

# **BURLINGTON DPW UPDATE: SEWER BREAK RESPONSE + NNE WASTEWATER CONSERVATION REQUEST**

---

## **Immediate Release**

**Contact: Rob Goulding, DPW Public Information Manager,**

**[RGoulding@burlingtonvt.gov](mailto:RGoulding@burlingtonvt.gov)**

**July 13, 2023**

**Burlington, VT** - On July 12th, DPW Water Resources staff discovered a break underneath the Winooski River at North Plant. We immediately mobilized to prevent as much untreated flow as possible from entering the Winooski. Visit <http://burlingtonvt.gov/water/winooskibreakjuly12> for an ongoing incident response page and more details.

We are working urgently on our response and repair plans. We also now need your help to conserve wastewater flows into our wastewater system in the New North End. This request is only applicable to a subset of NNE residents, and you can find out if this request applies to you at the link above or map below.

In an effort to support the emergency mitigation efforts we are asking customers in the Priority area of the North Plant Sewer System to reduce the amount of water/waste that is reaching the sewer system via their drains (sinks, showers, clothes and dishwashers) and toilets. See overall North Plant Map at the above URL to determine if your address is affected, and the conservation request guidelines below .

## **OUR RESPONSE: REMOVING, RE-PIPING AND REPAIRING**

- Our first phase of leak mitigation involves using sewage pumping/hauling trucks (4000 gallons each) to intercept and haul as much sewage as possible to prevent it from entering the river. We are working to start this pump and haul as early as tonight (Thursday July 13) with our own truck and then switch to a contractor and increase our hauling capacity with a second truck before the end of the day Friday (July 14).

- Our second and more robust phase of leak mitigation involves constructing a bypass piping system over a significant distance to be able to handle all of the flow that usually goes through this river crossing and safely convey it to North Plant for treatment. (See map for interception location and North Plant location). Because collection systems are built to handle the flows from the immediate area they serve, the bypass pipe and pumping systems needs to cover a significant distance so as to not overwhelm other pipes in the system.

- Simultaneously we are also advancing work for both a short term and long term repair of the pipe in the river. These details are being worked on and will also be available at the above URL.

### **CONSERVATION REQUEST**

Because both of the pumping options are volume & flow rate constrained (the truck hauling more so than the bypass pumping) it is important that customers reduce the amount of water/waste that goes down the drain systems or toilets until future notice (likely up to 2 weeks), especially during peak usage hours (6 – 8 am, and 6 – 8 pm).

This includes but is not limited to:

- Limit toilet flushing, when possible.
- Running dishwashers and washers only with full loads.
- Taking short showers and limiting bath tub use.
- Turn off faucet when brushing teeth or washing hands.
- Disconnecting sump pumps from discharging to the sewer system and running the discharge pipe onto your lawn (this is a best practice always)

Remember that this conservation notice is driven by limitations on the wastewater system and NOT the water system.



## WHAT ELSE TO KNOW

- Pay attention to all signage and instructions from local officials. At this time, the North Lake Access Areas in Burlington within 1 mile of this incident are closed to swimming.
- We are aware that Colchester has signed certain access areas, as well.
- Burlington's Access Areas will remain closed up to 48 hours after the untreated flows stop.
- Check <http://enjoyburlington.com> for further information on Burlington's public beaches which are tested for bacteria regularly.
- Sign up for VT-Alert at <http://burlingtonvt.gov/btv-alerts>.



## CONTACT US:

Email [water-resources@burlingtonvt.gov](mailto:water-resources@burlingtonvt.gov) with questions (expect a reply within 1 business day). For urgent questions, please call 802-863-4501.