



**For Immediate Release**

May 17, 2019

Contact:

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**SEWAGE SPILL ON MARYLAND ROUTE 33 (ST. MICHAELS ROAD)**

On the morning of May 17, 2019, representatives from the Talbot County Sanitary District responded to a suspected force main leak just south of Blueberry Acres Road off of Maryland Route 33 (St. Michaels Road). The force main conveys wastewater from the Royal Oak Pump Station to the Region II (St. Michaels) Wastewater Treatment Plant. After hiring a contractor to excavate around the force main, the Talbot County Sanitary District learned that a crack was observed in an existing 45-degree elbow in the force main.

An estimate of between 6,000 and 9,000 gallons of untreated wastewater is believed to have been lost out of the collection system. The leak appears to have been caused by non-County related heavy equipment that was utilized to upgrade the power lines along Maryland Route 33. Due to the age of the force main and the pipe fittings, the bedding around the pipe and the moisture content of the soil, the weight of the equipment cracked the 45-degree fitting. The Talbot County Sanitary District repaired the cracked elbow and brought the force main back into operation during the afternoon hours of May 17, 2019.

Representatives from the Talbot County Office of Environmental Health as well as the Maryland Department of the Environment's Office of Inspection and Compliance conducted separate investigations of the discharge of untreated wastewater and determined that based upon the fact that the wastewater did not reach surface waters, and the fact that the Talbot County Sanitary District took immediate steps to abate the discharge and recover the wastewater from the site, there was no imminent public health threat found as a result of the discharge.

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.