



# ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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JB PRITZKER, GOVERNOR

JOHN J. KIM, DIRECTOR

DATE: June 30, 2022  
TO: Todd Bennett, Manager BOW/DWPC/FOS  
FROM: Gregg Sanders, BOW/DWPC/FOS - Collinsville  
SUBJECT: Cahokia Heights  
Collection System Inspection

I conducted a collection system inspection on June 9, 2022, as a result of a complaint reported on the afternoon of June 8, 2022, for the residence of [REDACTED], Cahokia Heights. This complaint inspection led to observing 3 separate temporary bypass networks and road subsidence, which the city reported as being caused by sewer lateral damage. Within one block of the subsidence, on the same street of Price Street near Miskell Boulevard, the city had begun upgrading a submersible lift station and associated wiring; both buried beneath the road.

Three sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) were observed: (1) an active SSO behind [REDACTED] along Blue Water Lane; (2) a recent, but inactive SSO behind [REDACTED] and (3) an older, inactive SSO behind [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The residents of these addresses estimated that these three separate temporary bypasses had been in place ranging somewhere between 3 and 6 years.

There are several homes and a golf course located between the SSOs and the nearest water body; referred to as Blue Water. Due to poor drainage in the area, there was no connection observed between the SSOs and the nearest water body. The active SSO accumulated in a low-lying portion of a ditch; the city repaired the active bypass while present.

Geographically, the Blue Water Stormwater Pumping Station is located south and to the southwest of these sewer bypass areas. The station sets on a levy south of the golf course and on the south side of the nearest surface water body. The levy runs east and west. The Metro East Levy Trail runs beside the pump station, and below the trail lies the Prairie DuPont Creek. Aerials of these locations are attached.

[REDACTED]  
On the way to [REDACTED], the following circumstances were observed near the road at [REDACTED]: a debris pile, temporary fencing, and an open hole in the ground. Upon further inspection it was determined: (1) a collapsed sewer was present; (2) an above ground bypass pipe dumps into an adjacent downstream manhole; and (3) the receiving manhole drains underground to another nearby manhole under Lazarcheff Drive. The bypass pipe was traced upstream to the corner backyard; where it was connected to the effluent side of a gasoline powered portable pump. The contents on the ground and adjacent to the pump were indicative

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of recent wet and dry sewage and other sewage debris, but no active SSO was occurring at the time. Significant sewer odor was present. While there, the resident complained of unbearable sewer odor that routinely makes its way into the house from outdoors. The resident communicated the following additional concerns related to the sewer and bypassing: (1) she has a young child whom could potentially come in contact with the sewage; (2) sewage has overflowed into the backyard in the past; (3) she was stressed regarding the intensity of the outdoor odors entering the house and whether the sewer would be repaired; (4) the fencing surrounding the sewer collapse is insecure allowing easy public access; (5) there is a pile of debris located next to the collapsed sewer; and (6) solids are collected along the concrete gutter in front of the house. At the time of the inspection, the upstream manhole was not surcharged. Both the resident and the city reported that the city runs the pump daily.

In a follow-up discussion with the City, the City agreed to: (1) put up a more secure fence surrounding the collapsed sewer; (2) remove sewage solids from the ground and mix powdered chlorine into the remaining soil; (3) remove the debris located between the collapse and the road; (4) remove the solids from the concrete street gutter in front of the house; and (5) reconfigure and seal the upstream and downstream manholes as necessary to reduce sewer odors surrounding the house. The resident was made aware of these agreements and encouraged to develop an odor log having dates and times to: track odors; rate the odors; and note any activities the odors prevent the residence from performing. The resident was informed that the city commented that they had this section of sewer on a list for permanent repairs; as part of using a future grant source.

■■■■■■■■■■, ■■■■■■■■■■, and ■■■■■■■■■■  
Inspection of the backyard of ■■■■■■■■■■ revealed a collapsed sewer/manhole on the opposite side of the resident's chain link fence and adjacent to where four adjacent back properties meet. Bypass piping runs downstream through the homeowner's backyard and dumps at a sewer manhole in the backyard of a neighbor; located at ■■■■■■■■■■. The downstream manhole at the ■■■■■■■■■■ address is very close to both houses, and a strong odor was present there at the time of the inspection. The rest of the bypass piping behind ■■■■■■■■■■ runs: upstream; northeasterly; and behind the homes leading to the backyard of ■■■■■■■■■■, where a submersible pump in a manhole exists. The pump pulls sewer from the southwesterly underground sewer, due to the collapse, and then returns it back southwesterly by above ground bypass line to the aforementioned manhole at the ■■■■■■■■■■ residence. Although this network runs behind homes on the other side of the road from ■■■■■■■■■■, these are separate bypass networks. However, both networks do end up emptying into the same manhole in the middle of the road near ■■■■■■■■■■, which flows by gravity to the Blue Water Lift Station. There is also a white PVC pipe present in the same area as the collapse behind ■■■■■■■■■■, extending from the neighbor's backyard off of Kenneth Street. The city agreed to determine what this pipe is connected to; there was no active flow from it at the time of the inspection. The resident at ■■■■■■■■■■ communicated that the outdoor odors that come into the house are unbearable. The ■■■■■■■■■■ resident was informed that the city commented that this section of the sewer was on their list of

