

City of
Fitchburg



Department of
Public Works

February 16, 2022

COMMISSIONER

301 Broad Street
978-829-1910
978-345-9687 FAX

U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 1
5 Post Office Square, Suite 100
Mail code OES04-04
Boston, Massachusetts 02109-3912
Attn: Beth Kudarauskas

Massachusetts D.E.P., CERO
8 New Bond Street
Worcester, MA 01606
Attn: David Boyer

STREETS & PARKS

301 Broad Street
978-829-1900
978-345-9687 FAX

Re: SSO and Dry-Weather CSO Compliance Report

Dear Messrs. Handler and Boyer:

In accordance with the City of Fitchburg's Consent Decree, Paragraph 71, this letter is to serve as the 2021 Compliance Report. In this report we are covering the period from February 1, 2021 to January 31, 2022. It includes a list of sanitary sewer overflows (SSO's) and dry-weather combined sewer overflows (CSO's). A map is provided displaying the locations of all events. A list is provided of private property sewer backups that sought City assistance. Finally, a brief explanation will be provided on how the City expects to meet its water quality-based CSO compliance obligations.

WASTEWATER

166 Boulder Drive, Suite 108
978-345-9622
978-345-9623 FAX

SEWER COLLECTION

301 Broad Street
978-829-1900
978-345-9687 FAX

List of SSO's

The City experienced eight (8) sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) in the reporting period that were the result of issues with the municipally owned sewer system. All SSO's were reported to the MassDEP and EPA, and a Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO)/Bypass Notification Form was submitted.

WATER

1200 Rindge Road
978-345-9616
978-345-9555 FAX

Table 1 (attached), and the attached map includes all SSOs. A brief description of each event is as follows:

- 1) **9 Harrison Avenue, 2/3/21** - The city was notified of a homeowner backing up in their basement. The City responded and jetted the line, removing rags and some minor roots. To reduce the risk of SSOs in this pipe segment, the City cleaned and CCTV'd the pipe. Approximately 3 gallons of sewerage discharged to the basement of the dwelling. This area has been added to the City's problem area check list.
- 2) **34 Ash Street, 2/11/21** - A sewer manhole in this area was discovered to have leaked about 15 gallons into the snow surrounding it. The City responded by vacuuming the manhole and jetting the line, removing roots. This area has been added to the City's problem area check list.

ENGINEERING

301 Broad Street
978-829-1917
978-345-9687 FAX

CEMETERIES

115 Mount Elam Road
978-345-9578
978-345-9686 FAX

- 3) **147 Water Street, 2/18/21** – A sewer manhole was discovered to have overflowed about 4,500 gallons of sewage into a nearby catch basin. After jetting and CCTV of the line the City discovered the pipe to be collapsed. Two spot repairs were made including a cure-in-place liner. Upstream sewer flow was later routed away from this location as part of the CSO-039 project.
- 4) **8 George Street, 3/1/21**– The City responded to a call about sewerage backing up into a basement. Upon response, the City jetted the line and relieved a blockage. The blockage appears to have been caused by a sag in the pipe along with heavy rag build-up. Approximately 150 gallons were discharged to the basement of the residence. The City will be replacing the pipe segment to remove the sag, depending on left-over available funding from the on-going CSO-039 project.
- 5) **317 Kimball Street, 6/26/21** – The City responded to a call about sewerage overflowing from a catch basin. Upon response, the City jetted the line and relieved a blockage of roots. The area was then washed down with water from the vacuum truck and the catch basin was cleaned of sewerage and road grit. Approximately 5,000 gallons were discharged. Root killer will be added as a periodic maintenance task.
- 6) **569 Main Street, 7/19/21**– The City was called to reports of sewer backing up into the building basement. The backup was caused by a heavy rain event. This property has a history of backup issues during rain events. This will be corrected with the “downtown” separation project in a few years. Approximately 5,000 gallons are estimated to have spilled into the building basement.
- 7) **First Street at Railroad Street River Manhole, 7/19/21** – Shortly after a rain event the City noticed this manhole cover to be dislodged. Though an SSO was not witnessed we assumed one occurred due to ragging on the manhole steps and the dislodged cover. We will replace the existing “tabbed” locking frame cover with a more heavy-duty bolted frame and cover. Because an SSO wasn’t witnessed no estimate of discharge could be made.
- 8) **605 Franklin Road, 7/22/21** – The City was called to investigate sewerage pooling on the ground along a sewer easement. The main line was jetted and a blockage was removed. Lyme was spread on the ground in the affected area. Approximately 150 gallons are estimated to have puddled and infiltrated into the ground. Spot repairs were made on this line to reduce the chances of future SSOs.

