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Media Release

Weekend rain event causes sewer spills

TasWater advises that as a result of the large rain event over the weekend there has been a release of sewage into Pittwater.

“It was a one in ten year rain event in Richmond and a one in five year event at Cambridge,” said Bennie Smith, TasWater General Manager Service Delivery.

“At 5pm yesterday we could see through remote monitoring that the high rainfall was going to cause a partial bypass at Cambridge Sewage Treatment Plant.”

“We immediately alerted the Environment Protection Authority and other relevant stakeholders in the area including the oyster growers.”

“The Bilney Street (Richmond) Pump Station was also overwhelmed at one point with the pump station completely submerged in stormwater.”

As of this morning the overflows have ceased. TasWater crews are in the field investigating the effect of the rains and any impacts it has caused to the pipes, pumps and treatment plants. Teams are also out sampling water in creeks and in the bay all around the area.

TasWater has invested heavily into the infrastructure around Pittwater, and even though these spills occurred, they were delayed and reduced as a result.

“This rain event demonstrates how important it is to invest wisely in areas of high priority like Cambridge, Richmond and the areas around Pittwater,” said Mr Smith. “A number of projects to further upgrade the infrastructure are already underway.”

A rain event of this size, coupled with a sewer spill, will usually disrupt operations for oyster growers for a specified period. This is determined by Tasmanian Shellfish Quality Assurance Program (TSQAP).

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