

# Maintenance Advisory

From Jon W. Reincke, Engineer of Operations

## Rest Area Lift Stations

MDOT

Division of Operations

Maintenance

6333 Old Lansing Road

Lansing, MI 48917

For questions regarding  
this advisory, contact:

Corey Rogers, Engineer  
Emergency Support Unit  
Phone: 517-322-3320  
[RogersCo@michigan.gov](mailto:RogersCo@michigan.gov)

Phill Daneff,  
Superintendent  
Statewide Facilities  
Phone: 517-322-1660  
[DaneffP@michigan.gov](mailto:DaneffP@michigan.gov)



Many of our rest areas incorporate a sewage lift station as part of the wastewater treatment process. A lift station is used in low-lying areas where a gravity fed system is not sufficient. A series of pumps transports the sanitary wastewater to a treatment facility, lagoon, drain field, forced main, another gravity system, etc. A pump failure may result in a sewage overflow and the potential for environmental contamination and public endangerment. A few simple steps can be taken to ensure these important waste removal systems function properly.

- Frequent inspections of the lift stations and backup alarms are vital. These inspections should be conducted at least once a month by a Rest Area Coordinator and daily by Rest Area Attendants. A quick inspection is a simple way to ensure our alarms and pumps will function properly. An inspection checklist will be provided at all rest areas to guide coordinators and attendants in such inspections.
- A lift station allows for solids to settle to the bottom of the tank while the liquid portion is pumped out. As a result the solids may accumulate to the point where the pump and/or alarm are not functioning properly. If solids are found covering pipes, wiring and pump hardware, a tank cleaning contract is recommended.
- In the event of a power failure at the rest area, the backup alarm may malfunction. Often, those rest areas that incorporate a lift station also rely on well water for the water supply. A power failure in this instance may also result in a loss of water pressure reducing the chance of an overflow. However, it is still recommended that any rest area subject to a power failure be closed until power is fully restored and the pumps and alarms have been inspected.
- Any discharge must be reported to the DEQ. Contact the Rest Area Coordinator or region resource staff to ensure this reporting requirement is met. This individual will also provide advice on immediate response actions that should be taken to minimize health and environmental impacts.

Through proper maintenance and timely inspections, we can ensure our waste removal systems are working properly. With little effort, we can provide a clean, sanitary rest area for the public and protect our natural resources by eliminating the potential for sewage overflows.