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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 2, 2017

CITY CREWS ARE STILL PUMPING OUT AREA OF SEWER LEAK

Papoose Lift Station shut down to expedite repairs to sewer line in Muscatine

MUSCATINE, Iowa – The intersection of Day, Birch, and Nebraska Streets remains closed as crews are still working to pump out an excavated area where a sewer line leak was found earlier this week. Crews have been attempting to pump out the wastewater for the past several days and have shut down the Papoose Lift Station to help drain the line.

“We continue to SSO (sanitary sewer overflow) approximately three million gallons a day from the Papoose Lift Station to relieve pressure on the 30-inch force main where a sanitary leak is occurring,” Jon Koch, director of the Water Pollution Control Plant, said. “We are attempting to excavate in the area of the leak to determine if it is a private line connection or the force main itself. We are attempting to empty the line from the WPCP outfall to speed the process and hope to have the line exposed late today or early Friday. Once exposed we will have a better time line for repairs.”

No health hazards are expected from this discharge due to the limited use of the river in the affected area at this time.

Koch added that the City is not discharging into Briar's Ditch or the Muscatine Slough at this time and do not anticipate needing to do so for the remainder of this repair.

City staff continues to test the length of the discharge to identify how far reaching the wastewater contamination is.

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Crews switched pumping tactics on Wednesday to avoid discharging into Briar's ditch.

"We plan to use a sand point well to filter the water and then direct that water back into the sanitary sewer line running towards the Water Pollution Control Plant," Stineman said Wednesday. "That will take the sand out of the water which will allow us to push the water into the sanitary sewer line and stop the discharge into Briar's Ditch."

The Papoose Lift Station was turned off Tuesday to allow the force main to drain. The wet well and Papoose Tunnel filled during this time and began discharging into the Mississippi River late Tuesday.

Papoose Tunnel discharges upstream from the old boat landing along the Muscatine Riverfront. Water quality immediately downstream of this discharge may not meet State standards for fishing and swimming and contact should be avoided. The old boat landing was closed by the City Wednesday until repairs are completed and the lift station turned on.

The intersection at Day/Birch/Nebraska has been closed for emergency repairs to a sewer line. It is not known how long the intersection will be closed or when repairs will be completed.

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