

# NEW BEDFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT



871 ROCKDALE AVENUE • NEW BEDFORD, MA • 02740

P R E S S   R E L E A S E

(PR - 5 - 18)

**For Immediate Release**

**May 4, 2008**

**Lieutenant Jeffrey P. Silva**

*See Also: 2008-7475*

**Public Information Officer**

**Office: 508.991.6300 – Ext. 148**

**Email: [jpsilva@newbedford-ma.gov](mailto:jpsilva@newbedford-ma.gov)**

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## SEWAGE TRUCK LEAK CAUSES SOUTH END CLEANUP AND TRAFFIC DETOURS

**New Bedford, Massachusetts** – Just after 9:30 AM today, New Bedford Police Officers were called to the area of Harbor and Cove Streets regarding a JP Noonan truck that was hauling treated sludge from the wastewater treatment plant in the South End of the City that had leaked. The truck was hauling just under 9,000 gallons of treated sludge and a still undermined amount was spilled as the truck travelled throughout the City's South End until it finally stopped just before Route 18.

After a preliminary investigation by New Bedford Police patrol officers, it was determined that one of the truck's valve seals starting leaking in the area of Butler Street and East Rodney French Boulevard. The driver then told the arriving patrol officer that he did not realize his truck was leaking until a motorist had gotten his attention in the area of Cove and Harbors Streets just before Route 18. When the JP Noonan driver pulled over, he noticed the leaking sludge, which accumulated to over (1) foot in depth in this area, and called for another truck to come to the scene so that the wastewater sludge could be offloaded.

New Bedford Police patrol officers from the South District (District 2) then closed the area from East Rodney French Boulevard and Butler Street all the way to Cove and Harbor Streets, rerouting traffic and blocking streets so that the cleanup effort could be started. City officials and departments including the Fire Department and the Department of Public Infrastructure were called in to assist with the cleanup effort which was still going on as of 1:30 PM today. Northbound traffic on East Rodney French Boulevard was closed for over an hour and all other traffic will be redirected as needed by New Bedford Police Officers until the cleanup effort has concluded.

The Department of Public Infrastructure (DPI) stated that the cleanup effort will be completed and traffic flow restored by late afternoon and that the spillage will be completely removed. Although a significant odor still remains throughout much of the South End of the City, DPI officials indicated that as well would dissipate over time after the cleanup is complete. The spillage, although odiferous, is non-toxic because it has already been treated at the plant prior to its transport.

No one was injured as a result of this incident and there were no accidents or other complications other than the traffic disruption.