permanent repairs and being considered to be moved up higher on the priority list for grant repairs. There was no contact made with the upstream [REDACTED] resident; this being the location where the city uses the submersible pump in the backyard. However, the pumping manhole was observed from a distance outside of the resident's fence, and there was no active SSO from the manhole.

The residence at [REDACTED] was interested in understanding how the network of the bypass piping and pumping worked; so, it was explained. The [REDACTED] homeowner commented that strong odors from the bypassing routinely enter the home. The resident of [REDACTED] commented that recently a plumber snaked the lateral, and the plumber commented that the backup in the restroom was a result of the manhole collapse. The [REDACTED] resident also commented that there had been an SSO in the backyard from the bypass system in the past. Both residences on [REDACTED] were encouraged to develop odor logs having dates and times to: track odors; rate the odors; and note any activities the odors prevent the residences from performing.

[REDACTED]  
While in the area, a resident located at [REDACTED] commented that the city had ran a sewer line in the back of the yard; along Blue Water Lane. Upon inspection, an active SSO was accumulating in the ditch of the backyard; a break in a bypass line had occurred. A photo of the ponding SSO is attached. The separation of the bypass line was observed to occur, within high weeds, and sewer made its way through the weeds to a low open area of the ditch. The pumping manhole was found behind the neighbor's backyard fence. The electric pump was powered through an electrical outlet in the garage at [REDACTED]. The bypass line was followed to the end of Blue Water Lane to where it dumps into another manhole, which is downstream of another observed collapsed sewer. This downstream manhole also takes flows from nearby Andrew Street and gravity feeds the Blue Water Sewer Lift Station. The resident at [REDACTED] reported that strong odor had entered her house routinely in the past.

After discovering the SSO at [REDACTED], I contacted Dennis Traiteur, Superintendent of Water & Sewer. He sent Mr. James Culpepper and Mr. Al Carter of his staff to meet with me. We discussed and viewed the aforementioned manholes associated with the bypasses in the neighborhood. Mr. Culpepper was able to make a repair and rejoin the bypass line along Blue Water Lane during the inspection. The wet well at the Blue Water Sewer Lift Station was also inspected during these activities, and both pumps were shown to be operational.

Mr. Culpepper lifted manhole covers at: the [REDACTED] residence; the [REDACTED] backyard location; and near Bluewater Lane behind the neighboring resident to the [REDACTED] resident. None of the manholes were surcharged, but all lids were laying on top of the bypass lines running down into the center of the manholes. This leaves relatively large, unsealed, open-atmosphere gaps that release sewer odors. The use of tarps to cover some of the manholes may not have had the desired outcomes that the city initially intended.

**SUMMARY**

The following apparent violations were noted during my June 9, 2022, Complaint Investigation.

Apparent Violations:

1. Overflows from sanitary sewers are expressly prohibited; Section 306. 304 of Subtitle C.
2. No effluent shall contain settleable solids, floating debris, scum, or sludge solids. Color, odor, and turbidity must be reduced to below obvious levels; Section 304.106 of Subtitle C.
3. All treatment works and associated facilities shall be reliable and operated as to minimize violations of applicable standards by appropriate measures; Section 306.102 (a) of Subtitle C.

Recommendations: Based upon the apparent violations observed, the following recommendations are offered to help ensure compliance:

1. [REDACTED]
2. [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]
4. [REDACTED]
5. [REDACTED]
6. [REDACTED]

7. [REDACTED]

MGS: Cahokia/June 2022 Bypasses/Complaint Memo 2022

Attachments

- cc. BOW/DWPC/FOS – Collinsville
- BOW/DWPC/RU

SSO - [REDACTED] Cahokia Heights

Legend

- [REDACTED]
- Blue Waters Stormwater Pumping Station
- MIDDLE MISSISSIPPI RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
- Prairies Golf Course



