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PRESS RELEASE

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Tennessee Clean Water Network issues 60-day notice of intent to sue the City of Memphis for violations of the Clean Water Act from Maynard C. Stiles Sewage Treatment Plant

Location – Memphis, TN

Yesterday, the Tennessee Clean Water Network issued a 60-day notice of intent to sue to the City of Memphis for violating its National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit for the Maynard C. Stiles Wastewater Treatment Plant by failing to prevent 1,170 sanitary sewer overflows since January 2005 that discharged approximately 18,000,000 gallons of untreated raw sewage to nearby streams and rivers, by discharging foam to the Mississippi River, by discharging partially treated sewage in the Mississippi River as a result of bypassing treatment, and by failing to report these bypasses.

“This kind of pollution is not only an environmental hazard; it is also a public health hazard.”

Said Renée Victoria Hoyos, Executive Director of the Tennessee Clean Water Network.

“Memphis is a beautiful city by the river, but repeated discharges of untreated sewage can make people sick and ruin economic development. People want to enjoy their local resources and they expect their streams, streets and yards to be clean.”

TCWN has had success in a similar citizen suit. In 2004, TCWN filed suit against the Knoxville Utility Board that was settled after the United States Environmental Protection Agency intervened which resulted in a consent order. KUB has worked hard to comply with the order and has reduced their sewer overflows considerably.

“We’ve worked out solutions to similar problems with KUB and we are willing to work out a solution so that the people of Memphis can enjoy clean water in their rivers and streams,” said Ms. Hoyos. “Though we understand that the current City Administration inherited these problems, we’re sending the message that now is the time to clean up. We will not wait any longer.”

Untreated sewage can harbor pathogens, bacteria and chemicals that are unsafe. If you see a manhole spewing liquid stay clear of that water, wash down your vehicle and do not let children or pets play in that water.

To see the 60-day notice and photos, go to <http://www.tcwn.org/programs/litigation.php>

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Empowering Tennesseans to claim their right to clean water and healthy communities by fostering civic engagement, building coalitions and advancing water policy for a sustainable future.