

Thieves Cause Oil Spill in Mexico Leaving 200,000 Without Water



Mexico City, April 15 (teleSUR-RHC)-- The Mexican southeastern state of Tabasco has implemented an emergency plan to provide potable water to capital *Villahermosa*, after an oil pipeline tapped by thieves polluted two rivers that supply water to the city of more than 200,000 people.

On Sunday the Mexican state-owned petroleum company, PEMEX, reported the spill in the rivers and warned authorities about the disaster. Local authorities placed restraint systems to control and prevent further spilling and the hydrocarbons absorption.

Villahermosa's mayor said these preventive actions have been taken until specialists deliver the damage report, but so far four water treatment plants have been closed and the city's residents are without water services. Given the shortage, the city has deployed 50 water-carrying tanker trucks and announced that the priority of supply are hospitals and schools. Authorities have also asked for help from the army to supply drinking water to those most affected.

According to local press, stealing the fuel, which includes gas condensate and refined oil as well as crude, is not hard and has become a common practice in Mexico. Some estimated put the losses from theft to PEMEX at more than \$1 billion per year. The state-owned company's profits account for a third of the federal government's budget.

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