

Date: Fri, 16 Jun 2006 16:51:47 -0400
From: "Michael Bonk"
To: "Chris Phipps"
"Juliet Page"
Cc: "Cathy Vitale" ,
"Kerry Topovski" ,
"Ronald Bowen" ,
"Keith Tate"
Subject: Re: Stinky Mill Creek

Ms. Page and others: This is to confirm that there have been no sewage leaks or spills in the area of Mill Creek Pumping station known or reported during the time period.

Michael P. Bonk P.E.
Deputy Director
Bureau of Utility Operations
Department of Public Works
410-222-7520

>>> Chris Phipps 6/16/2006 4:36 PM >>>

Ms. Page,

By copy, I ask that our Bureau of Utilities Operations respond to your inquiry about any potential leaks at the station. I am not aware of any such incident at this time, or over the last two weeks, but will provide an official confirmation of status via Operations.

Regarding the source of the bacteria counts, we do not have enough information to identify its source. DPW contracted BayLand Consultants to work with scientists in the Magothy River Association (which includes Sally Horner) to monitor chemical, physical and biological conditions in Mill Creek until one year after the pump station failure in December 2005. The Scientific Review Committee (SRC) recommended monitoring Dividing Creek as a reference because of its similarities to Mill Creek and similar position in the landscape. BayLand and the SRC developed protocols to assess sediment and bottom conditions and will continue to monitor water quality until December 2006. Water samples are being taken along Mill Creek tributaries above and below the pumping station and in Dividing Creek tributaries. One objective of this program is to help ensure there are no ongoing sources of bacteria from the pump station or from possible residual contamination following the cleanup around the pump station. BayLand has expanded monitoring to include a spring survey of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) in both waterways in order to expand our understanding of these waterway's health and to better judge the recovery of Mill Creek. Another SAV survey is scheduled for later this summer. The Mill Creek recovery monitoring program is new and has collected only a limited amount of data, some of which include levels of bacteria in Mill Creek above and below the pumping station and levels in both creeks following rainfall. It is still premature to draw conclusions on the sources of bacteria, the recovery of Mill Creek, or whether the December 2005 spill influences the present health of Mill Creek. I would like to have our consultant contact you directly and go over the details of our monitoring and what we have measured to date.

The Health Department will continue to take independent weekly readings and to provide timely advisories based on those readings. We will also continue to forward any responses to our advisories to the Department of Public Works for their consideration for the Mill Creek Recovery Monitoring.

Thanks, Chris.

>>> Juliet Page <juliet@julietpage.com> 6/16/2006 11:36:23 AM >>>
Mr. Phipps,

Has anyone from the DPW been out to check in the past 2 weeks whether infact there is a new leak from the Mill Creek Pumping station? If so when and what did they discover?

I don't know if you're aware of the recent Mill Creek River closure, but the information has been posted on the county website <http://aahealth.org/news.asp?id=94>. At the time the explantion was given by Gail Smith as "Many factors such as tidal action and stagnant water can cause high test results."

The bacterial counts at Haskell drive (the monitoring location closest to the headwaters of Mill Creek) have exploded since the measurements the week before. At the monitoring sites further downstream the counts have gone up by a few hundred parts per million, while at the Haskell location (closest to the sewage spill location) the counts have gone up by over 1300 parts per million!

Sally Horner, in an e-mail to our community group on 6/8 stated: "I see 2 possible scenarios for elevated bacterial counts in the headwaters of Mill Creek. 1. There is a new undetected leak that introduced the bacteria. This would be the best scenario for the creek because it would mean that bacterial numbers will drop as soon as the leak is detected and repaired. or 2. There is not a new leak but rather the organic matter in the sediments and the warm water permitted a few bacteria (that may have been introduced by domestic or wild animals) to reproduce. This latter

scenario is problematic because it would lead us to predict that we'll have this problem recurrently all summer long."

Sincerely,
Juliet Page,
Homeowner on nasty, bacterial filled, hazardous to your health, Mill Creek