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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Diesel Fuel Oil Leak near US-23 at US-223 in Monroe County

MONROE, Mich., March 28, 2024 – The Monroe County Public Health Department (MCHD) is reporting a diesel fuel oil leak originating in the area of the intersection of US-23 and US-223. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) and MCHD staff are onsite working to contain the spill while searching for the source of the leak.

A diesel oil sheen and smell was discovered from the point of origin and as far south as Hicker Road in the North Branch Ottawa River (NBOR). Current efforts at containment include the placement of absorption booms in the NBOR near Erie and Sterns Road, along with vacuum trucks near the origin to contain and remove the contaminated water/sheen from entering the NBOR.

At this time, there is no threat to municipal (city water) drinking water supplies. However, residents in the area of the leak who utilize an onsite drinking water supply (well water) may consider having their drinking water supply tested out of a practice of caution and to alleviate concerns of potential contamination.

“The MCHD takes the safety of our residents’ drinking water very seriously. Out of an abundance of caution, we are encouraging the residents nearby to report to the MCHD any unusual change in the taste or smell of their water,” said Chris Westover, Environmental Health Director for MCHD.

The MCHD will be working closely with EPA, EGLE and others to map and develop further action on any water sample testing options that become available. As soon as more information (eligibility requirements based on vicinity to spill, testing lab, sample collection, etc.) becomes available to MCHD, it will be shared with Whiteford Township Officials (to disseminate this information with local residents) and provided to local media outlets. In the meantime, residents with concerns about the safety of their onsite drinking water supply based on taste, smell or sight (sheen) may consider bottled water for consumption (drinking, cooking, brushing teeth).

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact the Environmental Health Division at 734-240-7900 or eh_frontdesk@monroemi.org.

The Monroe County Health Department protects the public through health promotion, disease prevention, and preservation of the environment. Local public health information and updates are available at healthymonroecounty.com and on social media (@MCHDMichigan).

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