129 Kenneth Ave

RaynePreschool.com

600 ft

Prairie du Pont Creek

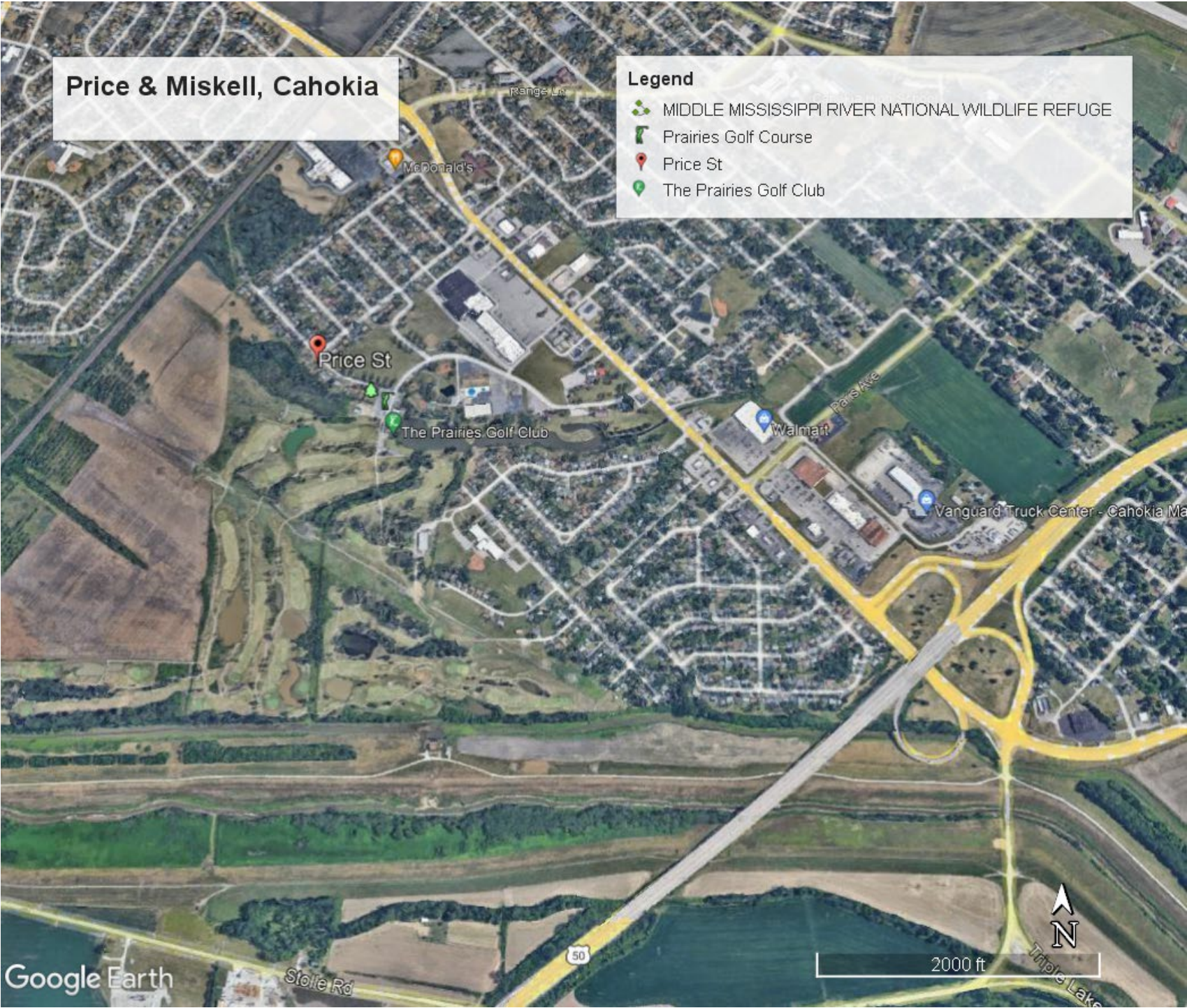


Google Earth

# Price & Miskell, Cahokia

## Legend

-  MIDDLE MISSISSIPPI RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
-  Prairies Golf Course
-  Price St
-  The Prairies Golf Club



