
VILLAGE OF LA GRANGE, ILLINOIS
NPDES PERMIT NO. ILM580009



COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOW PUBLIC NOTIFICATION PLAN

NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PROGRAM
ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Division of Water Pollution Control
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CSO PUBLIC NOTIFICATION PLAN

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1. OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

This plan was developed in compliance with the requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit No. ILM580009 issued by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) to the Village of La Grange for the operation of its Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) outfall structures. The primary objectives of this plan are to provide the public with information about sewer operation and use and the nature of combined sewer overflows, and to inform the public of combined sewer overflow events.

2. VILLAGE OF LA GRANGE PUBLIC NOTIFICATION PLAN

In the interest of avoiding duplication of efforts and to make the best use of available expert resources, the Village of La Grange has agreed to accept the invitation of the MWRD to use the MWRD Public Notification Plan as part of their public notification compliance. Given that the Village's CSO outfall is currently monitored by the MWRD, and that the MWRD public notification plan largely meets the Village's requirements, it has been incorporated as part of the Village plan. Furthermore, in complement to the MWRD program:

- The Village has created an informational page on its web site with links to the MWRD and USEPA web sites to help guide public inquiries concerning the combined sewer overflow requirements and operating status.
- The Village periodically provides information concerning the configuration and operational condition of its combination sewer system at regular meetings of the Board of Trustees, and at special public information meetings that are scheduled to address matters of community interest. At these meetings the Village encourages public comment, and provides direct response to public concerns, particularly as it concerns sewer system operations and drainage related issues.
- The Village has installed a public warning/advisory sign conforming to the MWRD developed specifications at the Village maintained CSO outfall.
- The Village has coordinated with the MWRD regarding the collection and public dissemination of the flow monitoring data gathered at its CSO outfall structure, such that the public can be advised and made aware of any combined sewer overflows.
- The Village conducts periodic inspections of the CSO outfall and maintains records of its operational status as required by the NPDES permit. In the event that circumstances arise requiring emergency response, the Village will coordinate the public notification and corrective measures required to address the circumstance, in cooperation with neighboring municipalities and the MWRD.

3. MWRD PUBLIC NOTIFICATION PLAN

In accordance with Special Condition 10.12 of the Stickney Water Reclamation Plant NPDES Permit No. IL0028053, the Calumet Water Reclamation Plant NPDES Permit No. IL0028061, and the North Side Water Reclamation Plant NPDES Permit No. IL0028088, the following plan was prepared by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) for actively informing the public of combined sewer overflow (CSO) occurrences and impacts.

Identifying the Affected Public

The District has solicited comments and feedback from the affected public in the development of the CSO Public Notification Plan. The District considers the affected public to include governmental organizations, civic groups, recreational groups or any public citizen with an interest in or responsibility for the condition of the Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS). Currently, the District identified the following organizations to be among the affected public: the USEPA; the IEPA; the City of Chicago; all municipalities located adjacent to the CAWS; the Friends of the Chicago River; NeighborSpace; the Openlands Project; the Sierra Club; the Civic Federation; the Prairie Rivers Network; the Lake Michigan Federation; and other environmentally based organizations. Other groups which are to be specifically identified include the recreational and commercial users of the CAWS such as canoe or kayak clubs, high school or collegiate rowing teams and owners of marinas. Interested parties of the Use Attainability Analysis that is currently underway for the CAWS will also be identified and included in the District's efforts to include the public in the development of the CSO public notification plan.

The identified affected public was invited to the public meeting held on January 20, 2004. Comments and feedback were solicited at that time. Advisories about the planned public meeting were available on the District's webpage, through news media alerts to all local print and electronic media, and direct notification when possible.

Municipal Coordination

The District has coordinated the measures outlined in its CSO Public Notification Plan with the City of Chicago and all suburban municipalities with connections to TARP. Upon final approval of the District's plan, it was transmitted to the referenced municipalities for their use in the preparation of their own respective public notification plans. The District has been in routine contact with the City of Chicago providing notice for the installation of warning signs at the District's outfall locations. In addition, the District will allow the City of Chicago and the suburban TARP municipalities to link to the District's proposed web page. Other governments which are concerned with water, health or public safety issues will be encouraged to link their web sites to the District's proposed web page.

Web Address Book

The District has developed an electronic "Address Book" containing a list of email addresses of interested parties, i.e. the previously identified stakeholders. The Address Book will be updated on an as-needed basis as other members of the affected public are identified and members of the public will be able to sign up to receive e-mail notification of CSO events by accessing the District's website (www.mwrld.org). These parties will be sent an email alert in the event of a known CSO or diversion to Lake Michigan.

Signage at District CSO Locations

The District has completed the installation of public advisory signs at the District's 37 CSO outfall locations. The signs are two-sided and weatherproof, and identify the outfall number. The District has installed the signs in public areas adjacent to the river on District property. Copies of the signs have also been transmitted to the suburban TARP municipalities for their use.

Notification of Potable Water Supply Agencies

The District continues to notify suppliers of potable water of CSO events that result in a reversal of the waterways into Lake Michigan at the Wilmette Harbor, the Chicago River and Controlling Works, and at the O'Brien Locks.

Web Page Information

The District has created a web page on the MWRD website to inform the general public of the occurrences of CSOs on the Chicago area waterways system. A color-coded graphic representation of the waterways appears on the web page depicting the occurrence of CSOs and waterway diversions to Lake Michigan. This map will be updated on a daily basis seven days per week. The District includes its web address on all news releases and will also be included on those pertinent to CSOs and/or diversions to Lake Michigan.

