



# **COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOW PUBLIC NOTIFICATION PLAN**

STATE POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PROGRAM  
NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

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## 1. Objective of Plan

This plan was developed to comply with the requirements of the State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) General Permit No. NY0026336 issued by the New York Department of Environmental Conservation to the Niagara Falls Water Board (NFWB) for the operation of the City of Niagara's Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) structures. The foremost goal of this plan is to inform the public of combined sewer overflow events and provide the public with information on CSO's.

## 2. Niagara Falls Water Board Public Notification Plan

The NFWB already has a Public Notification Plan in place. This CSO Notification plan is an updated revision in order to comply with new standards set by the EPA. The City of Niagara Falls has (7) CSO discharge points. During wet weather events, at times the combined sewer flow (storm and wastewater) can overcome the current capacity of the sewer system. Permitted discharges may occur that can possibly contain untreated sewage.

Combined sewer systems are part of older infrastructure built in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Completely removing these systems and replacing them with separate sanitary and storm systems may help eliminate CSO's. Unfortunately, due to construction costs, many combined sewer systems are still in place in the United States, mostly in the Northeast and Great Lakes region.

The NFWB, as part of its past and future Capital investment, plans work on repairing and maintaining the outfall structures and improving our CSO Long Term Control Plan to mitigate flow to the CSO's. More information on this can be found on the NFWB website.

## 3. Signage

There are (7) CSO locations in the city of Niagara Falls:

OutFall No.	Description	Location		Receiving Water
		Latitude	Longitude	
003	Fall St. Tunnel	43° 05' 24"	79° 04' 00"	Niagara River
004	Diversion Sewer	43° 05' 20"	79° 04' 00"	Niagara River
006	Gorge Pumping Station	43° 05' 58"	79° 03' 38"	Niagara River
007	Cleveland Ave.	43° 06' 26"	79° 03' 25"	Niagara River
009	Chasm Ave.	43° 06' 49"	79° 03' 33"	Niagara River
010	Maple Ave.	43° 07' 32"	79° 03' 35"	Niagara River
011	Garfield Ave.	43° 07' 56"	79° 03' 03"	Niagara River

Currently, identification signage remains posted at Outfalls 001 (Wastewater Treatment Plant), 004 and 006, as required. It should be noted that Outfall 001 and Outfall 004 (Diversion Sewer) share one physical outfall structure, and are labeled with one sign (two-sided) containing the appropriate text. These signs are in place so the general public and other entities are aware of CSO locations and areas affected. They contain the SPDES permit number, Outfall number, description of the type of waste and contact information for both the Regional Division of Water of the DEC and the NFWB. Inspection and maintenance of these signs is performed a couple times per year. Replacement signs for the locations are in storage at the Water Board offices (WTP) for use as necessary.

The CSO's are inspected monthly and maintained as needed. The Board has established a Public Information File that is located at the Water Board offices (water treatment facility at 5815 Buffalo Avenue). Copies of inspection reports for outfalls and outfall signage is available to any member of the public during normal business hours.

Currently, there are 5 locations that don't have CSO signage which were given waivers by our SPDES permit in the past. Of those locations, 4 will have signage installed before the August 7<sup>th</sup> submittal requirement for the notification plan, leaving only the Fall St. Tunnel outfall with a sign.

#### **4. Initial Notification**

Currently, notification of CSO events is made in accordance with the Sewage Pollution Right to Know Act. The public is notified of discharges and general information such as the amount and location of discharges from the NY-Alerts at the start of the discharge. The Department of Health and affected entities will also be notified. This takes place within 4 hours of the NFWB becoming aware of a discharge.

Information included in the notification:

- Location of the discharge along with affected areas, and waterbodies
- Start date/time of the discharge
- Description of what the discharge might contain
- Reason for the discharge
- Estimated volume of the discharge
- Treated state of the discharge (Treated, untreated, partially treated)
- Steps being taken to contain the discharge
- Additional information, such as recommendation to avoid fishing, swimming, etc..

## **5. Follow up Notification**

Within 7 days of the discharge ending the NFWB does to follow up notice, which includes:

- Location of the discharge along with affected areas, and waterbodies
- End date/time of the discharge
- Description of what the discharge might contain
- Reason for the discharge
- Actual volume of the discharge
- Duration of the discharge
- Treated state of the discharge (Treated, untreated, partially treated)
- Steps that were taken to contain the discharge
- Additional information about the discharge

## **6. Annual Notification**

The NFWB will release its first annual report that summarizes the implementation of the 15 best management practices that the NYSDEC requires by February 7, 2019.

This will include:

- Work done under the LTCP
- Discharges involved with Significant Industrial Users (SIU's)
- Flow to the WWTP, both historical and for the year
- Information on the Wet Weather Operating plan
- Dry weather flow recordings
- Controls in place for solids
- Work done on CSO's (Extensions, replacements and repairs)
- Historical list of service backups
- Run-off controls
- Information on public notification

## **7. Input on Public Notification Plan**

A letter was sent to the Niagara County Health Department (see attached) along with a draft copy of the CSO Notification plan seeking input to develop recommended protocols for providing notification of CSO discharges to them, which include:

- The CSO discharges that are subject to notification
- The means of notification

- Timing of notification and other relevant factors
- Recommendations developed for providing notice to the general public of CSO discharges electronically and by other appropriate means
- Recommendations developed for areas that would be considered “potentially impacted public access areas”

A draft copy of the CSO Notification plan was also posted on the NFWB.org website seeking input from the public to develop recommended protocols for providing notification of CSO discharges to them.

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