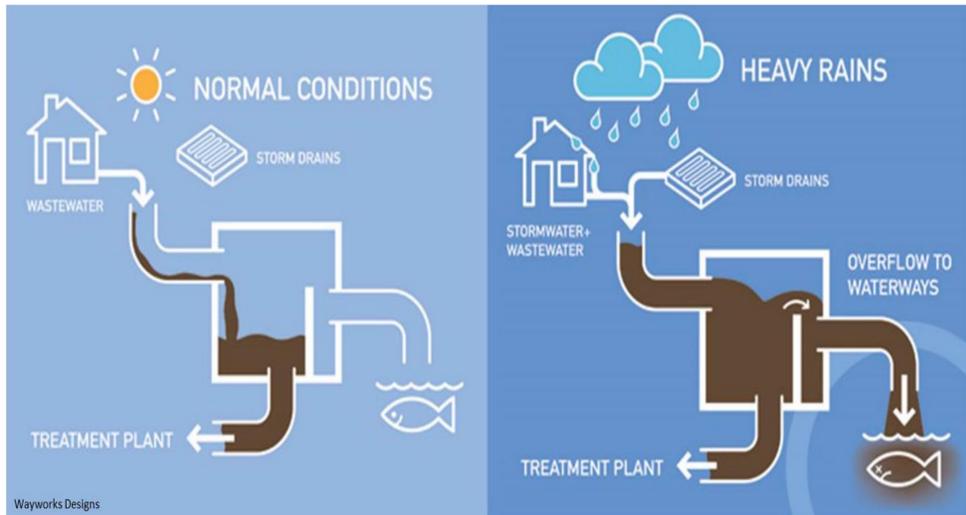


New proposed language clarifies implementation of human health criteria in permits for Combined Sewer Overflow Treatment Plants

What is Combined Sewer Overflow?

Combined sewer systems are wastewater collection systems designed to carry sanitary sewage (consisting of domestic, commercial, and industrial wastewater) and stormwater in a single piping system to a treatment facility. In periods of rainfall or snowmelt, total wastewater flows can exceed the capacity of the sewer collection systems and/or treatment facilities. When this occurs, the combined sewer system is designed to overflow directly to nearby streams, lakes, and harbors, discharging un-treated sewage and stormwater. These overflows are called combined sewer overflows (CSOs) and can cause significant water quality problems unless adequately permitted.



What is the purpose of this clarifying language?

The purpose of this proposed language is to clarify implementation of human health criteria in National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for CSO Treatment Plants. This new proposed language provides clarification but does not change any current practices with regard to permit requirements.

Proposed language:

173-201A-510 Means of Implementation

(6) *Combined Sewer Overflow Treatment Plant*

“The influent to these facilities is highly variable in frequency, volume, duration, and pollutant concentration. The primary means to be used for requiring compliance with the human health criteria shall be through the application of narrative limitations which include, but are not limited to, best management practices required in waste discharge permits, rules, orders and directives issued by the department.”

What is a Combined Sewer Overflow Treatment Plant?

Ecology proposes to define “combined sewer overflow (CSO) treatment plant” as a facility that provides at-site treatment as provided for in chapter 173-245 WAC. A CSO treatment plant is a specific facility identified in a department-approved CSO reduction plan (long-term control plan) that is designed, operated and controlled by a municipal utility to capture and treat excess combined sanitary sewage and storm water from a combined sewer system.

Why are CSOs a problem if not adequately permitted?

Untreated sewage can be discharged to surface waters during wet weather events.

