

ALERT: Restrict Water Usage

Sediment Plugs Collapsed Sewer Line

Shifting sediment has greatly reduced the amount of sewage able to flow through the damaged sewer interceptor line along 15 Mile Road in Fraser. The Macomb County Office of Public Works is urging residents and businesses of the 11 communities served by the line to reduce the flow of water going down their drains.

This morning, engineers monitoring the sinkhole observed a marked decrease in the flow of sewage through the interceptor to an almost negligible amount. Further examination showed that the entire 11-foot diameter of the interceptor is now blocked and only seepage is continuing down the line.

The existing by-pass lines installed along the sinkhole route are only able to accommodate “dry weather” sewage flow. A rainfall as little as a quarter of an inch could cause an unavoidable release of sewage into the Clinton River. Disinfectant materials and booms are at the ready in an attempt to mitigate the environmental impact should such a release become necessary, but those efforts would not be able to fully eliminate the negative impacts to the river, which eventually flows into Lake St. Clair.

“I cannot stress enough – we have no capacity in the system for any additional sewage flow. The situation is dire and we are at the mercy of Mother Nature until we can get the temporary by-pass lines in place, which is still a month away from completion,” said Candice S. Miller, the Macomb County Public Works Commissioner. “We are working to avoid an environmental disaster.”

The sewer line is owned by the Macomb Interceptor Drain Drainage (MIDD) District, which in turn is made up of all or parts of 11 communities in central Macomb County: Fraser, Sterling Heights, Utica and New Haven and Chesterfield, Shelby, Clinton, Harrison, Lenox, Washington, and Macomb townships, plus Selfridge Air National Guard Base. Residents and businesses in those communities are strongly urged to take the following actions:

- Reduce the length of showers
- Only flush solids in the toilet
- Only run full wash loads
- Don't run the water while brushing teeth.
- Run full dishwasher loads only

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

Attached photo shows the sewage flow capacity in the sewer interceptor on Jan. 16, when a partial flow was still possible, and about noon today, when the interceptor line is completely plugged.

