



S.W.I.M. Coalition

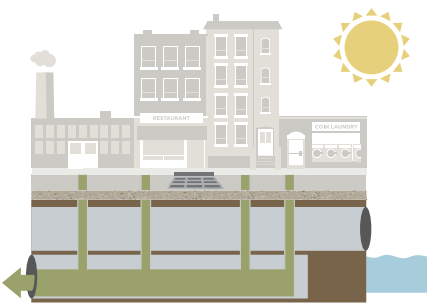
Stormwater Infrastructure Matters: utilizing stormwater as a resource, not a waste!

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE CITY'S MS4: Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System

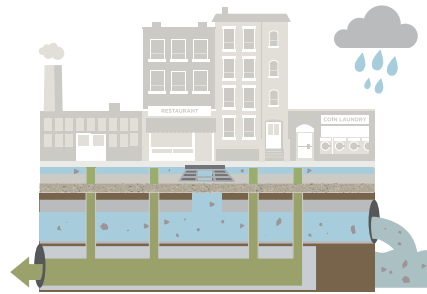
WHAT IS THE MS4?

MS4 stands for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System. In New York City, it is the system designed to collect and carry stormwater using city-owned drainage systems, streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, channels and specialized storm drains. The Separate Storm Sewer System is not connected to wastewater treatment plants, which means the stormwater is not cleaned before it discharges into our local waterways.

SEPARATE SEWER ON DRY DAY



SEPARATE SEWER ON WET DAY



Source: Open Sewer Atlas NYC

IMPORTANT TERMS

Stormwater runoff - When rain or snowmelt occurs on impermeable surfaces and flows over land, collecting debris and other pollutants.

First Flush - The initial runoff during rain is the most polluted because it is collecting the pollutants on the ground, thus it is a crucial part of managing stormwater.

Separate storm sewer system - A system in 40% of NYC in which a network of drains, pipes and ditches collect stormwater runoff discharge it into local waterways without it being processed in a treatment plant.

Direct drainage - A stormwater system in which stormwater runoff travels over land directly into the nearest waterway, instead of being collected and conveyed through pipes.

MS4 Permit - A permit issued by the State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) that regulates discharges from NYC's Separate Sewer System into local waterways.

SWMP (Stormwater Management Plan) The plan NYC DEP is developing to reduce pollution in stormwater runoff and prohibit illicit discharges.

WHERE ARE THE SEPARATE SEWERS?

About half of the City's land area is in separately sewered, unsewered, or direct discharge areas. Of the sewered areas in the city, about 40 percent have separate storm sewers or direct drainage, and the rest are served by the combined sewer system.



WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Polluted stormwater runoff is the major reason that almost 40 percent of surveyed U.S. waterbodies do not meet water quality standards. Polluted runoff, often untreated, flows directly into local waterbodies over land or via storm sewer systems.

If left unmanaged, this water pollution can result in the destruction of fish, wildlife and aquatic habitats; a loss in aesthetic value; and threats to public health through contaminated food, drinking water, beaches and recreational waterways.



WHAT IS AN MS4 PERMIT?

Under the Federal Clean Water Act, sources of stormwater discharge that harm water quality must be addressed through a permit system, known as the MS4 permit. The permit requires the City to implement measures such as mapping stormwater outfalls, identifying the source of pollutants in stormwater, finding and eliminating illegal stormwater outfalls, reducing water pollution stemming from new construction and development, and regulating industrial sources of water pollution.

The State Department of Environmental Conservation issued an MS4 Permit to New York City in August, 2015. Now, New York City is undergoing a multi-year process to research and develop a Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) to reduce the pollutants discharging into the water through the stormwater system. The detailed plan will be submitted in August, 2018, and will lay out specific schedules for identifying and reducing pollutants.

HOW WILL THE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN IMPACT ME?



If you work in construction...

the City will require construction sites of a certain size to manage stormwater runoff. Stay up-to-date on the city's requirements, and proactively ensure debris from your site does not end up in the waterways.



