

# Middlebelt to be Closed For More Than a Month

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Expect Middlebelt Road, between 12 and 13 Mile roads, to be closed for at least another month, according to engineers with the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner's office.

That portion of the road was closed last week when a section of an aging 36-inch sewer line collapsed some 35-feet beneath the surface allowing soil to enter the line. The displaced soil created a sinkhole that prompted the closure of part of the roadway.

Suzanne Coffey, a WRC manager and engineer on site, said progress is being slowed by the high groundwater table and the need to stabilize the soil to protect nearby utilities.

"It complicated because the soil had voids and the pipe dropped as much as three feet into those voids," Coffey said. "We need to stabilize the soil before a permanent fix can be made."

Coffey said that sewage that normally would be handled by the underground pipe is being pumped over land through temporary pipes to bypass the broken sewer line.

The 50-year-old pipeline serves approximately 70,000 people in Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield, Bloomfield Township, Orchard Lake and Keego Harbor.

"We're in the process of putting in another bypass to handle the wet weather flows," Coffey said. "It's not in place yet, but we have backup pumps on the existing bypass."

If you have any questions, you can contact the WRC during normal business hours at 248-858-0958.