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2001. Manufacture of the BOP (Blowout Preventer), a huge block of steel and valves that that holds the well pipe. The BOP has the ability to slice

through the pipe and seal the well. The BOP used by the Deepwater Horizon remains with the rig for the next nine years.

April 19, 2010. Halliburton completes pumping slurry down the borehole to seal in the pipe, approximately 19 hours before the accident. It is unknown whether

this might have any connection with the later accident. The \$600 million oil rig is Transocean's. BP leases it for some \$500,000 a day. Most of the 100+ people on the rig are Transocean's.

April 20. At around 10 p.m. (central time) a fire is reported on the rig. Eleven workers are killed. Apparently the BOP fails to function properly, although it allegedly had been tested successfully ten days earlier. The rig had been drilling 8,000 barrels of oil per day, and had 700,000 gallons of diesel fuel on board.

April 22. The Deepwater Horizon sinks.

April 23. The Coast Guard reports that no oil is leaking.

April 24: Coast Guard reverses its earlier statement that there was no oil leaking. Guard officials estimate 1,000 barrels of oil per day are coming out of the well head on the ocean floor, 5,000 feet below water.

April 26. BP says it is 'accelerating offshore oil recovery and continuing well control efforts.'

April 27 April 28, Late Wednesday, the Coast Guard announces that 5,000, not 1,000, barrels a day of oil are spilling, citing a new NOAA estimate.

May 3 The New York Times reports that new techniques are being tried to control the leak.. According to BP, the worst case scenario is that controlling the leak might take 2-3 months. 74-ton steel containment domes are being built and will be in the field within seven to eight days; the plan is to lower them on top of the leaking pipes.