

Recently, near the Ada Huja Access Road number 9, a brown-milky water with an unpleasant, sour smell started to gush from the pipe coming out from under the embankment. This pollution was first noticed by fishermen and pedestrians. As they did not know who to turn to, they invited the Association “Eco-Pancevacki rit”. While the Association “Eko-Pancevacki rit” is convinced that the river is polluted with wastewater from the nearby Paper Processing Factory, the company claims that the incident has nothing to do with them and that the inspection has determined that the waste comes from the sewer. It has long been known that the Danube has become the place where most of the wastewater from the city ends. Apart from the fact that fecal water from almost the entire capital flows into it, it also changes its quality due to various other pollution.

- The water, as eyewitnesses told us, gushed from that pipe in strong jets every fifteen minutes. Very quickly, a real plug was made between the ship that was anchored there and the shore, so the crew had to push that mass with a rake, because vapour was spreading from it, which pinched the eyes and caused coughing. In that mass, there was mostly adhesive tape, with which cardboard is glued. Therefore, we assumed that the liquid came from a cardboard processing plant in the nearby Belgrade Paper Factory, which, among other things, deals with paper processing. We investigated and determined that the pipe was connected to some tanks in the yard of the factory - says Zoran Janković, from the Association “Eko-Pančevački rit”.

He emphasizes that they tried to reach someone who is in charge of environmental issues in the factory.

- At the entrance, they told us that the person was at the meeting and gave us the number of the woman, who claimed that she did not know Serbian. She referred us to a certain Mehmet Enver, but he also “did not know” our language well. Then he “directed” us to the municipality of Palilula, which has nothing to do with what was happening on Ada Huja - says Janković and adds that the water spill lasted on May 31, June 1 and 2.

This is not the first time; similar situations have happened before. Last year, for example, the water in almost the same place was purple. After the analysis of the samples that the inspection, he notes, did a few days after the pollution, it was determined that the waste water comes from the sewer.

- This time, as before, we sent the application to the address of the authorities - the Secretariat for Inspection Affairs, the Sector for Environmental Protection and the Water Management Inspection, and asked to determine whether the factory has a so-called water permit. This permit enables companies to discharge wastewater into the river, but processed - Janković notes.

The Belgrade Paper Factory, ie the company “Smurfit Kapa”, claims that they received information about the pollution and discharge of wastewater into the Danube from the media.

- In this case, it is not a pipe from production, but a sewage pipe, and the assumption is that due to heavy rains and additional pumping of atmospheric water from all facilities on the road from Višnjička Street, sludge spilled into the Danube to our factory. After the announcement in the media, we immediately had a visit on June 3 by the city inspector for environmental protection, who determined that it was not wastewater from the factory, but probably an outflow of atmospheric water - said Milan Markovic, director of the company “Smurfit Kapa” at Ada Huja.

He emphasizes that the Belgrade Paper Factory, which is now part of the “Smurfit Kapa” company, has had systems for mechanical wastewater treatment since 1980, and that it has a so-called water permit until August.

Solution for a modern standby water treatment plant

The Belgrade paper factory, together with the Avala Ada factory, became part of the largest European group for the production of paper and paper packaging, the Smurfit Cap group from Ireland, a little over a year ago.

- We emphasize that the factory has been ready for a year for the construction of the most modern plant for biological wastewater treatment, which does not exist in Belgrade. The main reason why we are not able to carry out the planned works, is the lack of a detailed regulation plan at the location where we are - said Milan Markovic. He points out that the idea of this company from Ireland is for Belgrade to become the center of further expansion of the group to Southeast Europe.

- As a socially responsible company, which is at the forefront in the implementation of ideas and projects for environmental protection, we are ready to complete the most modern water treatment plant at the existing location by the end of next year, which would be useful to the factory, as well as the entire community in Belgrade - said Markovic.

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