

United States Alleges Multiple Environmental Violations by The City of Quincy

The United States has filed a civil complaint alleging that the City of Quincy is violating the Clean Water Act by discharging sewage and untreated wastewater into the Boston Harbor, Dorchester Bay, Quincy Bay and other waterways from the City's sanitary sewer and storm drain systems.

The complaint alleges that water quality samples from 2009 through 2018 demonstrated that Quincy discharged pollutants, including the bacteria commonly known as E. coli and Enterococcus, onto Quincy beaches and tidal areas along the coastline. It also alleges that the water quality samples taken from Quincy Bay, Sagamore Creek, Town Brook, Town River Bay and Furnace Brook from the period 2009 through 2013 showed the discharge of ammonia, surfactants and pharmaceutical compounds, which are indicative of sewage waste. In addition, the complaint alleges that Quincy's sanitary sewer system overflowed on numerous occasions, resulting in discharges of sewage and untreated wastewater.

"The Clean Water Act is designed to protect the waters of the United States for the health and enjoyment of its citizens. This complaint demonstrates our commitment to ensuring that our waters and beaches are protected from discharges such as raw sewage and seeks to require that the City of Quincy take the important and necessary steps to do so," said United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling.

"This complaint represents a critical step in the ongoing cleanup of Boston Harbor and nearby urban rivers," said Deb

Szaro, Acting Regional Administrator of EPA's New England region. "EPA is committed to ensuring the restoration of Boston Harbor and addressing sewage discharges in local communities continues in order to protect public health and clean water."

The Clean Water Act provides for monetary daily penalties of \$37,500 for each violation that occurred on or before Nov. 2, 2015, and \$54,833 for each violation occurring after Nov. 2, 2015. The complaint seeks the recovery of penalties and requests that the Court permanently enjoin the City from future violations of the Clean Water Act.

EPA has focused enforcement and compliance resources on the most serious environmental violations, including keeping raw sewage and contaminated stormwater out of our nation's waters. The United States Attorney's Office, working with the Department of Justice's Environment and Natural Resources Division, filed the complaint on behalf of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as part of that effort. Raw sewage overflows and inadequately controlled stormwater discharges from municipal sewer systems introduce a variety of harmful pollutants, including disease causing organisms, metals and nutrients that threaten our communities' water quality and can contribute to disease outbreaks, beach and shellfish bed closings, flooding, stream scouring, fishing advisories and basement backups of sewage.

U.S. Attorney Lelling and EPA Acting Regional Administrator Szaro made the announcement today. The case is being handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Susan M. Poswistilo of Lelling's Civil Division.