The waterways represented on the map includes the following: North Shore Channel, North Branch of the Chicago River (NBCR), Chicago River, Weller Creek, Salt Creek, Addison Creek, Des Plaines River, South Branch of the Chicago River (SBCR), South Fork of SBCR (Bubbly Creek), Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal (CSSC), Calumet-Sag Channel, Little Calumet River, Calumet River, and the Grand Calumet River. CSO notification will be conducted on a segment-wide basis.

Upon occurrence of a CSO in a given waterway segment, the color of the segment shown on the map changes from blue to red. The color of several waterway segments downstream of the segment on which a confirmed CSO has occurred also changes to red, indicating that the water quality of that segment may be affected as well. Floodwater discharges to Lake Michigan at the Wilmette Pump Station, the Chicago River Controlling Works and the O'Brien Lock & Dam is also indicated on the map by a red star at the respective lake outlet.

The on-line map of CSOs is updated as the information becomes available and is certified the following day, typically around 8:00 a.m. It will provide the public with a rolling seven-day record of CSO/floodwater discharge events in the Chicago area waterway system. The seven most current daily maps will be retained on the website with the oldest being deleted when a new map is added. A user will be able to select and display any one of the seven maps stored on the web page at a given time. A link will be established to allow users to access a table of CSO events at the North Branch Pump Station, the Racine Avenue Pump Station, and the 95th Street Pump Station extending beyond the seven day period represented on the maps.

General Reference Information

In addition to the graphic map display, limited general information regarding CSOs and floodwater discharges to Lake Michigan, along with their implications, has been provided for informational purposes in the following question and answer format.

- What is a combined sewer overflow (CSO)? A CSO is a discharge from a combined sewer system directly into a waterway. A combined sewer system is designed to collect a mixture of rainfall runoff, domestic and industrial wastewater in the same pipe for conveyance to a wastewater treatment plant. A CSO may occur during heavy rainfalls when the inflow of combined wastewater exceeds the capacity of the combined sewer system and the wastewater treatment plant. The CSO outfalls to the waterway act as relief points for the excess flow in the sewers, thereby reducing the frequency and severity of sewer backups and flooding.
- What are the impacts of CSOs? Although CSOs may contain highly diluted sewage that could include bacteria which may cause illness, they may also cause temporary water quality degradation in the waterways. Regardless of CSO activity, the Chicago Area Waterways may contain disease-containing bacteria at any time. Therefore, swimming, canoeing, or other activities where immersion in water is possible should be avoided and is not recommended, particularly during and immediately following rainfall.
- Why does the Chicago area have CSOs? Chicago and the older suburbs, typical of other older metropolitan areas, have a combined sewer system, in which both sanitary waste and storm water are conveyed in the same pipe. Suburbs built since 1950 have separate sanitary and storm sewer systems.
- Where do CSOs occur? When CSOs occur, they impact every major waterway in the Chicago area including the following: North Shore Channel, North Branch of the Chicago River, the Chicago River, South Branch of the Chicago River, the South Fork of the South Branch of the Chicago River (Bubbly Creek), the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, the Calumet River, the Grand Calumet River, the Little Calumet River, the Calumet-Sag Channel, the Des Plaines River, Salt Creek and Weller Creek. Due to the heavy urbanization in the Chicago area, CSO discharge points are numerous along these waterways.
- What is being done to reduce the occurrence of CSOs? The MWRD's ongoing Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP) Project was implemented to alleviate the polluting effects of CSOs and to provide relief from local flooding by providing holding capacity for 18 billion gallons of combined sewage in its tunnels and reservoirs until it can be pumped to the water reclamation plant for full treatment. Although the reservoir portion of TARP is scheduled for completion in stages between 2013 and 2023, significant benefits have already been realized. It is estimated that since the first of the tunnels went online in 1985 until 2003, more than 741 billion gallons of CSOs have been captured and conveyed to the water reclamation plants for full treatment. Since TARP went online, the waterways have seen an increase in both the fish population and number of species present; basement and street flooding have been reduced; and there are fewer floodwater discharges to Lake Michigan. To date, more than \$2 billion have been spent on the project. In addition to TARP, the District maintains and operates its collection system to maximize storage and optimize transportation of combined sewage to the treatment plants. This

is accomplished by conducting a regularly scheduled program of maintenance which includes sewer inspection, cleaning, videotaping activities, and inspection of diversion and bypass structures.

- Why do floodwater discharges to Lake Michigan occur? During extremely heavy rainfall in the Chicagoland Area, storm runoff empties into the waterways system causing the water level to rise. The water level may rise to a level sufficient to submerge the CSO outfalls, thereby reducing the rate of discharge from the outfall. This can result in basement backups and local flooding. The discharge of floodwaters to Lake Michigan occurs when the waterways reach high levels and threaten flooding of structures along the waterway and submergence of CSO outfalls. Since the initial operation of TARP in 1985, the number of times that floodwaters are discharged to Lake Michigan has been reduced. When TARP is fully complete in 2023, the number will decrease further.
- How can the public reduce CSOs? During periods of high flow, every gallon of wastewater and stormwater kept out of the sewer system is a gallon that will not add to a CSO discharge. Examples of ways to reduce the wastewater load include avoiding unnecessary water usage, toilet flushing, dishwashing, clothes washing, and showering. Additionally, individuals and businesses could install rain barrels/cisterns to collect rainwater runoff from their roofs. This water would be used for garden/lawn watering and similar uses, thereby reducing both the impact of heavy rain events and the use for potable water for non-potable uses.