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“Wastewater Treatment”



It isn't a comforting sight. Water from the Elkhorn River flooding surrounded the City of Norfolk wastewater treatment plant on Monroe Avenue. According to Todd Boling, City of Norfolk Wastewater Plant Superintendent, the flood waters have not breached the tanks at the plant. At the same time, the plant is processing record amounts of water.

“We normally treat three million gallons of water a day. On Tuesday we treated 8.5 million gallons and Tuesday night at 3:00 am we were treating water at the rate of 13 million gallons per day. The flood waters have affected us greatly but only because of the extra workload of the facilities,” Boling said.

Boling said that most of the extra water being treated at the plant was river water that had infiltrated the sewer lines.

“We treated it and released it downstream,” Boling said.

The water treatment plant is normally automated and is controlled by plant operators by computer. With the extra water, the computerized control had to be overridden and staff at the plant manually operated the controls.

For a period of three hours the plant had to use an electric generator as water had entered an electrical manhole and tripped a breaker. As the water receded, the plant was able to go back on normal power.

Boling said that at no time was waste water from the treatment plant backed up into Norfolk.

“Any water that residents have in their homes would be river water, not sewage. Our staff and equipment worked hard to make sure the waste water treatment plant worked as it should,” Boling said.