



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Environmental Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Aug. 7, 2019

DNR tracking fish kill in White Breast Creek near Osceola

MEDIA CONTACT: Tom Atkinson at 515-577-9296 (cell) or 515-725-0268 (office) or Tom.Atkinson@dnr.iowa.gov.

OSCEOLA—The DNR is tracking a spill from the Osceola wastewater treatment plant that is causing a fish kill in White Breast Creek.

Not many details are available yet, but about 9 a.m. Wednesday, the treatment plant reported a large amount of sludge spilled from their digester into the creek. Because of high organic matter in the sludge, oxygen levels dropped in the stream. Low oxygen and high ammonia levels are toxic to fish and other aquatic animals.

The city is pumping water from the creek back to the wastewater plant, to limit pollution downstream.

Boaters, anglers and waders should avoid direct contact with the stream as the sludge is likely high in human bacteria and possibly pathogens. Residents should keep children and pets out of the stream until at least 48 hours after the spill ends and cleanup is complete.

The leading edge of the sludge spill is moving slowly, and had not reached 260th Street, about 3.6 river miles downstream at 1 p.m.

The city and DNR have notified farmers immediately downstream so they can move cattle to other water sources.

DNR is onsite to monitor the spill, provide technical assistance and conduct a fish kill count. The DNR will consider appropriate enforcement action.