



CITY OF NAPOLEON

WASTEWATER TREATMENT

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What is a CSO?

During dry weather and small wet weather events (i.e., rainfall and snowmelt), combined sewers are designed to transport all flows to a treatment plant. During larger wet weather events the volume of storm water entering the combined sewer system may exceed the capacity of the combined sewers or the treatment plant. When this happens, combined sewers are designed to allow a portion of the untreated combined wastewater to overflow into the nearest ditch, stream, river or lake. This prevents the rupturing of pipes, backing up of sewage into basements, and/or flooding of streets. The locations where these discharges of untreated combined wastewater occur, as well as the discharge events themselves, are known as Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs). CSOs are located at various locations along combined sewers, and are unique to each system.

Why are CSOs a concern?

CSOs contain not only storm water but also untreated human and industrial waste, toxic materials and debris. This is a major water pollution concern for cities with combined sewer systems. CSOs are among the major sources responsible for beach closings, shellfishing restrictions, aesthetic impairments and other water body impairments. Additionally, contact with discharges from CSOs can have adverse effects on human health. A December 2001 report to Congress cited the Center for Marine Conservation as stating that, "[s]ome of the common diseases include hepatitis, gastric disorders, dysentery, and swimmer's ear. Other forms of bacteria found in untreated waters can cause typhoid, cholera, and dysentery." (Report to Congress on Implementation and Enforcement of the CSO Control Policy, December 2001, EPA 833-R-01-003)

When should CSOs be avoided?

CSO outfalls and their receiving waters should be avoided during and immediately after any wet weather event (i.e., rainfall and snowmelt). Additionally, these locations should be avoided any time a discharge is observed from the outfall pipe regardless of weather conditions.

Ohio EPA CSO Program Contacts

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