

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Gary Bechtel

Chairman

Frank Patterson

Vice-Chairman

Elaine Lucas

Desmond Brown

Dwight Jones

Bill Howell

Valerie Wynn

Ron Shipman

**Executive Director
& President**

790 Second Street

P.O.Box 108

Macon, GA 31202

(478) 464-5600

Fax: (478) 750-2007

MaconWater.org

MAJOR SPILL REPORT TO EPD**EPD Watershed Protection Branch**

2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive

Suite 1152

Atlanta, GA 30334

DATE OF MAJOR SPILL: Sunday, April 6, 2025 & Monday, April 7, 2025

REPORT SUBMITTED: Thursday, April 10, 2025

LOCATION OF MAJOR SPILL: [Outfall/Discharge to Ocmulgee River from the Rocky Creek Water Reclamation Facility at 4705 Mead Road](#)

CAUSE OF MAJOR SPILL: High solids caused the WRF to exceed its daily threshold of Total Suspended Solids (TSS) as stated in the Authority's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit (NPDES). As was reported to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) on March 4th, 2025, the biosolids disposal group, Macon Soils, Inc. (MSI), has been hindered in land applying biosolids produced by the plants due to regular rainfall over the last several months. This resulted in the biosolids storage sheds, which serve as storage for both of MWA's water reclamation facilities, staying full. This has, in turn, affected the ability of the wastewater staff to waste and dewater excess solids, and Rocky Creek began building a high solids inventory.

According to the rain gauge at the Ocmulgee River, on April 6th, 2025, 3.24 inches of rain fell in approximately six hours. This time period also included lightning and a tornado watch, which both interfere with the operators' abilities to safely monitor plant conditions as they are under strict instructions to stay indoors and, when necessary, shelter-in-place in designated locations.

The sudden flow surge disturbed solids that had been settled out, and Clarifier #6 became overwhelmed until the staff onsite could get all of the aeration off and get the incoming flow to stabilize. The affected clarifier spilled solids to the effluent as a result. Once the blanket on Clarifier #6 dropped back down, the return pumps were also shut down to cut back on the amount of flow pushing through the aeration basins.

MEASURED TSS EFFLUENT RESULT: The Georgia EPD requires the Rocky Creek WRF to report as a Major Spill if the discharge to the waters of the State exceeds on any single day 67.5 mg/L for TSS.

The TSS for the dates reported were as follows:

4/6/2025 – 406 mg/L

4/7/2025 – 94 mg/L

VOLUME OF EFFLUENT DISCHARGED:

4/6/2025 – 23.0 MG
4/7/2025 – 44.44 MG

RECEIVING WATERS: Ocmulgee River

SERVICE BASIN AFFECTED: Lower Rocky Creek

WRF SERVICE AREA NPDES PERMIT: GA0024546

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN TO MITIGATE OR TO REDUCE ADVERSE EFFECTS:

Aerators plant-wide were immediately shut down to hold solids in the basins until plant flows decreased, then were turned on slowly as plant conditions allowed to keep from overloading the clarifiers. Continuous sampling will be performed to monitor performance until the plant is returned to normal operations.

SPILL STATUS: Contained

SIGNS POSTED: Monday, April 6, 2025

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN TO PREVENT FUTURE SPILL: Our staff are making regular adjustments to the aeration basins and clarifiers to try and manage the solids while minimizing loss to the effluent. The return pumps are turned on and are slowly being ramped back up to not create a surge of flow to the aeration basins. The clarifier polymer feed systems will be run if necessary to aid in solids settling, but due to the density of the blankets already forming, the possibility of the arms over-torquing with the addition of polymer is a concern. As MSI finds opportunities to spread, press operations and wasting will be turned back on. MWA is aware that inflow and infiltration (I&I) contributes to elevated flows during rain events and is addressing I&I in future Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) projects. In addition, the MWA staff is pursuing options for plant upgrades that will provide better control of the various processes, especially in the event of major storm events

MONITORING INITIATED: Friday, April 11, 2025

MEDIA / HEALTH DEPARTMENT / OTHERS NOTIFIED: Macon Telegraph, WMAZ (TV), WMGT (Radio), WGXA, Macon-Bibb County Health Department, State of Georgia Health Department

REPORT SUBMITTED BY: Marlayzha Griffin