



CITY OF THE DALLES
Department of Public Works
1215 West 1st Street
The Dalles, Oregon 97058

PRESS RELEASE

DATE: July 15, 2020

TOPIC: Wastewater Treatment Plant Discharge Continues to Exceed *E. coli* Limit

CONTACT: Public Works Department (541) 296-5401

FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATELY

Operations at the City of The Dalles Wastewater Treatment Plant are not yet back in compliance after a recent plant upset that resulted in discharge to the Columbia River of treated wastewater exceeding the plant's limit for *E. coli*. Wastewater treatment staff is working hard to restore the biological balance so that the plant can quickly return to normal operations.

The ultraviolet disinfection process has been ramped up to maximum capacity in an attempt to compensate for partially treated effluent due to the upset. Staff has increased the frequency of effluent sampling until *E. coli* counts are back within permit limits.

On Wednesday July 15, 2020 samples were taken at pre-arranged locations from the Columbia River to determine the effect of the discharge on water quality in the river. Five samples were collected between River Mile 186.5 (Rocky Island, to the west of the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center) and 189.5 (City of The Dalles wastewater treatment plant outfall). Processing of samples takes 24 hours. Therefore, test results will be available on Thursday July 16, 2020.

As a precaution, signs will remain in place at locations of public river access until the discharge from the wastewater treatment plant returns to compliance. Signs are posted on the Oregon shore of the Columbia River, from The Dalles Riverfront Park to West Mayer Park boat launch. The signs say: "Warning - Contaminated Water - No water contact" and give phone numbers to call for information.

The Department is in communication with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and local health department officials to coordinate response. Questions can be directed to the Public Works Department office at (541) 296-5401.

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