



Re: Tar Balls 

Marcia K McNutt  Mark K Sogge

06/19/2010 10:58 AM

Mark -

I am really down for the count today with   
 So I am just going to lay down in the dark for a while. Also my iPhone died, so  
until I can get it fixed or get a new one call me on my 

Mark K Sogge

----- Original Message -----

**From:** Mark K Sogge  
**Sent:** 06/18/2010 07:24 PM EDT  
**To:** Victor Labson  
**Cc:** Marcia McNutt  
**Subject:** Re: Tar Balls

Great trivia! I had a physics professor who used a Volkswagen Beetle in at least one question on every test (including one on harmonic frequencies). Perhaps you can figure out how many "tar Volkswagens" we would need to account for....

Mark

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From: Victor F Labson/GD/USGS/DOI  
To: Marcia K McNutt/DO/USGS/DOI@USGS, Mark K Sogge/DO/USGS/DOI@USGS  
Date: 06/18/2010 06:18 PM  
Subject: Tar Balls

Just because I could, and the fact that I am tired of everything else I am doing, I engaged in a little tar ball trivia. Tar balls are to the spill much like dark matter is to the astrophysicist. We can't see them but we know they must be there. There are about 1400 tennis balls per bbl of weathered oil. To add 20,000 bbl of weathered oil to the mass balance requires a density of 0.0016 tennis ball sized tar balls per square meter of sea surface. Not a very high density but potentially a lot of "available" oil. This analysis assumes uniform density and a few other silly things, but you can see where it might go. We could do footballs, baseballs, basketballs, hockey pucks...

Vic