



BP Oil Spill - The Sharks are Circling

By Jon Lewis

Well, it hasn't been long, but the oil sure hasn't prevented the sharks from circling. Law firms are moving fast to get the cases. They are aggressive, and they see green, and it's not algae. It's money and **BP**.

The problem is that the public is not so well versed at assessing the quality of legal services available for such claims. And, there are several claims involved. What claims? Personal injury claims. Property damage claims. Environmental claims. Products claims. Federal claims. Maritime claims. And more.

Do you want your attorney contacting you, or do you want to interview your attorney? There can be a lot of pressure brought on these potential injured parties: you have to move fast; we know what we are doing; we are representing numerous clients; etc. Literally, it's a feeding frenzy. The sharks see money, and lots of it. There are deep pockets and insurance involved.

What do we suggest? Talk to several attorneys. Ask questions such as:

- 1.) Have you handled a case like this before;
- 2.) Are you going to handle my case or refer it;
- 3.) How long have you been practicing;
- 4.) What experience do you have in maritime cases;
- 5.) What experience do you have in trying cases;
- 6.) What experience do you have in environmental cases;
- 7.) What experience do you have in products cases;
- 8.) What types of verdicts have you obtained;
- 9.) How do you plan on pursuing my case;
- 10.) Will this be a class action or mass tort type claim;
- 11.) How do those types of claims work;
- 12.) How will you finance my case;
- 13.) How much will my case cost;
- 14.) How will you coordinate your efforts with the other attorneys;
- 15.) Do you have experience in Longshoremen's cases;
- 16.) Is this a maritime or longshoreman's case;
- 17.) What jurisdiction will apply;
- 18.) Will I have to give a deposition and answer discovery;
- 19.) Will I have to travel;

These are just some suggested questions, but there could be many more. It's okay to employ an attorney who is pursuing these cases, but you should make sure that you and the attorney will work well together. When you hire an attorney, you become a team, and you want to work together so you can win.