



This document will be updated as new information is available. Last updated: 11-6-20

What happened?

Sometime between 5 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. the night of August 4, 2020 a sewage spill occurred along SR179 associated with the SR179 Sewer Main Replacement Project that is currently under construction. The spill was contained and disinfected around 8:30 p.m. that same evening. Kinney Construction Services, the contractor for the construction project, is responsible for this accidental spill.

Untreated liquid effluent was reported coming out of a manhole in front of the Hillside Sedona Shopping Center and flowed into a storm drain which then drained into Oak Creek approximately 750 feet downstream from the SR179 bridge over Oak Creek. At this time, it is estimated that approximately 15,000 to 20,000 gallons of effluent spilled into the creek.

For context, the approximate volume of effluent translates to approximately 150 gallons per minute. It is estimated that 13,000 gallons per minute flow down Oak Creek.

Did solid waste and toilet paper flow into Oak Creek?

No, solid waste and toilet paper did not flow into Oak Creek. Only liquid effluent spilled into Oak Creek.

Is it safe to swim?

In August, the city kept data on E. coli counts so you could decide if you wanted to swim. Please visit the project website at www.sr179sewermainreplacement.com to see those counts. The city is no longer taking daily counts.

Why do the results say Most Probable Number? Does that mean it's not an accurate number?

No, it is an accurate number. More specifically, MPN is a statistical method based on the random dispersion of microorganisms per volume in a given sample, and is a common way of measuring E. coli in water.

Did the city fudging results in their favor?

No, it is actually illegal for the city to "fudge" results and they must be reported accurately. Also independent third parties review the data.

Is there a risk to get COVID-19 from exposure to Oak Creek?

No, there is extremely minimal risk of getting COVID-19 from this spill into Oak Creek.

Will this push the timeline for the project back and what is the project status?

The contractor remobilized August 17, 2020 with provisions added to their operations plan to ensure another spill into Oak Creek won't happen.

As of Nov. 6, 2020, KCS and the city mutually agreed, based on numerous unforeseen challenges with other utilities and obstacles that have significantly slowed the pace of construction, to end the State Route (SR) 179 Sewer Main Replacement Project with the last phase still yet to be completed. The sewer main has been replaced to a point where stopping is feasible and restoration of the SR 179 roadway and entrances to businesses can be achieved.

Anticipating additional complications in the last phase of project, it will now be completed at a later date. Several factors will be taken into account in determining a reasonable date to begin the next phase, including weather, tourism and sewer main capacity. It is expected the second phase will begin sometime between January and July 2021.

How did you notify people of the spill?

The contractor for the 179 Sewer Main Replacement Project hand-delivered information to all downstream properties proximate from the spill. The City posts information to social media and sends press releases to all local media and anyone signed up to receive the City's news alerts. Forest Service crews helped to place signs at

179 Sewer Spill FAQs



trails and other locations where people often access Oak Creek, which have since been taken down with lower E. coli levels. Additionally, anyone signed up to receive updates on the specific project are sent update emails.

Are you planning to update any of your protocols?

The city assembled a stakeholder group comprised of residents; city staff; and representatives from Oak Creek Watershed Council, the county health departments and ADEQ. This collaborative process will review all components of the incident and amend protocols that need to be updated.

What is the project website?

Please visit the project website at www.sr179sewermainreplacement.com.

How do I sign up for updates on this project?

Subscribe to email updates by sending an email to news@sr179sewermainreplacement.com.

Who can I talk to for more information?

You may call the project hotline at (928) 852-4164 or send an email to news@sr179sewermainreplacement.com