



Grant County Health District – Always Working for a Safer and Healthier Grant County

Ephrata Office County Courthouse
PO Box 37, Ephrata, WA 98823
509-754-6060

Moses Lake Office
1038 West Ivy Suite 1, Moses Lake, WA 98837
509-766-7960

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To: Grant County Media

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT

Jefferson Ketchel, Administrator
509-754-6060 ext. 26

Sewage spill prompts officials to ask public to avoid contact with Moses Lake water

MOSES LAKE--The City of Moses Lake has responded to a break in a valve connection in the city's sewage treatment system that has resulted in an overflow of raw sewage adjacent to Potato Hill Road south of Moses Lake.

According to Moses Lake Public Works Superintendent, Tim Varney, the leak was from a broken 20-inch main pipe that sends sewage to the Dunes Wastewater Treatment Plant, south of I-90. The break was originally discovered Sunday at 2:15 p.m. at the intersection of Potato Hill Road and Road 1 NE.

The "force main," which pushes sewage under pressure from one location to another, was shut down after the leak was discovered, Varney said. This means sewage has been backing up into a one million gallon storage basin at the Central Operations Facility located at Lakeside Drive and D Street.

According to Jefferson Ketchel of the Grant County Health District, the storage basin is full and overflowing into an adjacent chlorine contact chamber. That chamber is full as well and the chlorinated sewage is overflowing through a pipe into Moses Lake on the south side of the Montlake railroad crossing.

The public is being asked to stay away from and keep pets away from the lake water in the Montlake area between the railroad tracks and I-90 until further notice.

"We realize there is little reason to go into the water this time of year but we want to make sure everyone is aware of the problem so they use precautions in case they have a reason to come into contact with the water," said Ketchel. "The breakage will be fixed today so that the system can begin working properly again."

The Department of Ecology is keeping abreast of the situation and will require sampling and testing of the water until it is determined that no fecal coliform bacteria from human waste is present.

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