Excel spreadsheet, filling information from each article into columns for the key domains. We enabled a drop-down menu so that users can narrow their searches.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
	Study Citation	Pre/Post-2010	Referent oil spill	Type of publication	Year of data	Sample size
1	Arena, Erin M. E Veronic St Schuler "M Resili Traum. After th Horizon Study of Coasta			journal article	"months after the oil spill"	n = 1,119
3	Seeki Arata, C. Steven David Jo Scott (2000). techn disa applica conse resourc the Ezzo spill Buttke			journal article	1995	n = 125
4	Sara Schna Bagley Morris Allen, Volki Cor Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) one year following the Gulf Coast Oil	Post-2010	Deepwater Horizon	journal article	2011	n = 536

Using the Database

The database is provided as a downloadable Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. It is formatted to answer specific questions in a variety of ways. For example, a user can use the search function to locate

all papers authored or coauthored by a particular author or using a particular analytical method. Additionally, the drop-down filter menus at the top of each column can be used separately or in combination to find subsets of papers. For example, a user could search under *Referent Oil Spill* for “Exxon Valdez” and under *Population–Short Form* for “Fishers” to find the papers concerning fishers affected by the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill.

Limitations of the Database

PubMed provides researchers free access to MEDLINE, which covers biomedical journals. It is the nation’s primary medical literature database; however, other literature on public health and oil spills may be omitted (e.g., research from the sociology or economics literature). In addition, the database was not updated after June 2016, so any articles published after that date are not contained in the database. Users should keep these limitations in mind when referencing the database.