List of Dry-Weather CSO Events

The City experienced no dry weather CSOs in the reporting period that were the result of issues with its municipally owned system.

List of Private Property Backups

The City uses "SeeClickFix" to monitor private property sewer backups. SeeClickFix is a web-based software which allows the City, or constituents to enter and track sewer issues. To date, the system has been well received by both residents and City personnel. Table 3 contains a list from the SeeClickFix system for private homeowner, or non-SSO related issues. Homeowners are responsible for calling a plumber to clear blockages or infrastructure failures within the privately owned sewer service, or within the building plumbing.

Qualifying statement to meet water quality obligations.

In the reporting year, the City neared completion of its Sewer System Evaluation Study, (SSES) Phase IV. Phase IV includes complete multi-sensor inspection of the City's trunk sewer. During the reporting year, the City also hired a contractor to clean five double barrels siphons in the City, 3 of which are on the trunk sewer near the WWTF. Additional heavy cleaning will was also conducted at specific locations of the trunk sewer and large diameter sewers throughout the City. The City also separated 22 combination manholes during the reporting year, and will be separating additional combination manholes in the coming year using a combination of in-house and outside forces.

Within the reporting period, the City began construction of the CSO-7, 11, 39, and 48 Sewer Separation project. In addition to closing four CSO regulators, the City expects to permanently separate approximately 17 combination manholes within this project. The project is started in November 2020, with work continuing throughout the winter months on combination manhole separation and pipe lining.

We will continue to make strong efforts in the next reporting period to improve water quality to the Nashua River.

If you have any questions regarding this compliance report, please contact Fitchburg Civil Engineer, Jeff Hillman, P.E., at 978-829-1916, or the undersigned.

Very Truly Yours,



Mark McNamara
Fitchburg DPW Interim Deputy Commissioner of Wastewater

Attachments

Electronic & Hard Copy: Beth Kudarauskas, USEPA, Region 1 Office
David Boyer, P.E., MassDEP, Central Region Office

Electronic copy:
(Transmittal letter only)

Chief, Environmental Enforcement Section, DOJ
Anu Balakrishna, Assistant U.S. Attorney
Jeff Kopf, Senior Enforcement Counsel, EPA Region 1
Louis Dundin, Assistant Attorney General, Massachusetts AG
Vincent Pusateri, II, Fitchburg City Solicitor

Electronic copy:

Nicholas Erickson, P.E., Fitchburg Commissioner of Public Works
Jeff Hillman, P.E., Fitchburg Civil engineer

"I certify under penalty of law that this document and all attachments were prepared under my direction or supervision in accordance with a system designed to assure that qualified personnel properly gather and evaluate the information submitted. Based on my inquiry of the person or persons who manage the system, or those persons directly responsible for gathering the information, the information submitted is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true, accurate and complete. I am aware that there are significant penalties for submitting false information, including the possibility of fine and imprisonment for knowing violations."

Mark McNamara.

