



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UPDATE: Tropical Storm Helene impacting sewer service in Oconee County

SENECA, S.C. – The following is an update as of 11:00 am Monday, September 30 for operations and conditions regarding the Oconee Joint Regional Sewer Authority (OJRSA):

- The following advisories and requests shall continue to remain in place for the foreseeable future:
 - People and pets should avoid contact with all creeks and waterbodies in the area due to potential wastewater contamination or other environmental hazards.
 - If customers observe a possible overflow of wastewater from a manhole or other vault, they should avoid the area and notify the OJRSA by calling 864-972-3900.
- The Coneross Creek Water Reclamation Facility continues to operate with only minor issues—the grit removal system and sludge pumps are clogged and staff are working to unstop these lines today. The current treatment rate is 4,200 gallons per minute (6.1 million gallons per day), which includes the treatment of stored flow. The OJRSA is currently storing about 2.4 million gallons onsite and 1.75 million gallons at our offsite storage tank and releasing it into the treatment process as we are able. It will take several more days to treat the stored flow.
- The water level at the Duck Pond Reservoir, located south of Walhalla, has receded enough to where we the Duck Pond Pump Station can be restarted. The sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) at this site will continue until the pumps are able to convey some of the wastewater contained in the upstream gravity sewer system. We expect the SSO to stop by the time of the next update (between 4pm and 5pm today). The OJRSA will have to make repairs to some of its damaged manhole structures next to the reservoir once the easement is dry enough for equipment to access the area.
- There are still two pump stations that do not have a generator and the utility grid is down that serves these locations. To the best of our knowledge, neither of these stations experienced an overflow during the event.
 - Millbrook Pump Station: We are setting up the bypass pump with an automatic control system to be able to convey the flow.
 - Pelham Creek Pump Station: We will continue a pump-and-haul operation from the storage vessel at the station on an as-needed basis.
- The current breakdown for power service at our critical pump and treatment facilities is:
 - On utility power: 7, including the treatment plant
 - On generator power and operational: 7
 - No power and not operational: 2
 - Manually turned off but soon will be online: 1 (Duck Pond PS)
- Oconee County was able to provide us with fuel for generators and they are currently out making deliveries. It should be noted that the OJRSA had these generator fuel storage tanks filled prior to the storm; however, most of them have small fuel cells that can only hold about 24-to-48 hours' worth of diesel. The tanks were

refilled on Saturday by the county. We are hopeful that as Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative and their utility partners continue making tremendous strides on their system, that we will not have to refuel these again in a couple of more days.

- The OJRSA has informed the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (formerly the Department of Health and Environmental Control) of the situation throughout the emergency. We are currently working with the agency regarding the documentation of spills and operational matters.

About the Oconee Joint Regional Sewer Authority:

The Oconee Joint Regional Sewer Authority (OJRSA) is a governmental agency providing wastewater treatment service to the cities of Seneca, Walhalla, Westminster, the town of West Union and their surrounding areas. Learn more at www.ojrja.org.

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