



For Immediate Release

March 31, 2020

Contact:

Ray Clarke, County Engineer

Talbot County Department of Public Works

(410) 770-8170

**SEWAGE SPILL WALES LANE AND MARYLAND ROUTE 33,
ST. MICHAELS, MARYLAND**

On Monday, March 30, 2020 at approximately 4:00 p.m., the Talbot County Sanitary District inspected a vault housing an air release valve that had water on the surface of the ground near the intersection of Wales Lane and Maryland Route 33 (St. Michaels Road). Upon inspection it was determined that the air release valve was cracked. This crack allowed raw sewage to be released onto the ground every time the pumps turned on at the Royal Oak Pump Station. This spill did not result in raw sewage being discharged to navigable or shellfish harvesting waters of the Miles River.

When the Talbot County Sanitary District found raw sewage on the ground, the pumps at the Royal Oak Pump Station were shutdown to allow CHT Excavating to replace the cracked air release valve with a new air release valve. With raw sewage discharged onto the ground, the Talbot County Sanitary District had CHT Excavation use a tanker truck to collect all the raw sewage in the ditch. In reviewing the pump records, 1,500 gallons of raw sewage was estimated to be discharged onto the ground and in the nearby ditch on the west side of Maryland Route 33 near Wales Lane.

In approximately 90 minutes, a new air release valve was installed with the raw sewage present in the ditch being vacuumed up by a tanker truck. Prior to leaving the site, the Talbot County Sanitary District spread lime over the ground to kill any pathogens that may have been present. The sewage spill was reported to the Maryland Department of the Environment around 6:00 pm on March 30, 2020.

The Talbot County Health Department's Office of Environmental Health assisted with the investigation of the discharge and determined that due to the amount of sewage and the distance to navigable waters there was low to minimal impact to public health and the environment. If the public has any questions regarding the public health determination they may contact Anne Morse, Director of Environmental Health at 410-770-6880 Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. or after hours by contacting the Talbot County Operations Center at 410-822-0095. The Operations Center will contact the Environmental Health Specialist on call. If the public has questions regarding the discharge or the corrective action that was taken they may contact Ray Clarke, County Engineer, at 410-770-8170.