

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
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DEVAL L. PATRICK
GOVERNOR

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

March 29, 2011

Senator Stephen Baddour
State House, Room 208
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Michael Costello
State House, Room 254
Boston, MA 02133

Senator Frederick Berry
State House, Room 333
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante
State House, Room 473F
Boston, MA 02133

Senator Bruce Tarr
State House, Room 308
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Harriet Stanley
State House, Room 43
Boston, MA 02133

Representative James Lyons, Jr.
State House, Room 39
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Elected Officials:

Thank you for your letter regarding the recent malfunction of the Hooksett wastewater treatment plant in Hooksett, New Hampshire. The effects of the plant's failure are being felt in many coastal communities in Massachusetts as well as municipalities along the banks of the Merrimack River. Remediation of the environmental impact is a top priority and my office has taken steps to ensure that this happens as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Working together with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES), the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) immediately ordered testing of the disks in order to determine if there was an imminent public health hazard requiring an emergency response. Tests were completed between March 14th and 17th and while some tests indicated a presence of bacteria, MassDEP and the Department of Public Health (DPH) determined that the levels, which are below the public bathing standard, do not present a public health threat.

As a result, clean up of the disks is now being managed as a longer-term debris management challenge and not an emergency response to a public health threat. I have directed Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rick Sullivan to coordinate this cleanup response.

The Town of Hooksett has assumed direct responsibility for cleanup efforts in the Merrimac River and along the Massachusetts seacoast. Additionally, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) and MassDEP have worked with the Town on a scope of services for the Town to contract with an environmental clean-up firm (ENPRO of Newburyport, MA). The Scope of Services addresses clean-up activities within affected areas and provides that such activities will continue for an extended period of time as the disks work their way down the River, into the Ocean and down the coastline.

In the interim, before the contract was signed, EEA and MassDEP started the cleanup process. Starting on Sunday, March 14, MassDEP called in Clean Harbors to initiate clean-up work near the mouth of the Merrimack River and nearby beaches, primarily on Plum Island, and on March 19th, ENPRO commenced cleanup activities here in the Commonwealth. In addition, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) called in staff to start clean up of Salisbury Beach. As a result, over 50 DCR employees were engaged in clean-up activities on Thursday and Friday of that week. I believe that with these efforts - combined with the engagement of ENPRO and the commitment and effort made by local communities - we have the necessary tools to overcome this unfortunate incident.

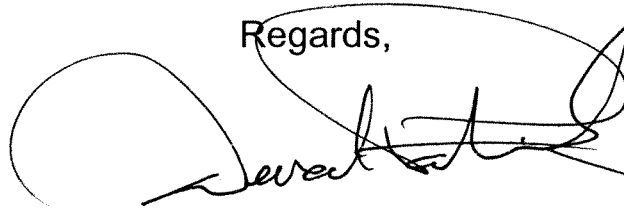
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The Commonwealth has acted quickly and efficiently in order to address this problem. The beaches and rivers in Massachusetts are some of our greatest treasures and we will continue to work tirelessly to ensure their protection.

If you have any further questions or concerns regarding this process, I encourage you to contact Secretary Sullivan at (617) 626-1000.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sullivan", is written below the word "Regards,". The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

cc: The Hon. John F. Kerry
The Hon. Scott P. Brown
The Hon. Niki Tsongas
The Hon. John Tierney
Attorney General Martha Coakley