DPW Interim Deputy Commissioner of Wastewater

Table 1 - SSO Events (February 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021)

Date	Address	Time Discovered	Time Stopped	(gal)	Location of Discharge	Receiving Waterbody	Volume to Receiving Waterbody (gal)	Specific Cause of Event	Blockage?	Hydraulic Limitations?	Measures Taken to Stop Event	Last Release from this Area
3/2/2020	133 Bel Air Drive	1:00 PM	2:00 PM	3	Backup into property basement	None	0	Sewer system blockage	Yes	No	Jetted line three times and removed blockage. Will add manhole to problem check list.	N/A
3/11/2020	228 Plymouth Street	3:10 PM	3:30 PM	30	Sanitary sewer manhole	North Nashua River	30	Sewer system blockage	Yes	No	Removed rags from pipe along with black water indicating blockage has been forming for quite some time.	N/A
4/14/2020	31 Gillis Court	1:15 PM	2:00 PM	150	Backup into property basement	None	0	Sewer system blockage	Yes	No	Removed rags from pipe along with black grease. Also raised manhole for better access.	N/A
5/15/2020	28 Phillips Avenue	11:00 AM	12:00 PM	20	Backup into property basement	None	0	Sewer system blockage	Yes	No	Jetted line and removed blockage of rags	N/A
6/15/2020	43 Patton Street	3:31 PM	3:30 PM	25	Backup into property basement	None	0	Pipe collapse	Yes	No	Jetted line removed blockage, conducted repair on damaged section of pipe	N/A
10/28/2020	47 Arlington Street	11:30 AM	12:30 PM	75	Backup into property basement	None	0	Sewer system blockage	Yes	No	Jetted line and removed blockage, full brick found in invert from corbel. Repaired manhole frame and cover.	N/A
11/18/2020	50 Laurel Street	11:00 AM	12:30 PM	8,000	Bubbled out of ground	None	0	Pipe collapse	Yes	No	Replaced 80 feet of pipe with new PVC.	N/A
11/14/2020	480 Ashburnham Street	8:30 AM	9:00 AM	2,000	Catch basin	None	0	Sewer system blockage	Yes	No	Jetted line and relieved blockage	N/A
1/13/2021	17 Eureka Street	5:30 PM	8:00 AM	200	Backup into property basement	None	0	Sewer system blockage	Yes	No	Jetted line and relieved blockage	N/A
1/15/2021	634 Ashby State Road	10:00 AM	11:00 AM	200	Sanitary sewer manhole	None	0	Pipe collapse	Yes	No	Repaired leaking forcemain clean out.	N/A
1/25/2021	551 Electric Avenue	4:30 PM	6:30 PM	2,000	Backup into property basement	None	0	Sewer system blockage	Yes	No	Jetted line, relieved blockage and CCTV'd line	N/A
1/28/2021	500 Beach Street	2:30 PM	3:00 PM	8,000	Backup into property basement	None	0	Sewer system blockage	Yes	No	Obstruction removed from main line	N/A

Table 2 - Dry Weather CSO Events (February 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021)

Date	Address	Time Discovered	Time Stopped	Discharge (gal)	Location of Discharge	Receiving Water Body	Volume (gal)	Specific Cause of Event	Blockage?	Hydraulic Limitations?	Measures Taken to Stop Event	Last Release from this Area
No Dry Weather CSO Events occurred during the reporting period												

Table 3 - Private SSO Events & Service Call Log (February 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021)

