

INSPECTOR NOTE

Building: LOT 25 & 57
Street: HARBOUR ROAD
Suburb: HOUT BAY
Postal Code:
Date: 2022-07-13
Time: 16:45
Inspector: JON FRIEDMAN

Type: CASE DISCUSSION NOTE

Follow-Up Date:

Comments:

The COGH SPCA Wildlife Department was alerted to an oil spill at the Hout Bay Harbour on the morning of July 13, 2022. We contacted the HBSRC and offered our assistance with the clean-up and assessment of affected wildlife (two of our staff are formally trained in oiled wildlife response.)

HBSRC confirmed that they needed assistance as they had no materials or cleaning products to be able to treat oiled Wildlife.

Chief Inspector Jaco Pieterse responded first to assess the situation and later contacted the Wildlife team for assistance.

We contacted SANCCOB who also agreed to assist and to bring the necessary soaps and after-care products.

On arrival at the Centre, we observed a small-sized oil slick directly at the water frontage of the HBSRC. SpillTech were on site containing and removing the oil. We observed that two free-swimming Cape fur seal yearlings who had been rehabilitated and released into the harbour by HBSRC, and who had returned to the Centre that morning seeking food (as we were informed by HBSRC staff that they were accustomed to doing), had been oiled.

HBSRC staff members Abel and Amos were able to get the seal to come into the Centre by baiting them with food I. They were observed handling and stroking the seals at the centre, which is of concern as these are wild animals that should not be handled.

Together with a volunteer from SANCCOB, we were able to wash the oiled seals.

We were further concerned that the "pond" in which the young seals are allowed to swim in at the Centre was filthy and there was an oily film on the surface. We were informed that the reason for this is because the two seal pups that were covered in the oil swam in the water.

Apparently, the pump system for the pond had not been working for several months prior and there no electricity at the centre. We advised the manager Kim Krynauw who was present, that this water must be changed daily, and by hand if need be as it is problematic to allow sick and healthy animals to use the same dirty water. They agreed that the water will be drained and cleaned.

After helping to clean the interior of the centre we left. SANCCOB left them a 5litre bottle of de-oiling detergent for any further oiled animals, we left them a number of towels for drying and cleaning young seals as they had none available otherwise.

There were no sick, injured or dying/convulsing seals observed during our visit. Concern was again raised with Kim with regards to the wooden floor and that it is not hygienic. Kim informed us that they do not have funds to replace the flooring.

No APA contraventions found.