

MOTION

On September 23, 2015, personal hygiene and medical products like tampon casings, condoms, syringes and needles began to wash ashore beaches in Santa Monica Bay, prompting the closure of Dockweiler State Beach and other beaches ranging from Manhattan Beach to Marina Del Rey. These personal hygiene and medical products are not intended to be disposed in the toilet, but some do still get into the wastewater system and many ended up in Santa Monica Bay.

Though there are theories regarding what caused the discharge of sewage-related trash into the Bay, the event is still under investigation by the Department of Sanitation. Sanitation officials and engineers have postulated that a storm in early September may have played a role in the discharge, possibly flushing out trapped debris in the auxiliary outfall pipe at the Hyperion Water Reclamation Plant.

This unfortunate situation comes at an especially precarious time, as Sanitation is currently undertaking a renovation project for Hyperion's five-mile outfall pipe, which is requiring the use of the backup one-mile outfall pipe. Sanitation expects to complete the project by November 2, 2015.

In the wake of the discharge, the Department of Sanitation has been exceptionally open and transparent with the public and environmental organizations. With El Nino weather patterns making large rainstorms likely in coming months, however, it is crucial that more is known about the September discharge and that preparations are made to prevent a similar spill occurring in the future.

I THEREFORE MOVE, that in order to protect public health and the environment and ensure public confidence about operations at Hyperion, the Department of Sanitation report to the City Council within 21 days regarding the following:

- The cause of the September spill of materials of sewage origin (MOSO) into Santa Monica Bay;
- Review of the cleanup operation and determination of whether the release of MOSO has subsided;
- What preparations are underway to manage operations at Hyperion in the event of excessive rainfall from El Nino related storms, including what proactive steps are being taken to keep MOSO from being released and to maximize water recycling opportunities;
- The status of any outreach programs by Sanitation intended to better educate the public on proper disposal of personal hygiene and medical products in that they should not be disposed of in the toilet; and
- The status of the five-mile outfall renovation project.

I FURTHER MOVE, that the Department of Sanitation assemble a "Bay Emergency Response Team," comprised of the County of Los Angeles Departments of Beaches and Harbors, delegates of elected officials representing coastal areas in both City and County government, community stakeholders, conservation organizations and other relevant groups, to assist Sanitation in public notification in the event of future spills or emergency events.

PRESENTED BY:


MIKE BONIN
Councilmember, 11th District

SECONDED BY:




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