Google Earth

Storie Rd

50

2000 ft



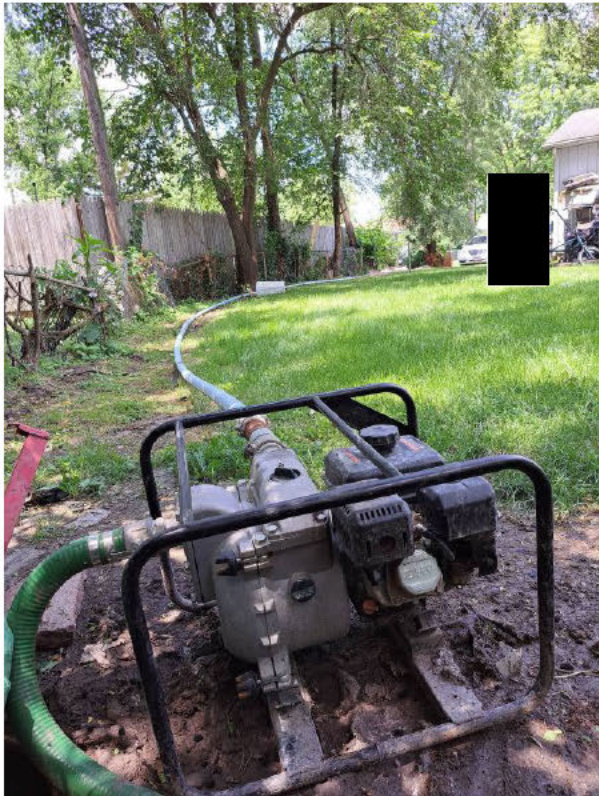
Triple Lake



## DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Date: 6/9/2022  
Photo by: Gregg Sanders  
Bypass Manhole, Pump & Solids on  
Ground at [REDACTED].



Date: 6/9/2022  
Photo by: Gregg Sanders  
Bypass Line at [REDACTED].





Illinois Environmental Protection Agency  
Bureau of Water  
Division of Water Pollution Control

St. Clair County/ Cahokia Heights  
Temporary Bypasses & SSOs  
FOS File

## *DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS*



Date: 6/9/2022

Photo by: Gregg Sanders

**Sewer Collapse, Receiving Manhole,  
Debris, Vegetation, Temporary Fencing  
At [REDACTED].**



Date: 6/9/2022

Photo by: Gregg Sanders

**Manhole in Road Receives Temporary  
Bypass Discharges from: (1) Parklane  
Drive Collapse & Lazarcheff Connected  
Network and (2) the [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Collapse Network.**



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## ***DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS***

Date: 6/9/2022  
Photo by: Gregg Sanders  
**Sewer/Manhole Collapse Behind**

██████████.



6/9/2022  
Photo by: Gregg Sanders  
**Pipe of Unknown Use Behind**  
██████████ **Near the**  
**Sewer Collapse/Manhole. The**  
**Pipe Extends from Neighbor's**  
**Yard on** ██████████.





## ***DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS***



Date: 6/9/2022

Photo by: Gregg Sanders

Bypass Behind and Runs Toward [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]. The Bypass Pump  
Connection is Behind [REDACTED],  
Which is Further in the Background and  
Not in the Picture.



Date: 6/9/2022

Photo by: Gregg Sanders

Bypass Receiving Manhole Location at  
[REDACTED] Backyard. Picture  
Taken from [REDACTED] Backyard.



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## ***DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS***

St. Clair County/Cahokia Heights  
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Date: 6/9/2022  
Photo by: Gregg Sanders  
**Bypass Receiving**  
**Manhole at** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] **Backyard – Tarp Removed.**



Date: 6/9/2022  
Photo by: Gregg Sanders  
**Bypass Pumping Manhole at** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] **for Residences on**  
**Parklane Drive &** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].



## *DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS*



Date: 6/9/2022

Photo by: Gregg Sanders

**Bypass Line Break Behind**

**██████████ & Along Blue Water Lane – Accumulated in Ditch Behind**

**██████████.**



Date: 6/9/2022

Photo by: Gregg Sanders

**Accumulated SSO from Line Break.**

**SSO Traveled Through Heavy Vegetation to This Ponding Point.**

**Intact portion of Bypass Line is in the Background.**



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## *DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS*



Date: 6/9/2022

Photo by: Gregg Sanders

**Bypass Pump Location Behind and Next To [REDACTED] & Along Blue Water Lane.**



Date: 6/9/2022

Photo by: Gregg Sanders

**Bypass Pump Opened Manhole Behind and Next to [REDACTED] & Along Blue Water Lane.**



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## *DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS*



Date: 6/9/2022

Photo by: Gregg Sanders

**Bypass Line Towards Sewer Collapse  
& Receiving Manhole Along Blue Water  
Lane.**



Date: 6/9/2022

Photo by: Gregg Sanders

**Receiving Bypass Manhole Along  
Blue Water Lane.**



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## *DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS*



Date: 6/9/2022  
Photo by: Gregg Sanders  
**Blue Water Lift Station Receives  
Flows from All 3 Bypass Networks.**



Date: 6/9/2022  
Photo by: Gregg Sanders  
**More Bypass Pipe Along Blue Water  
Lane.**