Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

July 14, 2015

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

"No Contact" Health Advisory Issued for the St. Joseph River, from Waste Water Treatment Plant (101 Galloway) to the Moore Road Bridge Access Point

Hillsdale, MI. Officials of the City of Hillsdale's Board of Public Utilities have notified the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency (CHA) today that untreated sewage has been discharged into the St. Joseph River as a result of a plant overflow during a recent loss of electrical power. The Wastewater treatment plant, located at 101 Galloway, Hillsdale, has spilled an estimated 69,960 gallons of untreated wastewater on July 14, 2015. Sewage and wastewater overflowing into the St. Joseph River has prompted county officials to issue a no-contact advisory.

"The plant operators have corrected the situation and raw sewage is no longer being released to the river," Rebecca Burns, Environmental Health Director for the tri-county health department, stated. "The sewage overflow does present a public health concern. Contact with the St. Joseph River water during this time - through swimming, boating or other recreational uses - could lead to illness in both animals and humans," Rebecca Burns stated. The advisory is in place until further notice.

Action Taken. Persons are advised to avoid any body contact with the St. Joseph River from the Wastewater treatment plant location at 101 Galloway to the Moore Rd. bridge access point. The City's BPU is taking steps to correct the electrical problem.

Future Action. The CHA is currently notifying local newspapers, radio stations and providing information via the internet to get the word out to citizens as rapidly as possible about this advisory. The health agency will continue to monitor this situation until conditions return to normal and will issue an advisory release when appropriate.

The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency offers additional information concerning waterborne illnesses on its website under the Quick Info About Health Topics button. Visit us at www.bhsj.org to learn more.

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