



The Jersey Water Works (JWW) Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Committee has been reviewing the CSO Long Term Control Plans for NJ sewer agencies, commenting publicly that the LTCPs provided limited guidance on how CSO utilities expect to handle climate change.

Major events like Hurricanes Henri and Ida have raised awareness that many parts of our current sewer infrastructure cannot handle increasingly severe storms. Scientists and engineers widely agree that there are three important effects of climate change on our existing CSO infrastructure:

- Total precipitation is increasing, and a higher percentage of that precipitation occurs in heavy storms.
- NJ has a 50% chance of sea level rising more than 1.4 feet by 2050 and 3.3 feet by 2100.
- With more severe storms comes a greater possibility of power outages. Many combined sewer systems rely on grid electric power to capture and treat stormwater.

There are many methods for mitigation and/or adaptation to climate change. Generally, these adaptive methods fit into three categories:

- Adapting to increased high-tide levels at sewer discharge points.
- Managing or mitigating increased flows in the sewers, both total flow and peak rates, including the use of green infrastructure.
- Providing resilient infrastructure.

Jersey Water Works encourages elected officials, planners, and citizens to review LTCP plans for resilience and adaptability to climate change. Some specific actions include:

- Adopting an official state sea level rise standard to guide planning for combined sewer overflow plans and projects.
- Revising the official design storm standard that incorporates climate change.
- Requiring utility permit holders to incorporate energy efficiencies and projects that will achieve zero carbon emissions from their treatment facilities.
- Advocacy by stakeholders for more federal and state funding for significant capital improvements. The use of stormwater use fees should also be considered.
- Given the increased wet weather flow, we recommend stricter adherence to, and enforcement of, the Environmental Protection Agency's nine minimum controls, such as keeping sewers cleaned on a regular basis.

Use this card to educate stakeholders to ensure the CSO permits incorporate current climate change data. For more information, please contact info@jerseywaterworks.org.