



City of Tacoma  
Environmental Services Department

June 12, 2020

Angela Vincent  
Department of Ecology  
Southwest Regional Office  
Water Quality Program  
PO Box 47775  
Olympia, WA 98504-7775

RE: S4.F Notification for Two Separate Sanitary Sewage Overflows into receiving waters via City's MS4

Dear Ms. Vincent

This S4.F Notification is for two separate sanitary sewer overflows that entered the City's MS4 in two separate locations and were conveyed to separate receiving waters. The details of each event are summarized below. Both incidents were promptly reported to the Department of Ecology's (Ecology) Environmental Reporting Tracking System and required Sanitary Sewer Overflow Reports have been completed and submitted to Ecology in accordance with the City's NPDES Waste Discharge Permits for the Central Treatment Plant #1 and the North End Wastewater Plant #3.

Tacoma believes that these events were S4.F qualifying events because while the overflows were actively occurring the following condition from S4.F applied: "a discharge from the MS4 owned or operated by the Permittee is causing or contributing to a known or likely violation of water quality standards in the receiving water."

**Event 1 ERTS # 698164**

**Address Court D between South 7<sup>th</sup> and South 9<sup>th</sup>**

**Receiving Water: Thea Foss Waterway via outfall #6000261**

On May 12, 2020 approximately 09:00, a sanitary sewer overflow occurred which resulted in surface flow of untreated wastewater into the City of Tacoma MS4. The wastewater was conveyed through the MS4 into the Thea Foss Waterway at outfall #6000261. Ecology was promptly notified per Permit Section G3.

City crews were mobilized and the overflow was stopped at 13:20. Estimated flow volume discharged was 4800 gallons. The blockage was due to root intrusion and rags. The line was cleaned and repaired. The affected storm system was also cleaned.

The Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD) was notified and took samples in the Thea Foss Waterway near the outfall on May 14, 2020. The results of the samples were received on May 15, 2020

and indicated the presence of enterococci which may have exceeded the water quality standards for marine waters per WAC 173-201A(3)(b).

**Event 2 ERTS #698452**

**Address 3707 North Union Ave**

**Receiving Water Commencement Bay near Les Davis Pier via outfalls 6000419 and 6000387**

City of Tacoma first became aware of the event due to a May 26, 2020 report by a representative of an adjacent property owner. Staff was dispatched to the location and discovered that a manhole had failed and sanitary wastewater was overflowing out of the sanitary system. Ecology was notified via ERTS #698452 on May 26, 2020 at 21:10. The overflow was stopped by City crews by installing a temporary repair on May 26, 2020 between 20:20 and 21:00 hour.

The City contacted the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department who conducted water quality sampling in Commencement Bay on May 27, 2020 near Les Davis Pier. Results were received on May 28 and indicated the presence of enterococci.

Additional sampling was conducted on June 5, 2020 and included the receiving water and freshwater located in the outfalls adjacent to Les Davis Pier. Enterococci results were positive in the receiving water and within the outfalls at low tide for this sampling event.

The City investigated the event and it has been determined that a landslide in early February 2020 caused the manhole to fail. The manhole is on a steep and wooded slope.

It is estimated that 1,296,000 gallons of wastewater discharged from the manhole and went into a ditch along the BNSF railway. Some portion of the discharge entered the City's MS4 and was conveyed into Commencement Bay via the City's outfall.

The City is maintaining the temporary repair and has begun design work to complete a permanent fix for this location.

Please see the attached Sanitary Sewer Overflow Reports as submitted to Ecology's Dianis Klienburg, NPDES Permit Manager for the City's NPDES Waste Discharge Permits #WA0037087 and #WA0037214.

"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 gathered and evaluated the information submitted. Based on my inquiry of the person or persons who manage the system or those persons directly responsible for gathering 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 willful violations."

Please contact Merita Trohimovich at (253)502-2103 or (253)857-5621 or [mtrohimo@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:mtrohimo@cityoftacoma.org) if you have any questions or concerns.

*John Burk, P.E.*

John Burk, P.E.  
Environmental Services Division Manager

Cc: Dan Thompson, ES Business Operations

Kurt Fremont, ES Business Operations

Geoffrey Smyth, ES

Chris Bacha, Tacoma City Attorney's Office

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