



Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Factsheet



In older cities, the pipes that collect stormwater, sewage, and industrial wastewater are often gathered into one system called a Combined Sewer System (CSS).

- Under normal conditions, CSS flows are transported to a wastewater treatment plant.
- During heavy rains, CSS flows can exceed the capacity of the system resulting in a Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO).
- Untreated sewage and industrial wastewater enter our waterways during CSO events.
- CSOs impair water quality for 72 hours and pose health threats to anyone coming in contact with the contaminated waters.

Nearly every creek, stream, and river in the Philadelphia and Camden region is impacted by CSOs.