Date	Address	Nature of Call	Findings
03/01/2020	18 Matthew St	Smell like rotten eggs that keeps coming and going in backyard over last week. Already had Unifit come out and they said it wasn't a gas leak... thinking maybe sewer gas but no pipes in the backyard where the odor is so maybe from Hancock street?	Someone did come out to check. Not sure if they discovered the source or not (the odor was not present at the time they came to check). But perhaps they did find the source and fixed it because there hasn't been a recurrence of the odor since then.
3/20/2020	152 South St	Sewage spill seeping from wall down side walk smells very bad, between 142 and 152 South St.	Leaking Lateral. Homeowner issue.
4/21/2020	64 Hope St	cracked cover	Carl responded and replaced cracked cover.
4/21/2020	100 Elm St	back up in basement toilets	tony responded, opened up all manholes on Elm, Wallace, and Grove. Everything flowing as it should. A little bit of drain back up in drain line on grove, but looks like just standing water.
4/21/2021	96 Bel Air Dr	back up at house when running water	carl responded, main line flowing fine. Tony told homeowner that we would alert here if it was a city issue, but she should call a plumber
5/1/2020	52 Ward St	manhole in back yard near end of driveway is surcharging	private MH in back yard serves 25 Central Ave, and we also determined via dye test and CCTV that 42 Central Ave ties in just downstream of the MH at a wye. We cleared the roots out of the MH, added root killer, and gave some root killer to the resident to keep the roots at bay
5/15/2020	66 Railroad St	tub and toilet backing up	ray jetted line with eddie, took out some rags and grease. Homeowner said it fixed the issue. She called back again on 5/18/20, said it backed up again. Carl and Eddie went over and jetted line twice. Said everything is flowing fine. Tony looked at old video, shows the lateral packed with roots. Advised homeowner and dropped off some root killer to her to see if that would help.
5/21/2020	34 Berkley St	backing up, plumber TV'd line and found that lateral pipe had collapsed	tony told homeowner to file claim, but I said there is no guarantee he will be reimbursed. He believes it occurred because of paving/pulverizing in the area by PJ Albert.
6/3/2020	12 Airport Rd	noticed driving to work every morning horrible odor coming from nash in the area by bemis rd right after intersection. actually made me wretch this morning. smells like raw sewage	Smell has dissipated. Likely came from trunk sewer off-gassing through covers.
6/8/2020	55 Jeanette St	broken cover reported by unifit	ray replaced cover
6/26/2020	41 Greenhurst Ave	pump alarm on e-one keeps going off	tony and ken responded, found alarm panel going off in basement. told homeowner to call FR Mahoney for service on e-one. gravity manhole near intersection with wanocnoc flowing fine.
6/26/2020	583 Ashburnham St	homeowner had his lateral cleaned, said something is in main line that might be cause of his back up.	bob and eddie responded, jetted line and said seems to be flowing better, but didn't see a "license plate" as the caller reported at the end of his lateral. Might have been a homeowner issue, or a city issue. hard to say.
7/2/2020	460 Clarendon St	Unifit Gas damaged a lateral putting in a new gas line	Tony responded, Unifit repaired broken lateral with 6" PVC, existing lateral is 5" clay. Appeared to still be active. One end they just mortared up the joint since that was how it was originally with concrete just poured around the bell.
6/22/2020	5 Linden St	back up in basement when using laundry	Bob and Kevin responded, said main line flowing fine. No one home to answer. Tony called her back and said she has to call a plumber.
7/13/2020	348 Cathy St	snaked out 50-feet, backing up still	ray and eddie responded. Jetted line, everything flowing fine. Appears that homeowner did not snake far enough to clear lateral.
7/20/2020	172-174 Townsend Street	Rattling manhole cover at the beginning of Townsend Street (around #167)	Put butyl around cover
9/23/2020	275 Franklin Rd	backing up, roots in main line	Tony talked to homeowner on 9/25 and checked main line, told him it could be roots in lateral. He thought unifit broke it, so unifit is coming by to CCTV. Unifit's trench was not on the right side of the road to impact his lateral. Likely roots. owner said it's orangeburg pipe.
10/6/2020	46 Mt Globe St	sewerage coming out of wall in front of house, and from a clean out in front of front porch. Feces were witnessed	Told Health Department that homeowner needs to clear lateral.
10/5/2020	55 Central St	back up	Ray responded, main line flowing fine
11/3/2020	36 Ronald St	basement backup	tony responded, found that an open clean out in basement was letting sewerage in. Also a drain channel around the basement floor that lead to the clean out, which likely carried groundwater which is why it was worse when it rained. city sewer was flowing fine, told homeowner to call a plumber

Table 3 - Private SSO Events & Service Call Log (February 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021)

