



SEWAGE FREE STREETS AND RIVERS

Your Waterways, Your Neighborhood, Your Money, Your Voice

ACTION GUIDE

HOW DO COMBINED-SEWER OVERFLOWS AFFECT YOU?

If your community is listed below, you live or work in a place that suffers from combined sewer overflows (CSOs), with the reality of sewage backing up onto streets and into basements and waterways.

If you are an elected official, you represent the people in a CSO community. Getting your community involved early will also make it easier for them when the work starts and service is disrupted, or rates go up. And it's important that your constituents see you taking a leadership role in advocating for what is best for them on such an important issue.

Combined-sewer overflows are a public health threat, and have a negative effect on business and on the perception people have of your community.

Join the Sewage-Free Streets and Rivers campaign and make sure infrastructure changes to your sewer system are cost-effective and provide the most benefit to your community.

By working together, we can prevent combined sewer overflows and keep sewage off of our streets and out of our basements, rivers and streams. Let's make sure the children in our communities grow up in a healthier, greener environment and our streets and businesses remain safe and healthy.

Your Voice Is Critical

The state Department of Environmental Protection is requiring your sewer system be repaired, in order to reduce the amount of raw sewage that overflows into waterways, streets and basements and to comply with the 1972 Clean Water Act. These repairs will be very expensive and may cause temporary disruption to both residents and businesses, so it's important that you are able to advocate now for the options that bring the greatest benefit to you, your customers, and your community.

COMMUNITIES WITH COMBINED-SEWER SYSTEMS

BAYONNE
CITY OF CAMDEN
EAST NEWARK
ELIZABETH

FORT LEE
GLOUCESTER CITY
GUTTENBERG
HACKENSACK

HARRISON
HOBOKEN
JERSEY CITY
KEARNY

NEWARK
NORTH BERGEN
PATERSON
PERTH AMBOY

RIDGEFIELD PARK
TRENTON
UNION CITY
WEEHAWKEN
WEST NEW YORK

Go to sewagefreenj.org for more information, to join the campaign, and to sign up for email updates.



Here's how you can make your voice heard:

IF YOU ARE A RESIDENT OR SMALL BUSINESS OWNER

- ✦ **Attend local meetings**, so you learn about the options being considered and how they will affect you, and so you can contribute to finding the solutions that are best for your community.
- ✦ **Work with your local businesses or community organizations** so you can advocate with one voice for community solutions that address the needs of small businesses and residents.
- ✦ **Advocate for local hiring, job training and contracting** for this upgrade work, so that more of the money being spent stays in your community. Let your city or town officials know that you want workforce training and local worker priority hiring included in the Long Term Control Plan implementation contracts.
- ✦ **Ask your city or sewer utility to share its plans**, explain the alternatives and make sure the ideas and concerns of the community are included.
- ✦ **Get your Chamber, block association, or neighborhood group involved.** Ask them to write a letter or go door-to-door to encourage residents and business owners to attend local public meetings.
- ✦ **Do your part right now to reduce CSOs**, by keeping litter out of sewers and streets, conserving rainwater during rainstorms, planting trees, redirecting downspouts to rain barrels or planters, removing concrete from yards, and supporting green infrastructure projects.

IF YOU ARE A COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION

- ✦ **Work with your municipality or sewer utility and residents** to conduct outreach and solicit community input on flooding and combined sewer issues.
- ✦ **Join your local Municipal Action Team** or other local groups working on green infrastructure solutions to flooding and sewage overflows.
- ✦ **Use surveys to engage residents** in the solutions being proposed to reduce sewage overflows and to identify community priorities.

IF YOU ARE A LOCAL OFFICIAL

- ✦ **Work with your sewer department or sewer utility to get it to share its plans** and to make sure your constituents' priorities are included in them.
- ✦ **Set up regular meetings with local community groups** on localized flooding issues, combined-sewer overflows and green infrastructure solutions.
- ✦ **Solicit feedback from residents and business owners** through town hall meetings, surveys and social media campaigns.
- ✦ **Keep your constituents informed** by making information on combined sewer overflows and progress on the plans accessible and understandable to the public.
- ✦ **Update your stormwater ordinance** so that it goes beyond state minimum requirements and has a greater impact on improving water quality and reducing local flood risks.

For more information and links to resources, check out the Sewage-Free Streets and Rivers website at

SEWAGEFREENJ.ORG

