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August 10, 2020

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Oak Creek ALERT!

Oak Creek Watershed Council is concerned to learn of a sewage spill into Oak Creek, where a reported 15,000-20,000 gallons of untreated, raw sewage flowed into a storm drain and immediately drained into Oak Creek. The incident occurred between 5 - 7:30 pm on August 4th along SR179 at the Hillside Sedona Shopping Center. Kinney Construction Services is responsible for the spill which was in conjunction with the continued SR179 Sewer Main Replacement Project. The City of Sedona reports that the "spill was contained and disinfected around 8:30 p.m. that same evening."

"This is disheartening to see happen. Raw sewage is detrimental to the health of the creek and species that rely on it, and hugely impactful for people using the creek, including for recreation and agriculture" said Kalai Kollus, Executive Director of Oak Creek Watershed Council.

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Oak Creek Watershed Council has been on site of the spill and has noted a distinct odor in the area that still smells of sewage, as well as concerning algal blooms downstream of the spill site. We know at this time that initial E. coli tests taken on Wednesday morning have come back below the state and federal E. coli limits. However, raw sewage also leads to a host of bacterial and nutrient concerns to our creek, used by residents, wildlife, agriculture, and many aquatic species.

We are grateful that Kinney Construction has stopped work at this time, and hope they take full accountability for their actions.

We understand that the Sedona community is upset at the failure of Kinney Construction to protect our creek. Residents may not have heard of the spill in a timely manner, and the entirety of Kinney Construction's actions to stop and mitigate the disaster have not been disclosed. Oak Creek Watershed Council is in contact with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, City of Sedona, and other partners to further investigate the SR 179 sewage spill and determine necessary actions to protect our waters.

As more information becomes available, you can count on us to inform and communicate with you through emails like this, our social media pages, and the news page on the [OCWC website](#)

The City of Sedona also has an SR 179 [project webpage](#) and is fielding additional questions: Roxanne Holland, P.E., Director of Wastewater at RHolland@SedonaAZ.gov or (928) 203-5069. A project hotline is also available for more information: (928) 852-4164 or subscribe to email updates by sending an email to news@sr179sewermainreplacement.com.

Oak Creek Watershed Council has been monitoring E.coli and water quality contaminants in Oak Creek for more than a decade. These threats to watershed health are not over, and neither is our work to protect the creek and our community. Please consider donating to protect Oak Creek today.

<https://oakcreekwatershed.org/donate/>

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KSB greatly appreciates the support
Chamber Music Sedona has given us.

Visit the KSB website for more information on
our activities, goals and how you can help:

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