Date	Address	Nature of Call	Findings
11/2/2020	510 Franklin Rd	snaked out 100 feet - still backing up, unitil dug in road in front of house	tony responded, main line flowing fine. Does not look like Unitil dug in location of lateral according to record plan. Called Unitil, they were going to visit home. Told homeowner they should snake line further as lateral is almost 120 feet long.
11/12/2020	132 Appleton Cir	back up at house, running slow	Tony responded, sewer flowing fine. checked mh in backyard. told homeowner to snake out line
11/12/2020	30 Rockland St	manhole cover missing	replaced manhole frame and cover
12/7/2020	86 Harrison Ave	back up at house, snaked out, pipe seems collapse	Homeowner had contractor repair lateral
12/7/2020	137 Appleton Cir	back up	Tony found old jet line in lateral. Told homeowner she likely has roots, need to clear it out
12/10/2020	175 Marshall Rd	Sewer smells. We've been experiencing this on and off since we moved in 2018. We had a minor back up issue on Sat when it snowed.	Ray responded. Everything appears to be flowing fine. May come from Hollis Hills Farm
12/17/2020	139 Parson Circle	back up, coming out of vent under porch	lateral ties into neighbor's lateral. Neighbor lined lateral and didn't reinstate line from 139. Tandem construction dug lateral and re-instated it.
1/10/2020	331-499 Nichols Rd	Back up in lateral	Home owner had a back up, and needed to know if they were responsible for the issue. Home owner was notified that they were responsible and advised to call plumber.
1/4/2021	15 Brigham Street	back up in bathroom, both units of duplex	home states when using shower, it backs up. Adjoining unit also backing up. Checked upstream and downstream MHs, flowing fine. Homeowner issue, need to call plumber.
12/25/2020	29 Westminster Street	Sewer in basement	Checked flow in street. Home owner issue
12/27/2020	175 Walton Street	Water trickling in basement	Basement flooded. checked sewer main in street/ flowing fine. Talked to home owner, ground water coming in through open pipe.
12/7/2020	45 Pepper Road	water in basement	Homeowner has groundwater in basement. Looks like yard work in back may have covered perimeter drain and prevented it from draining.
12/5/2020	120 Marshall St	Building backing up	Advised to have plumber snake the line and call back if back up continues.
11/3/2020	65 Mount Vernon Street	back up	Checked manholes in back of houses. Home owner issue
11/4/2020	158 Green St	Sewer coming out of sidewalk	Checked manholes - Home owner issue
11/10/2020	33 Payson Street	sewer backup at house	Checked manholes - Street flowing, homeowner issue
10/30/2020	81 Amiot Street	backup	Jetted street - Home owner issue
10/28/2020	27 Granite Street	Building backing up	Sidewalk was recently dug up, checked permits. Unitil repaired lateral on 10/29/2020
10/19/2020	150 Whalon Street	Sewer coming up in parking lot	When flushing bubbling out of manhole, called plumber at building
10/3/2020	226 Clifton St	Sewer odor	Opened upstream and downstream manholes - All mains flowing - No evidence of odor.
9/23/2020	72 Webster Street	Sewer backing up in house.	Checked manholes - flowing fine
9/24/2020	1034 Franklin Road	Sewer in road	Checked street, no sign of sewer in street.
8/28/2020	488 Milk Street	Sewer backing up in cleanout	Checked manholes in street. Street flowing fine. Home owner's lateral needs repairs.
8/27/2020	23 Congress Street	Home owner backup - Plumber on site	Checked upstream and downstream manholes. Main lines flowing fine.
8/19/2020	75 Sawyer Passway	Pump station clogged	vac'd out pump station due to high level alarm. Rags were bound around pumps.
8/14/2020	25 Winthrop St	Sewer backup. Home owner's lateral was snaked twice this month.	Tony Received a call on 1/28/21 from Aegis Engineering. Asking about any history of work being done by the city in the last few years. Explained that the only work we know of is the CSS project about 9 years ago or so.
8/10/2020	186 Townsend St	Sewer backup	Checked manholes, flowing fine.
8/10/2020	66 Institute Street	Backup	Checked manholes, flowing fine.
6/24/2020	91 Payson St	Sewage running down driveway.	
6/29/2020	64 Autumn Dr	Sewer backup	Checked manholes, running fine
6/29/2020	35 Richardson Road	Manhole cover off.	Put manhole cover back on.
6/20/2020	4 Lawrence Street	Sewer backup	Checked manholes, all mains running fine.
6/8/2020	32 Adams Street	Sewer backup	Main running fine, note, laterals come into manhole low. Combined area, may surcharge during rain but homeowner has a broken backflow preventer
6/2/2020	33 Forest Street	Sewer blockage	homeowner has a broken lateral that is leaking. Told health department.
5/21/2020	36 Albee Street	Sewer backup	Checked manholes, all mains running fine.
3/16/2020	112 Walton Street	Line backing up	Main line flowing. Notified Plumber. Note: Unitil patch located in front of house.

