



City of Chattanooga
Water Quality Program



Welcome to the Combined Sewer Area of Downtown Chattanooga

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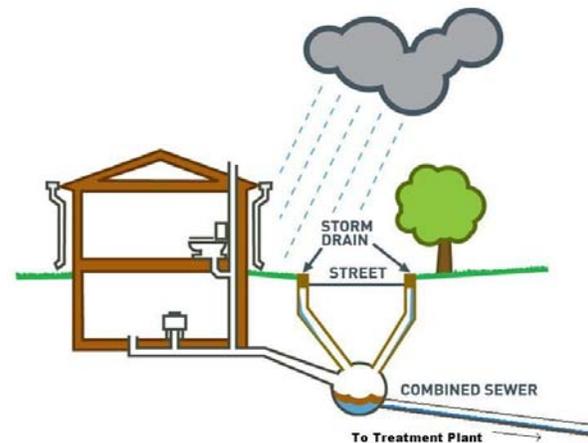
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What is a Combined Sewer System?

Because Chattanooga was established hundreds of years ago, the first sewer system that was installed was that of a combined sewer system, which collects both stormwater runoff and sanitary sewage in a single pipe system. In this aspect, the Combined Sewer Area is unlike any other "watershed" in Chattanooga. Originally, because the adverse effects were unknown, all of the contents collected by the combined sewer were discharged directly into the Tennessee River. In 1952, Chattanooga's Waste Resource Division was developed, which includes Moccasin Bend Waste Water Treatment Plant. All of the existing combined sewer area was then rerouted to the treatment plant.



We all live in a watershed. The City of Chattanooga consists of 9 unique watersheds: Chattanooga Creek, Citico Creek, Combined Sewer Area, Lookout Creek, Mountain Creek, North Chickamauga Creek, South Chickamauga Creek, Tennessee River, and Wolftever Creek.

Where am I?

The Combined Sewer Area is home to many tourist attractions including the Chattanooga Choo Choo, the Creative Discovery Museum, the Tivoli, the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Auditorium, and the World's first "green" movie theater, the Carmike Majestic 12. Additionally the University of TN at Chattanooga is located in the Combined Sewer Area.



Combined Sewer Area Facts:

- The Combined Sewer Area drains just over 2000 acres of downtown Chattanooga.
- With a 1 inch rain, nearly 54,905,965 gallons of water discharge into the Combined Sewer System, equaling 1,098,119 baths.

Wow— that's a lot of water!



Water Quality Issues in the Combined Sanitary Sewer Area

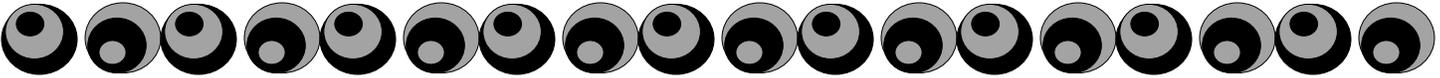
- Pathogens
- Urban influences (i.e. trash, pet waste, grass clippings, motor oil, and gasoline)



What is the City doing to manage the water quality issues in the Combined Sewer Area?

Stormwater Management —

- A 300,000 gallon underground stormwater reservoir was constructed underneath Martin Luther King Boulevard, allowing excess stormwater from large rain events to be temporarily stored. This reduces the amount of stormwater in the combined sewer which, in turn, helps to reduce the number of Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSOs). The untreated sewage from these overflows contaminates our waters, causing serious water quality problems.
- Chattanooga's Urban Forestry Department and Take Root have planted over 600 trees in downtown Chattanooga, increasing stormwater management, reducing runoff, decreasing urban heat islands and improving both air and water quality.
- The Creative Discovery Museum has a 3000 square foot garden consisting of sedum plants, pansies, planting boxes containing a variety of other small plants, and even small trees.



What can I do to improve water quality in the Combined Sewer Area?

- Maintain vehicles to reduce the discharge of oil and other motor fluids to the watershed.
- Wash cars in grassy areas to prevent runoff of washing chemicals into the storm drains.
- Do not discard your used motor oil, leaves, paint, or anything else into storm drains.
- To avoid blockages in your sanitary service line, pour grease and/or cooking oil in closed containers to be disposed of in your trash cans instead of in the sink.
- Pick-up after your pet to reduce pathogens in the watershed.
- Properly dispose of your grass clippings/wood debris through composting or the brush pick-up service offered by the City.
- Use mulch to control weeds instead of pesticides.
- Consider installing a rain barrel or rain garden.
- Disconnect your downspouts.

To report an illicit discharge: Call 311 or email: swm@chattanooga.gov

Additional Resources:

TN Department of Environment & Conservation (TDEC): www.state.tn.us/environment/wpc/

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/

Center for Watershed Protection: <http://www.cwp.org/>

