

**HURRICANE FLOYD: THE AFTERMATH**

Officials fly over waste spills as tracking begins

By **BRIAN FEAGANS**

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State and federal environmental regulators took to the air and ground Friday to track hog waste spills, leaks from industrial retention ponds and malfunctioning sewage plants.

But a complete analysis was slow coming, as field investigators couldn't get to the problem spots to measure the environmental impact.

A new hog waste spill was reported in Duplin County that involves "millions of gallons," said Ernie Seneca, a spokesman for the N.C. Division of Water Quality. The 2,035-head Batchelor Sow Farm, owned and operated by Murphy Family Farms, sent the waste into a tributary of the Northeast Cape Fear River.

Already of concern was the estimated 2.1 million gallons of hog waste working its way down Rockfish

Creek toward that river. As Hurricane Floyd passed, the waste broke through the earthen wall of an open-air lagoon at the Jesse Lanier Farm outside Rose Hill.

"We've had a number of farmers telling us they're in to their freeboard and asking us what to do," said Rick Shiver, head of the N.C. Division of Water Quality's Wilmington office. "Others are saying they can't even get to their lagoons because they're flooded."

Occidental Chemical was leaking waste that could contain oxygen-cating sludge from its Wilmington plant into wetlands adjacent to the North East Cape Fear, said Mr. Shiver, who

flew a Bell 407 helicopter over industrial facilities with an emergency team from the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Archers Daniel Midland plant outside Southport also appeared to be releasing wastewater from a retention pond around a pile of gypsum.

"In terms of their environmental damage, I don't think they're major concerns to us," he said.

All oil terminals appeared to have weathered the storm without leaks, he added.

Water Quality had no reports of major sewage releases around Wilmington, although many plants were inaccessible due to flooding, he said.