



CITY OF BLUE SPRINGS, MISSOURI MEDIA ALERT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Vandalism leads to sanitary sewer overflow

Blue Springs, Mo. – On Saturday, June 26 at 7 p.m. the Blue Springs Police dispatch was notified of a manhole overflowing in the woods behind 2909 NW Hunter Drive. Blue Springs Public Works crews responded and discovered the manhole was full of debris resulting in the overflow of sanitary sewer waters into a near by creek.

Vandals removed the manhole cover, threw it into the creek and filled the manhole with debris, causing the overflow. Public Works crews found a 21-inch television, plastic birdbath, rocks, sticks, bricks and an 8-foot log in the manhole, which created a major obstruction to the 12-inch sewer main. As a result of the blockage, an estimated 85 percent of the flow was diverted into the creek. The debris was removed and flow returned to the system by 8:30 p.m., Saturday night.

Public Works crews cannot ascertain when the debris was placed or how long the overflow occurred so there is no way to calculate the total spillage at this time. The outflow was estimated at 250-300 gallons per minute.

The City of Blue Springs is coordinating its clean up efforts with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources sent a representative out Saturday night to meet with the crew and investigate. The representative took information for his report and suggested locations for sign placement marking the water contaminated and not safe for swimming or fishing. The signs are expected be needed for approximately five days.

The City of Blue Springs Public Works Department setup a pump system to recapture some of the overflow in the creek and place it back into the sewer system. Crews setup a pump 350-feet down stream, pumping water out of the stream for three hours at a rate of 400-gallons per minute, which was all of the flow in the creek. This action was approved by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

Assistant Director of Public Works Chris Sandie said, "The only way to effectively confront these violations and maintain an efficient sewer system is to have city residents help identify and report problems or suspicious activity whenever they arise. A quick response will help resolve these problems before they spiral into bigger and more costly repairs."

Residents can help by reporting unauthorized uncovering of sewer manholes, disposal of materials into manholes or drainage, vandalism of manholes, overflow or spills, and strong sewage odor in or around sewer lines.

It is against the law for any unauthorized person to open, enter or dispose of anything into a sewer manhole. Only city sewer maintenance crews are authorized to open city sewer manholes. Other agency personnel have authority to open their respective manholes, and will be in uniform or in agency marked trucks when servicing their manholes.

The Blue Springs Police Department is investigating this case of vandalism. If you have any information on this case or to report vandalism, suspicious activity around manholes, or spills and strong sewage odors, contact (816) 228-0195 during regular business hours or (816) 228-0150 after hours.

For additional information, contact Chris Sandie, assistant director of Public Works at (816) 228-0195.

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