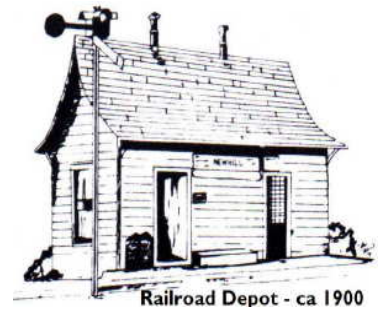


PO Box 68
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New Hill Community Association, Inc.

June 30, 2006

Daniel M. Blaisdell, P. E.
Assistant Chief, Engineering Branch
Construction Grants and Loans Section
North Carolina Division of Water Quality
1633 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1633



Railroad Depot - ca 1900

Dear Mr. Blaisdell,

I am Paul Barth, President of the New Hill Community Association, Inc.

I want to bring to your attention an article (Attachment 1) that was on today's front page of the Raleigh News and Observer dated June 30, 2006.

Seems like Cary "under estimated" the amount of sewage they spilled! I'll bet it was even more than 7.9 million gallons. Cary doesn't want to hold the record for the second largest spill which is 8 million gallons!

Interesting Excerpts:

Officials said Thursday that the fleet of tanker trucks the town brought in to haul waste around the trouble spot could not keep up.

"The trucks didn't haul all the waste," said Susan Moran, a Cary spokeswoman. "We were able to divert 68 percent, but not all of it."

→ 68 percent is not good enough when a communities only water source is in jeopardy

The potential damage to two popular recreation spots has angered nearby residents and regular users of the lakes.

→ recreational users of lakes were angered! What if this was New Hill community and they lost their only water source!!! We also have a significant amount of wetlands that would be impacted.

Just last month, the city of Durham reported an 8-million-gallon sewage spill. A 21-inch sewer line collapsed in a remote area behind the Nello Teer Quarry, and officials didn't find out until a resident reported it 13 days later.

→ what if a leak in New Hill went "undetected" for 13 days!!!

In recent years, Massengale (Susan Massengale - DWQ Public Information Officer) said, the state has tried to tie regular maintenance requirements to its permit process for sewer operators. As sewer lines age, she said, they become more susceptible to damage from shifting ground or tree roots.

➔ how long do sewer lines last? We're talking about more than 10 miles of high pressure lines running through the New Hill community and our front yards!

I would respectfully encourage the Army Corps of Engineers to request DENR to reject the Western Wake Partners currently submitted draft EIS.

Sincerely,

Paul Barth
President, New Hill Community Association, Inc.

ATTACHMENT 1

Cary spill totals 7.9 million gallons

The town raises its estimate of the sewage that polluted Swift Creek and two lakes

DAVID BRACKEN AND TOBY COLEMAN, Staff Writers

Cary now reports that about 7.9 million gallons of sewage spilled into Swift Creek while engineers struggled to deal with a broken pipe at a pump station.

The revised total makes the spill the third-largest in the Triangle in the past decade. The spill has closed Lake Wheeler and Lake Benson to boaters and fishermen for a week. Raleigh officials continue to test both lakes for bacteria but say the earliest they could open is Saturday.

Earlier Cary had estimated the spill, which began last Friday night and ended Wednesday morning, at just over 3 million gallons. Officials said Thursday that the fleet of tanker trucks the town brought in to haul waste around the trouble spot could not keep up.

"The trucks didn't haul all the waste," said Susan Moran, a Cary spokeswoman. "We were able to divert 68 percent, but not all of it."

The potential damage to two popular recreation spots has angered nearby residents and regular users of the lakes. The spill started after mudslides caved in a hole contractors had dug in an expansion project at the pump station.

A look at other large sewage spills in the Triangle over the past decade shows that they occur for many reasons and that operators are rarely fined for problems they may encounter.

Just last month, the city of Durham reported an 8-million-gallon sewage spill. A 21-inch sewer line collapsed in a remote area behind the Nello Teer Quarry, and officials didn't find out until a resident reported it 13 days later.

Susan Massengale, the public information officer for the state's Division of Water Quality, said the agency agreed with Durham's conclusion that most of the sewage spilled into a wooded area and only a small amount reached the Eno River.

Steve Miller, assistant superintendent for Durham's water and sewer maintenance division, said beaver dams nearby helped contain the spill. The cleanup effort has involved pumping out the waste, removing soil and checking the rest of the line for problems. The Division of Water Quality has yet to determine what action it will take against Durham, Massengale said.

Other large spills in the Triangle have been caused by severe weather. The largest in the past decade occurred in December 2002 in Raleigh. An ice storm cut power to one of the city's lift stations, which ultimately caused 9 million gallons of sewage to reach Walnut Creek. In March 1998, a pump station in southwest Durham County failed and quickly flooded with sewage,

leading to a 6-million-gallon spill.

Glen Whisler, the Durham County engineer, said the pump station was in a flood-prone area and has been closed. Whisler said his biggest concern is the collection of fats and grease in sewer pipes, which reduces their capacity and causes blockages.

In September 2005, a deer carcass stuck in a sewer line in Clayton's system, resulting in a 1.8- million-gallon sewage spill into Little Creek. The town wasn't fined.

"We're not really sure how it got in there," said Byron Poelman, Clayton's public works superintendent.

In recent years, Massengale said, the state has tried to tie regular maintenance requirements to its permit process for sewer operators. As sewer lines age, she said, they become more susceptible to damage from shifting ground or tree roots.

As for fines, Massengale said that in the past, the division didn't levy fines if an operator responded quickly, because it was trying to encourage the reporting of spills.

Last year, the state took the rare action of fining both Elizabeth City and Wilmington more than \$50,000 because of sewage spills. Massengale said the division is starting to demand that sewer systems do more to address problems before spills bring them to light.

Staff writer David Bracken can be reached at 829-4548 or dbracken@newsobserver.com.