

City of
Fitchburg



Department of
Public Works

COMMISSIONER

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STREETS & PARKS

301 Broad Street
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WASTEWATER

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SEWER COLLECTION

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1200 Rindge Road
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CEMETERIES

115 Mount Elam Road
978-345-9578
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February 26, 2025

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: Dan Kurpaska

Re: SSO and Dry-Weather CSO Compliance Report

Dear Messrs. Kudarauskas and Kurpaska:

In accordance with the City of Fitchburg's Consent Decree, Paragraph 71, this letter is to serve as the 2024 Compliance Report. In this report we are covering the period from February 1, 2024 to January 31, 2025. 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.

List of SSO's

The City experienced nine (6) 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.

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

- 1) **231 Plymouth Street, 9/24/24** - The city was notified of a sewer manhole surcharging near 231 Plymouth Street. The City discovered the cause of the overflow to be a blockage in the downstream sewer main. The blockage was likely due an obstruction in the main sewer. The main line was cleaned and the blockage was removed. A visual estimate of 5 gallons overflowed.
- 2) **28 Garnet St, 11/19/24** - The City was called out for a sewer manhole overflowing into Garnet Street. The City discovered that the main line was blocked downstream of the overflow. The City jetted and cleared the rag blockage and returned normal flow. A visual estimate of 250 gallons overflowed during this event.

- 3) **Depot Street at Burma Road, 12/1/24** – The City was called out to Depot Street at Burma Road for an overflowing manhole that was originally reported as a water main break. The City discovered that the main line was blocked downstream of the overflow. The City was unable to clear the blockage by jetting. A private contractor was called in due to the amount of by-pass required to excavate and make repairs. A visual estimate of 14,400 gallons overflowed during this event.
- 4) **85 Henry Street, 12/17/24** – The City was not notified of an overflowing manhole. This backup occurred due to heavy grease in the main line. The collections crew cleaned and added grease treatment to the main line. From a visual estimate a volume of 50 gallons entered the basement.
- 5) **67 Rindge Road, 1/2/25** – The City was called to a report of sewer manhole overflowing. The City ran the jetter/root cutter in the main line and pulling back roots and clearing the blockage. A visual estimate of 6,000 gallons overflowed during this event. This location was added to our root treatment list.
- 6) **John Fitch Highway at North Street, 1/2/25** – The City was called to a report an overflowing sewer manhole. The City ran the jetter in the main line and pulling back debris and clearing the blockage. A visual estimate of 2,000 gallons overflowed during this event.

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 3 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 has continued construction of the CSO 010, 032, 045, 083 Sewer Separation/ Rehabilitation Project. In addition to closing four CSO regulators, the City expects to permanently separate approximately 10 combination manholes within this project.

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 the Sewer System Manager, Kenneth DuPont, at 978-829-1906, 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
 Dan Kurpaska , MassDEP, Central Region Office

Electronic copy: Chief, Environmental Enforcement Section, DOJ
(Transmittal letter only) Anu Balakrishna, Assistant U.S. Attorney
 Jeff Kopf, Senior Enforcement Counsel, EPA Region 1
 Louis Dundin, Assistant Attorney General, Massachusetts AG

Electronic copy: Nicholas Erickson, P.E., Fitchburg Commissioner of Public Works

"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

