

October 9, 2012

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Approximately 2,400 pounds of lime and 324,000 gallons of chlorinated drinking water entered the City's storm sewer system Friday, Oct. 5, at 8:45 a.m. when a City contractor accidentally struck a 12-inch water transmission main while mixing lime for subgrade stabilization in Renfro Street. The work is part of the left turn lane project at Northwest Renfro Street and Brushy Mound Road in north Burleson. City staff contacted the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to report the unauthorized discharge. The discharge did not, at any time, pose a threat to the public.

The contractor immediately contacted City staff about the water main break. Staff responded at 8:55 a.m. to assess the environmental impact. The water main was shut down at 11:15 a.m. to allow the crews to complete the repair. The water main was turned back on at approximately 6:15 p.m. The water flow rate was reduced initially until excavation was sufficient to safeguard against material entering the water main, but no residents were without water during this time. The water main pressure was sufficient to prevent the need for a boil water notice.

Since the lime and chlorinated drinking water entered the City's storm sewer system (and an unnamed tributary of Village Creek), City staff collected water samples within the affected channel, measured the pH and chlorine levels, and sent samples to the laboratory. The results Friday did not show signs of pending environmental damage.

City staff did a follow-up investigation of the affected creek at 4 p.m. on Friday and found four dead fish. Staff updated TCEQ and contacted the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The City was advised that no further action needed to be taken since the number of dead fish was minimal.

On Monday, Oct. 8, City staff checked the affected creek again and this time they found more dead fish, including 78 minnows, 41 medium sunfish (2-4 inches), three large sunfish (4-inches or larger), four catfish (6-inches or larger), four frogs, and 14 crawfish. TCEQ and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department were contacted again. Both agencies said that no further action was required.

As is common for road construction in North Texas, lime is used to increase the stability, impermeability, and load-bearing capacity of the subgrade (soil below the paved surface). Lime refers to products derived from heating (calcining) limestone rock. Residents who have concerns about the Oct. 5 discharge may contact Kevin North, assistant director of public works, at 817-426-9830.