

Nation of Change

The 14-year chronic, continuous oil spill most Americans never heard about

The federal government said it is committed “to ensure Taylor Energy will work to permanently stop the ongoing oil spill” because there is “still more that can be done by Taylor to control and contain the oil.”

[Ashley Curtin](#) / [NationofChange](#) / News Report - October 25, 2018



Image Credit: Getty Images

Anywhere from 300 to 700 barrels of oil (or 12,600 to 29,400 gallons) continuously leak on a daily basis from a damaged production platform 12 miles off the coast of Louisiana into the Gulf of Mexico. A story that’s received little attention from the mainstream media, these underwater oil wells, owned by Taylor Energy, have been leaking since 2004.

Based on a recent government-commissioned study, the leak could continue for another “100 years until the oil in the underground reservoir is finally depleted” if it’s not plugged, Greenpeace reported. And this could become a reality since the owner of Taylor Energy “[has no plans to stop the leak and is](#)

[lobbying behind the scenes](#) for permission to walk away from its mess,” Greenpeace reported.

<https://www.nationofchange.org/author/acurtin/>

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In 2004, an offshore oil platform owned by Taylor Energy sank into the Gulf after a mudslide caused by Hurricane Ivan.

14 years later, it's still spewing oil.

It's time for a #FossilFreeFuture. bit.ly/2A7YJ3c

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This Oil Leak Could Last for 100 Years — and the Company In...

Oil has been continuously leaking from a damaged Taylor Energy production platform off the coast of Louisiana since 2004.

[greenpeace.org](https://www.greenpeace.org)

The 14-year leak, which was revealed to the public in 2010, had been kept at a level of secrecy by Taylor Energy, only reporting very small estimates of spilled oil to the National Response Center. But following image documentation of the spill by SkyTruth and an investigation by the Associated Press, “the U.S. Coast Guard released a leak estimate that was 20 times larger than what had been claimed by Taylor Energy in court filings,” Greenpeace reported.

Taylor Energy’s lack of transparency has led to a lawsuit filed by Waterkeeper Alliance and other environmental groups.

[Ashley Curtin](#)

Ashley is an editor with NationofChange. Before joining NoC, she was a features reporter at The Daily Breeze – a local newspaper in Southern California – writing a variety of stories on current topics including politics, economy, human rights, the environment and the arts. Ashley is a transplant from the East Coast now calling Denver, Colorado home.

But the settlement hasn’t stopped the leak nor has it put any responsibility on Taylor Energy as the company ceases to exist. According to Greenpeace, the company’s only remaining full-time employee is William Pecue, the company president. But he said he can’t be legally held responsible for the continuous leak because it is an “[act of God](#).”

“I can affirmatively say that we do believe this was act of God under the legal definition,” Pecue said. “Defining why we believe this is an ‘act of God event’ gets into a legal definition that is not appropriate for today.”

The company “sold all its offshore leases and oil and gas interests in 2008,” according to Fuel Fix, and its founder, Patrick Taylor, died in 2004. The company is currently under the leadership of the founder’s widow, Phyllis Taylor, who is a philanthropist and political donor.

While Taylor Energy said it spent nearly \$480 million in an effort to stop the leak, the company is now suing the federal government over a frozen trust with \$432 million in it that the company said is reserved for leak response use. But “federal authorities rebuffed the company’s settlement overtures and ordered it to perform more work at the leak site,” Fuel Fix reported. The federal government said it is committed “to ensure Taylor Energy will work to permanently stop the ongoing oil spill” because there is “still more that can be done by Taylor to control and contain the oil.”