

Appendix F: Lead Letter



A health study for oil spill clean-up workers and volunteers

Participant Name
Participant Address 1
Participant Address 2
Participant City, State, ZIP

Date

Dear [Participant Name]:

In a couple of weeks, you will be called about a research study on the health of people involved with oil spill clean-up in the Gulf of Mexico. The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) is leading this research.

The study will include clean-up workers and others. We hope to learn about any health effects of the oil spill by comparing those who had oil spill exposures and those who did not. In all, about 55,000 people will be included.

You were selected because you worked in oil spill clean-up, took training, signed up to work, or were sent to the Gulf to help in some way. When you are called, we will tell you more about this important study and ask you to participate. If you do not want to be called, you can call the study center toll-free at 1-855-NIH-GULF (1-855-644-4853) in the next two weeks to let us know.

You will be asked to complete a 30 minute survey about what you did during the spill and about your health habits, and other jobs. The enclosed oil-spill calendar may help you get ready for the call. We will follow your health over the next 10 or more years using national, state and local records like death certificates and cancer registries.

You may also be asked to join the **Active Follow-up** part of this study. If you agree, we will send an examiner to your home to measure your height, weight, and blood pressure. The examiner will collect a blood and urine sample and collect some dust from your home. Depending on where you live, the examiner may measure lung function. You will then be contacted about every two years to answer questions about your health. If you are selected, you will receive a gift card worth \$45 for completing the home visit.

The telephone survey and the home visit are voluntary. Information you share will be kept private. If you complete the telephone survey you may choose not to do the home visit. It is up to you.

Your help is very important. The enclosed brochure gives more information about the study. You can also visit our website at <http://www.nihgulfstudy.org> or call us toll-free at 1-855-NIH-GULF (1-855-644-4853). We look forward to talking with you.

Sincerely yours,

NIEHS Principal Investigator

SRA Project Director