

January 24, 2020

HEALTH OFFICIALS IN HAMILTON, MADISON, SUWANNEE COUNTIES LIFT ADVISORY FOR WASTEWATER CONTAMINATION IN THE WITHLACOOCHEE AND PART OF SUWANNEE RIVERS



Impacts from Valdosta, GA Wastewater Overflow

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Withlacoochee River in Madison and Hamilton Counties and Part of the Suwannee River in Suwannee County, FL – On December 9, 2019, the City of Valdosta, Georgia reported a spill of approximately 7.5 million gallons of untreated sewage that they believe began on December 3, 2019 due to repair work on a major lift station. Sampling and laboratory test results showed the river water was impacted by the sewage spill and had moved into the Withlacoochee River at the Florida/Georgia border during the last few rain falls. A public health advisory was issued on January 9, 2020 for the entire Withlacoochee River in Florida and a portion of the Suwannee River from where the Withlacoochee River connects down to County Road 250 at Dowling Park.

There has been extensive river water sampling for laboratory testing completed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Florida Department of Health, and the Suwannee River Water Management District. The most recent lab test results indicate the river water again meets surface water quality standards for fecal-indicator bacteria confirming the public may resume water-related activities (https://www.flrules.org/gateway/notice_Files.asp?ID=17115667).

For information pertaining to the sewage spill and the city's remedial actions, contact the Valdosta Utilities Department Environmental Manager, Scott Fowler, at 229-259-3592 or sfowler@valdostacity.com.

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