

City of Thomaston

Office of City Manager

106 East Lee Street

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January 24, 2019

PRESS RELEASE – SEWER SPILL DAVIS LAKE ROAD AREA

The City of Thomaston shares your concerns. City crews are working diligently to identify the various scenarios which are impacting the City's sanitary-sewer infrastructure. The heavy rain events are causing intrusion and overburdening our piping systems leading to releases. In a matter of weeks, this particular section of our system has released twice as a result of heavy rains. In both situations, the Environmental Protection Division has been notified and is working with the City towards corrective action. The City is taking all appropriate samples around the spill area to ascertain any impacts to our waterways and environment.

This particular section of pipe is scheduled to be videoed and cleaned via high pressure jet on February 18th. The City does not own this specialized type of equipment and is beholden to contractors and their schedule. They were contacted immediately after the first release event and the city is in the process of running the required 1 mile of temporary water line to facilitate the cleaning. Engineers are studying the pipe's grade to determine capacities, crews will provide cleanup, and our goal is to leave the area in better condition than it was pre-release. City Crews have been on-site since 8:30 AM mitigating the issue.

In addition, the City cameras and cleans approximately 20% of our sewer system annually as preventative maintenance. Since 2016 the City has secured approximately \$9.5 million via loans and grants that are dedicated to improving storm water and sanitary sewer systems. Also, the City has dedicated 100% of its SPLOST proceeds from the 2011 and 2016 referendums for sewer improvements.

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Sewer spills are unfortunate and no citizen should encounter the effects of this type event. The reality is that the City of Thomaston has been under a consent order with the EPD since October of 2012 regarding our sewer system. Since that time, the City has spent millions trying to reduce sanitary sewer overflows and has greatly reduced the amount of spills we encounter on an annualized basis. The City experiences between 5 and 12 sewer spills annually. This number is less frequent than when we entered the consent order. All spills are reported to the state and displayed via the local newspaper, radio, and health department.

The City is making no excuse. We have issues and aged pipes. We are better situated than we were; we have funding to make greater improvements, but it's going to take time. Our sincere apologies to those impacted, and please continue to notify us in the event you witness a release. The quicker we are notified, the faster we can abate the issue.

Respectfully,



Russell Thompson
City Manager
City of Thomaston