



**CITY OF BURLINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

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INFORMATIONAL RELEASE
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Sewage from Sewer Force Main Break on Flynn Avenue Contained On-Site

At approximately 4 pm on August 1, 2017 a Department of Public Works (DPW) Water Resources Division employee called in an observation of sewage surfacing in the swale on the south side of Flynn Avenue just west of the driveway for 205 Flynn (Metalworks). The location and nature of the liquid indicated that the break was most likely on the cast-iron 6" sewer force main at that location. Force main sewers carry pumped sewage from areas of the City that are too low to flow via gravity to our Wastewater Treatment Plants.

Water Resources and Street Maintenance crews mobilized immediately to:

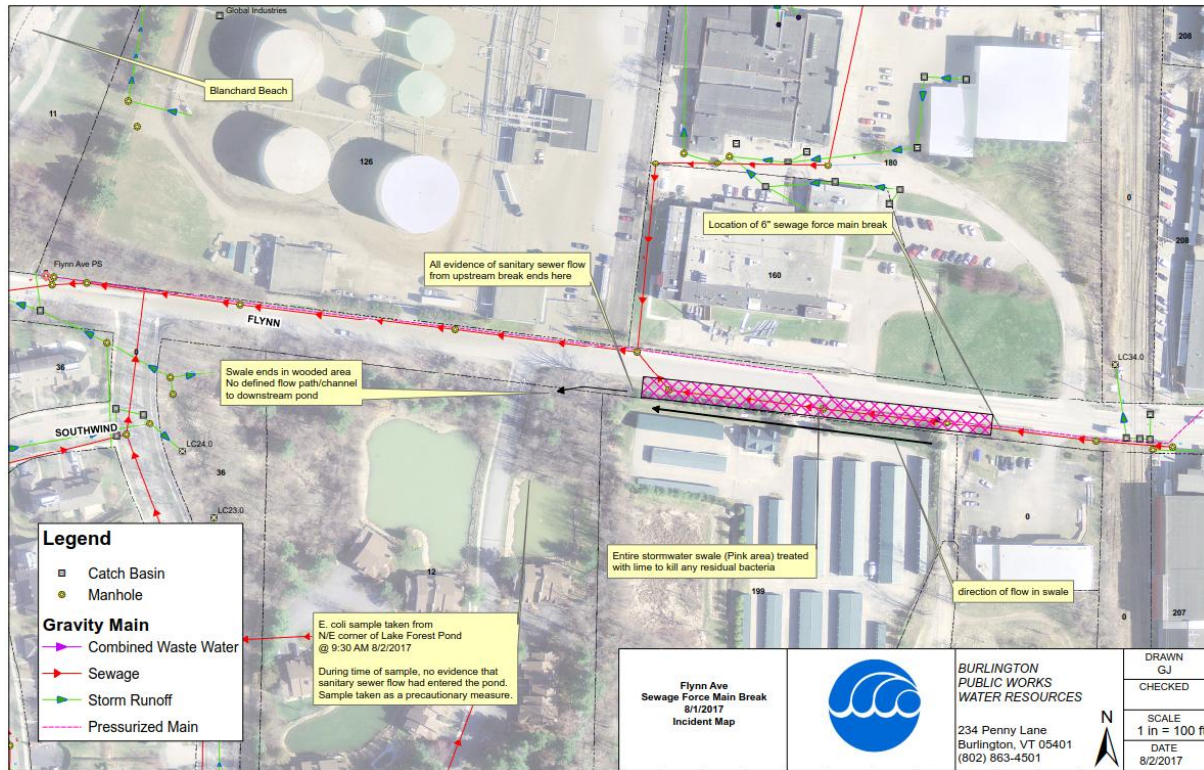
- confirm that there was no immediate risk of release of sewage to downstream surface water and Blanchard Beach
- contain the sewage in the swale using sandbags
- remove any liquid in the swale using our sewer vactor (vacuum) truck
- shut off the sewer pump station and mobilized the sewage pump truck to collect sewage draining to that station
- apply lime to raise the pH of any remaining liquid to kill bacteria from the sewage

Crews began digging and were able to pinpoint the break at approximately 8 pm. Due to the condition of the pipe, the initial repairs led to additional breaks, with the final repair being completed today (Wednesday) at approximately 12 noon.

Since the notification yesterday afternoon, DPW and Parks, Recreation & Waterfront staff have been monitoring and evaluating any potential risks to downstream surface waters including Blanchard Beach. Additionally, the City has been in contact with the Vermont Department of Conservation (DEC) to confirm that a beach closure is not warranted given the overwhelming body of evidence that there has been no release to surface waters.

Staff have confirmed that, based on the surrounding topography, the swale that contained the sewage does not directly connect or flow to any downstream surface waters. City staff will be

applying a non-toxic dye to the swale and will be monitoring the site during this afternoon's forecasted and future thunderstorms to confirm these observations.



As an additional precaution, extra beach sampling at Blanchard was performed this morning and regular Thursday beach sampling will occur tomorrow. Result turn-around time is approximately 24 hours. Depending on the intensity of this afternoon's rains, please be aware that *E. coli* bacteria (a fecal indicator) unrelated to this sewage spill may be detected, as Stormwater can and does mobilize other sources of *E. coli* such as pet waste or feces from wildlife.

If there is any indication of a change in the level of risk to surface waters from the force main break, the need for a downstream beach closure will be re-evaluated in partnership with DEC. Any change in the City's assessment of this incident will be posted on the beach, on social media, on the DPW home page <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/DPW> and on the Parks' Water Quality Notice page <https://enjoyburlington.com/resources/water-quality-public-notice/>.

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