

Gaza to pump sewage straight into sea as crisis worsens

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Sewage water runs next to the Nuseirat power plant in the Gaza Strip in this file picture taken on June 10, 2017

Municipalities in Gaza announced Wednesday they will pump sewage straight into the sea from the Palestinian coastal enclave due to fuel shortages and the desperate humanitarian situation in the strip.

"The beaches of the Gaza Strip will be completely closed and [sewage](#) will be pumped into the sea because the municipalities are unable to provide fuel" for [treatment plants](#), said Nizar Hejazi, head of the Gaza City municipality.

Hejazi also noted "the policy of collective punishment (which) continues to be imposed on the population," in a statement representing municipalities across the strip.

"We announce a state of emergency in the cities and municipalities of the Gaza Strip," Hejazi said, noting services would be cut by as much as 50 percent.

The only power plant in Gaza stopped operating last week due to lack of fuel, leaving the strip totally reliant on imports.

Israel has imposed a crippling blockade on Gaza for more than a decade, while Egypt has also largely sealed its border in recent years, with both citing [security measures](#).

Residents currently receive only a couple of hours power per day.

The Rafah crossing with Egypt was opened for four days from Wednesday for humanitarian cases, only the second such opening this year.

Last month the United Nations envoy warned the enclave was on the verge of "full collapse".

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