If you are a plumber...

the City will start cracking down on illegal hookups to storm drains, whether they are mistakes or deliberate. Make sure you know your sewer and storm lines, and contact the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations if you are unsure.



If you are a property owner...

Explore ways to manage stormwater on your property. Rain gardens, permeable pavers, and rain barrels are just some of the ways a small property owner can make a big difference.



If you are none of the above...

You still have a role to play! Any litter, debris, or oil on the street will end up in the waterways when it rains. Keep the streets clean, and spread the word to your neighbors.

5 WAYS TO BE A STORMWATER STEWARD

1 Take a close look at the MS4 map and determine if you are inside the MS4 area, for help, visit openseweratlas.tumblr.com/map and type your address

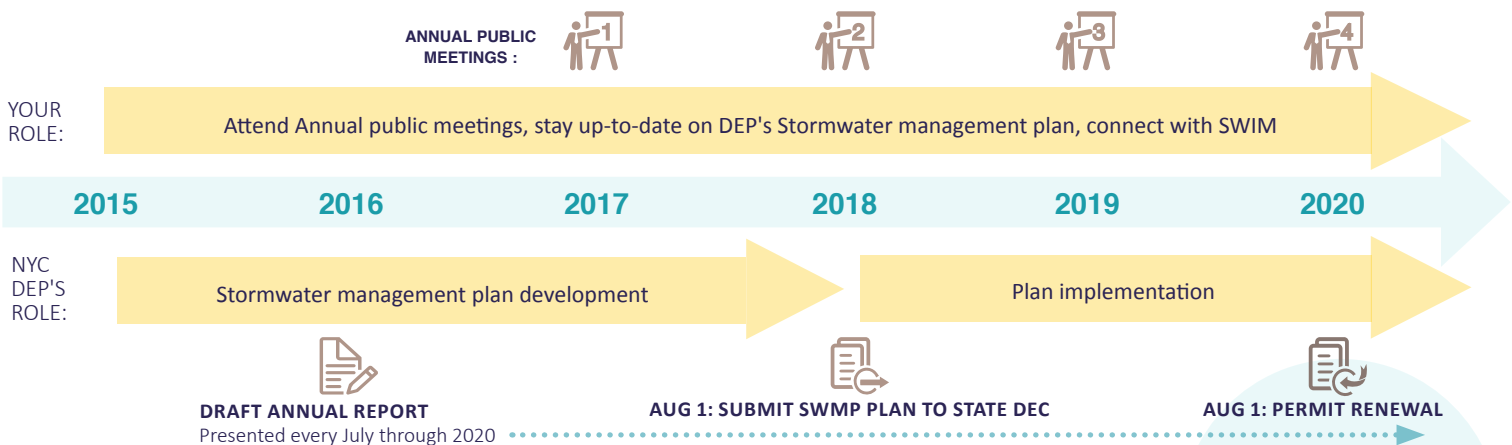
2 If you see illegal dumping or discharge coming from an outfall pipe on a dry-weather day, report it to the NYC DEP by calling 914.232.8642 or emailing MS4info@dep.nyc.gov

3 Learn more about the MS4 permit and what is required by visiting DEP's website at www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/stormwater/ms4.shtml

4 Sign up to receive SWIM Coalition eblasts to stay up-to-date on MS4 news by visiting us at swimmablenyc.org

5 Be a storm drain steward! Take responsibility for clearing any debris and trash from your nearest storm drain.

MS4 DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE



Stormwater Infrastructure Matters (S.W.I.M.) is a coalition of 70 member organizations dedicated to ensuring swimmable and fishable waters around New York City through natural, sustainable stormwater management practices. For more information about the plans and to get involved with our outreach program visit us at www.swimmablenyc.org, contact us and follow us at swimmablenyc@gmail.com and [@SWIMcoalition](https://twitter.com/SWIMcoalition).

