

# Dye Tracer Test Communications Plan

## Crystal City Substation Oil Spill

DATE: May 6, 2016

### **Official Dominion Statement:**

As part of the Crystal Substation oil remediation effort, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality has instructed Dominion to conduct a dye tracer test to determine how mineral oil traveled from the vault at our substation into Roaches Run last January 24. We will be conducting the dye tracer test on XXXX. Visible signs of the dye may be seen in the form of an effervescent color (likely peach) in the water and we want to assure the public that the dye tracer test is safe for vegetation, humans and animals and will in no way harm aquatic life.



Dye test at work

### **Background**

As part of the Crystal Substation oil remediation effort, we must conduct a dye tracer test to determine how oil traveled from the vault at our substation into Roaches Run. Before we can complete this test, we must submit a formal communications plan to the National Park Service, who owns the land that Roaches Run is on.

- 1) We are required to do this test.
- 2) The test will help us find the path that the oil flowed to get into Roaches Run.
- 3) Contingent on agency approvals, the injection will take place the week of May 30<sup>th</sup>. We anticipate the injection of the dye to occur over a one to two day period.
- 4) Charcoal packages will be placed along the path to help give us an idea of the route and the speed that the oil would travel.
- 5) If visible dye does reach Roaches Run, it could be days before the dye is visible in Roaches Run and then it could take days before it dissipates.
- 6) The color of the dye has not been determined at this time, but it will likely be a bright peach, which will be quite visible.
- 7) The dye used is the same type of dye used to color the Chicago River each year to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. It is non-toxic and poses no threat to any vegetation, animal or aquatic life.

### **NOTE:**

Dominion's media relations manager, Chuck Penn, will be on site and available for on-camera interviews during this periods. He can be reached at 703-796-9308.

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### Q&As

#### If asked:

#### **Q: What is the purpose of the dye tracer test?**

A: We want to better understand how mineral oil from a transformer at the Crystal City substation was able to infiltrate the storm sewer system and eventually reach Roaches Run. By adding the dye (which will likely be effervescent peach in color) at specific locations along the electrical system and then tracking its path, we will be able to determine the mineral oil's flow.

#### **Q: Is the dye harmful to vegetation, humans and animals?**

A: The dye is safe. It is approved the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and has been successfully used at other sites in Virginia. In fact, the dye is the type of dye used to turn the Chicago River green for St. Patrick's Day. It does not harm vegetation, wildlife and is also very common in food colorings, so it is safe to ingest (i.e. it will not impact fish or other seafood from the area).

#### **Q: Was this test mandated and who is Dominion working with on this effort?**

A: Because we could not conclusively determine how the mineral oil reached a body of water, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality required Dominion to conduct a dye tracer test. Dominion hired an outside environmental contractor to do the testing.

#### **Q: When will the testing occur?**

A: TBD.

#### **Q: What will be seen and how long will the dye last?**

A: If the dye reaches Roaches Run, it could be visible for about week, but it is more likely that the dye will only be visible for a day or less if there are water currents to dilute them. It also breaks down in sunlight. We expect that you'll see the dye during rainstorms when the storm sewers are flushed. We anticipate that some of the dye will show up near the storm sewer outfalls at Roaches Run.

#### **Q: When will you know the test results?**

A: Because we do not know how long it will take for the dye to travel through the path, we cannot definitively say when we will have test results. We will monitor the testing daily to track the progress.

#### **Q: What are you doing to ensure a mineral oil spill doesn't happen again at any of your substations?**

A: We have already begun a rigorous and aggressive review of our current oil spill response plans and are in the process of making enhancements deemed necessary to strengthen these plans. We are conducting an engineering review of our containment design and making improvements as needed.