Table 3 - Private SSO Events & Service Call Log (February 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021)

Date	Address	Nature of Call	Findings
5/13/2020	42 Phillips Street	back up in basement	Ray responded. Looks like Unitil had a newer pole where lateral might be. Tony called Unitil, pole is over 5 years old. Tony also recalled responding to the same house in a previous year, they had a collapsed pipe near the MH, doesn't appear to have ever been fixed.
3/19/2020	44 Lawton Avenue	sewer back up in house	checked main line, seems to be flowing fine
2/11/2020	48 Woodworth Avenue	back up in house	carl responded, he said upstream and downstream manholes were flowing, however the lateral in the MH that leads to 48 was blocked with rags on the bench from the lateral. Pushed rags down main line, and homeowner was going to add drano to line.
3/11/2020	216 Charles St	house back up	Plumber couldn't get through lateral. Unblocked lateral from inside the manhole. Plumber was then able to jet and tv lateral.
2/20/2020	27 Clearview Ave	back up	ray responded, checked main lines, flowing fine, told homeowner to call a plumber
3/5/2020	14 Proctor Avenue	back up at house	Root ball at end of lateral. Ran saw in main to try to cut roots to see if that would help homeowner.
2/19/2020	14 Putnam Street	back up	ray and eddie responded, the manholes were flowing fine. Property owner calling a plumber.
2/24/2020	410 North St	back up	manholes flowing fine, told homeowner to call plumber
3/5/2020	42 Phillips Ave	back up	Lines flowing in street. Jetted street. Suggested owner call plumber
5/15/2020	1077 South St	pipe in basement is leaking	carl responded and bob, main lines fine, it is a homeowner issue
5/12/2020	64 Mt Vernon St	back up at house	ray and ed responded. sewer on easement is flowing fine. Tony also talked to homeowner, he said he's had roots before but he just wanted us to check main line first. Homeowner will call a jetting company.
4/20/2020	133 Hurd St	back up	back up, all man lines flowing, told homeowner to call a plumber
4/24/2020	4 Maverick Street	plumber requested access to MH	bob opened manhole to see if homeowner's lateral was entering MH to assist the property owner, it was not.
3/2/2020	18 Matthew Street		Main had good flow, no odor detected.
3/26/2020	325 Boutelle Street	back up into basement	carl and eddie responded, sewer is ripping through, it's a homeowner issue.
3/2/2020	17 Senna Road		Lateral blocked. Needs a plumber to tv and snake line.
2/10/2020	276 Lunenburg Street	clean out has sewer coming out of it in trailer park	city sewer is fine, rooter man is coming to clean private lines in trailer park
1/19/2021	66 Thorndike Street	back up in basement sink	homeowner said she would do laundry and back up into sink. Tony and ray responded. jetted line, but main line was fine. told homeowner she might have roots, based on TV. Gave her some Root-X