



For Immediate Release

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August 24, 2006

MADIGAN: VILLAGE, SANITARY DISTRICT UPGRADE FACILITIES TO HELP PREVENT SEWER BACKUPS

Chicago - Attorney General Lisa Madigan today said an agreement that includes \$3.4 million in improvements and upgrades to the Westville Belgium Sanitary District and the Village of Westville, should help to rectify a host of problems that have plagued the system since the 1980s.

Madigan said a consent order entered yesterday in Vermilion County Circuit Court resolves a May 2005 lawsuit that alleged persistent problems at the Sanitary District's wastewater treatment plant and Westville's portion of the collection system resulted in alleged water pollution that exceeded National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit limits. In the suit, Madigan pointed to a number of citizen complaints of partially-treated sewage that flowed into a creek that empties into the Vermilion River. The suit also noted that Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) inspectors observed wastewater being discharged from a Westville collection station to a storm sewer to relieve pressure and prevent sewer backups into homes.

"This agreement will ensure that corrective measures already underway by the Village of Westville and the Sanitary District will bring to an end annoying sewer-related problems and provide a healthier local environment," Madigan said.

Madigan said the Sanitary District has begun work on a proposed \$2.5 million construction project to help alleviate excess flow to its wastewater treatment plant during heavy rains. The work includes the construction of two 52-foot clarifiers, or concrete basins, to hold and treat excess flow from the collection system and other projects that will assist in handling excess flow including replacing 640 feet of 24-inch sewer lines leading to the plant and upgrading chlorination and de-chlorination systems. In addition, Madigan said the Sanitary District and Westville have distributed an educational flyer to Westville residents on steps they can take to prevent sewage backups in their homes.

In June, the Westville Village Board approved a plan to locate illegal hookups to the sewer system, upgrade meters, replace defective equipment and manhole covers, and reconstruct two pump stations at a projected cost to the village of more than \$900,000. Madigan said the Sanitary District and Westville have applied for state grants administered by the IEPA to help pay for improvements specified by the consent order.

Madigan said under terms of the consent order, a civil penalty of \$11,000 was imposed on both the Westville Belgium Sanitary District and the Village of Westville.

Assistant Attorney General Jane McBride is handling the case for Madigan's Environmental Bureau.

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