



**For Immediate Release**

July 1, 2019

Contact:

Ray Clarke, County Engineer

Talbot County Department of Public Works

(410) 770-8170

**SEWAGE SPILL ON MARYLAND ROUTE 33 (ST. MICHAELS ROAD)  
AND MARYLAND ROUTE 329 (ROYAL OAK ROAD)**

On Saturday, June 29, 2019, the Talbot County Sanitary District responded to an emergency alarm and received a call that water was flowing from the Royal Oak Pump Station at the intersection of Maryland Routes 33 (St. Michaels Road) and 329 (Royal Oak Road). It was discovered that during the early morning hours, the pumps at the Royal Oak Pump Station overheated and shutdown. These pumps convey wastewater to the Region II (St. Michaels) Wastewater Treatment Plant.

About 12:30 p.m. on June 29, 2019, tanker trucks from Mr. Rooter and Tyler Contracting arrived at the pump station to pump the wet well down and to collect wastewater, most of which had spilled into the ditches. Approximately 225 feet of the roadway ditch along Maryland Route 33, and approximately 275 feet of the roadway ditch along Maryland Route 329 was filled with wastewater or showed signs of being wet. An estimated 7,100 gallons of untreated wastewater is believed to have been lost out of the pump station. From 12:30 p.m. to about 3:00 p.m., wastewater that collected in the ditches was pumped out. It is estimated that up to 3,000 gallons of wastewater either evaporated or saturated the soil in the ditches and could not be recovered.

It was determined that the force main was clogged by air that entered the force main during the repair made during the day before, thus preventing the pumps from conveying wastewater to the Region II Wastewater Treatment Plant. From June 29, 2019 to July 1, 2019, the wastewater entering the Royal Oak Pump Station was pumped and hauled to the Region II Wastewater Treatment Plant. In the early morning hours of July 1, 2019, the Talbot County Sanitary District worked to remove air from the force main through an existing air release valve near the Royal Oak Pump Station and a pressure cleanout about 450 feet north of the location where the repair was made on June 28, 2019.

In the afternoon of June 29, 2019 representatives from the Talbot County Office of Environmental Health conducted an investigation of the discharge of untreated wastewater and determined that there was no imminent public health threat found as a result of the discharge based on the fact that the wastewater did not reach surface waters, and that the Talbot County Sanitary District took immediate steps to abate the discharge and recover the wastewater from the site.

If the public has any questions regarding the public health determination they may contact the Office 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.