



**For Immediate Release
January 24, 2023**

Contact: Ray Clarke, County Engineer
Talbot County Department of Public Works
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Sewage Discharge to Drainage Ditch along Maryland Route 33 located across the intersection of Maryland Route 33 (St. Michaels Road) and Fox Harbour Lane near St. Michaels.

On Monday, January 23, 2023, at approximately 8:30 a.m., the Talbot County Sanitary District (Sanitary District) was alerted to a possible sanitary sewer discharge into a drainage ditch in the vicinity of the intersection of St. Michaels Road and Blueberry Acres. Staff from the Sanitary District investigated the area of the alleged discharge but found no evidence of the presence of sewage in the drainage ditch.

On January 24, 2023 at approximately 7:30 a.m. personnel from the Sanitary District observed evidence of a possible sanitary sewer discharge in the drainage ditch along St. Michaels Road across from the intersection of Fox Harbour Lane. Upon further investigation, the staff confirmed the wastewater discharge and immediately contacted CHT Excavating, a licensed liquid wastewater hauler, to provide assistance with the cleanup of the untreated wastewater. Brummell's Septic Service, another licensed liquid wastewater hauler, was also contacted to provide assistance to manage the wastewater flows from the Royal Oak Pump station which is located at the corner of Maryland Route 329 and St. Michaels Road. Staff estimated that approximately 3,000 gallons of untreated wastewater was discharged from the sanitary sewer force main into the roadside drainage ditch due to a faulty coupling located at a pressure clean-out. The area in the vicinity of the faulty coupling was excavated, the coupling was replaced, and the impacted area within the drainage ditch and the vicinity of a nearby culvert was stabilized with lime.

The sewage discharge was immediately reported to the Maryland Department of the Environment and the Talbot County Health Department's Office of Environmental Health. Several representatives from the Office of Environmental Health visited the site and confirmed the discharge of sewage from the sanitary sewer force main to the roadside drainage ditch. Wastewater was also observed crossing under St. Michaels Road through a culvert pipe that was connected to a drainage way. It was determined that the untreated sewage would need to travel approximately 600 feet to reach the navigable waters of the State. Based on the distance to the navigable waters, as well as the relatively low volume of the reported discharge, it was determined that there was low to minimal impact to public health and the environment.

If the public has any questions regarding the public health determination they may contact Anne Morse, Director of Environmental Health at 410-770-6880 Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. or after hours by contacting the Talbot County Operations Center at 410-822- 0095. The Operations Center will contact the Environmental Health Specialist on call. If the public has questions regarding the discharge or the corrective action that was taken, they may contact Ray Clarke, County Engineer, at 410-770-8170.