

Charlton Health Department
37 Main Street,
Charlton, MA 01507

MassDEP
627 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608

Public Notice

(June 14, 2010)

Officials from the Town of Charlton and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) are working to control and recover several thousand gallons of diesel fuel that was released into a tributary of Cady Brook. The release was reported by a citizen to the Charlton Fire Department on Friday evening, June 11, 2010. Charlton Fire Department immediately notified MassDEP's Emergency Response unit and began containing the release. MassDEP responded with its cleanup contractor, New England Disposal Technology, Inc. The diesel fuel was traced back to Charlton Welding & Repair, Inc. at 11 Griffin Road, on the northern side of Route 20. MassDEP has issued a Notice of Responsibility to Charlton Welding & Repair. The release came from a tanker truck used to fuel vehicles. The specific cause and timing of the release is under investigation.

The tanker truck has been emptied and removed, and the contaminated soils removed. Charlton Fire Department contained the release and prevented it from spreading beyond the Route 169 bridge. The actual volume of the release is still unknown, however the capacity of the tanker truck was 7,000 gallons and MassDEP's contractor has recovered an estimated 1,500 gallons of diesel fuel from the tributary to Cady Brook so far. The oil is being recovered from the brook by vacuum truck. A significant amount of diesel remains in the wetland area on the east side of Cady Brook Condominiums. Preparations are being made for clearing oil out of the wetlands.

The public water supply well serving Cady Brook Condominiums has not been compromised. It is a bedrock well, greater than 700 feet deep. MassDEP has reviewed water supply records and based on prior sampling information confirmed that the well draws no water from Cady Brook. As confirmation, drinking water samples have been collected for analysis, the results of which should be available later this week. Enhanced sampling will continue to ensure the safety of the water from that well.

At this time, the main hazard posed by the spill is from the potential inhalation of diesel fumes or direct contact with the fuel. Short term exposure to diesel fumes may temporarily cause nausea, eye irritation, increased blood pressure, headache, light-headedness, loss of appetite, poor coordination, and difficulty concentrating. Charlton Board of Health and MassDEP met with many condominium residents to inform them of the situation. Both agencies strongly advise residents to keep windows shut and keep pets and children away from the brook and wetland areas that contain diesel fuel. Fumes and odors should improve as clean up progresses. This notice will be updated periodically to advise residents of clean up status.

Aggressive cleanup actions by MassDEP are expected through this week, and field operations will continue for several weeks after that. MassDEP and Charlton municipal officials will continue to work together until this release is resolved.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact James Philbrook at the Charlton Health Department at (508) 248-2210.