



## MEDIA RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MR# 2018068**

**DATE: 24 August 2018**

**RE: Equipment malfunction causes lift station overflow**

**AMHERST, Nova Scotia** – An equipment malfunction on Aug. 19 that rendered all three pumps at the Town of Amherst's LaPlanche River sewer lift station inoperable resulted in an overflow of untreated sewage to enter the LaPlanche River.

The malfunction is thought to be related to, but not entirely caused by a heavy rainfall in the area that, according to the Weather Network, totaled about 65 millimetres.

Overflow situations do occur from time to time during heavy rainfalls, but on this occasion an air release valve broke allowing sewage to enter the lift station's control room via openings around electrical conduits that go between the valve chamber and the control room. Once inside the control room, the sewage damaged electrical components that regulate the pumps, rendering them inoperable.

Before the pumps could be restarted, new electrical parts had to be acquired and the control building, located on the marsh north of the town, had to be cleaned and sanitized.

Repairs to one of the pumps was completed on Aug. 22, allowing the lift station to be brought back on line on that date. Repairs to the other two pumps continue.

It is estimated that about 8,200 cubic metres of sewage per day is pumped through this lift station to the waste-water treatment plant in Fort Lawrence.

Nova Scotia Environment was notified on Aug 20, shortly after the problem was discovered. The department was given regular updates as the town worked to resolve the issue.

"We'd like to thank the Public Works staff who have been working through very unpleasant conditions to clean the facility and make the repairs" CAO Greg Herrett said.

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