

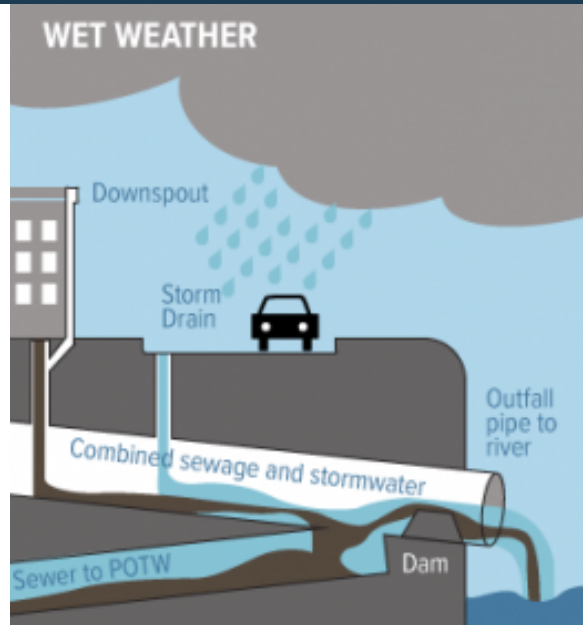
FACT SHEET

Under the federal Clean Water Act, combined sewer discharges are prohibited without a permit. In New Jersey, the permit program is administered by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and is an essential tool for the control of combined sewer overflows (CSOs). In March 2015, NJDEP issued 25 CSO permits for the municipalities, utilities, and treatment plants that receive combined sewage.

The permits require the development of a Long Term Control Plan (LTCP)—a system-wide evaluation of the sewage infrastructure, and the hydraulic relationship between the sewers, precipitation, treatment capacity, and overflows. As part of the LTCP, the permittee must evaluate alternatives that will reduce or eliminate the discharges, and develop a plan and implementation schedule for that reduction. In New Jersey, permittees will have five years to create their LTCP. Once the implementation plan is approved by NJDEP, the permittee must immediately begin progress toward implementation.

How You Can Help

- Attend upcoming NJDEP public hearings on the next CSO Permits to learn more and voice your opinions.
- Write and submit comments to NJDEP on the next CSO Permits issued to your municipality.
- Join local community-led groups working to provide education, outreach, and advocacy on smart CSO plans in New Jersey.



Graphic credit: Environmental Protection Agency

Why This Matters to Your Community

In a combined sewer system, when the combined volume of sewage and stormwater is too great for the treatment plant to handle, the system is designed—quite deliberately—to discharge them directly into nearby water bodies without treatment. These combined sewer overflows (CSOs) pollute rivers and bays during rain events. CSOs additionally can cause sewer backups flooding into basements and streets, threatening human health. They have a significant environmental impact, causing closure of beaches and shellfish beds and impairing the health and habitats of fish and other aquatic life.

The NJDEP will release the first new CSO Permits—based on these LTCPs—during Winter 2022, followed by a public meeting and comment period.

What 2022 will bring for CSOs in NJ

Permits will be released by system on a rolling basis, with the first one being North Bergen and Guttenberg. NJDEP anticipates the release of first draft permits by the end of 2022 or early 2023. These permits will be followed by a public comment period of 60 days and a public meeting to present the permits—in draft form—should be scheduled within that time frame.

This presents an opportunity to both review what the next round of CSO permits will look like and to comment on the final draft format and content.

Federal Funding opportunities provide a rare chance to fast-track projects.

Looking to learn more about CSOs in NJ and how you can get involved?

Jersey Water Works:

<https://www.jerseywaterworks.org/committees/combined-sewer-overflow-committee/resources/>

NJDEP's Combined Sewer Overflow page:

<https://www.nj.gov/dep/dwq/cso.htm>

Sewage-Free Streets and Rivers Campaign:

<https://sewagefreenj.org/>



Looking Forward: 2023 and Beyond

