

Sea otters and fur seals do not have blubber under their skins. They have thick fur coats that trap pockets of warm air, which keeps them warm. If their coats become covered with oil, protection from the cold is lost. With no protection from the cold, animals may become chilled in the icy water and die.

Sea otters face a further problem. When they groom themselves, they can swallow the oil. The oil poisons their liver and kidneys, and sometimes the animals die.



Dolphins and whales can die when their blowholes become blocked with oil, making it impossible for them to breathe. Fumes from the oil can also damage their lungs, so they have difficulty getting enough air into their lungs when they dive.

