



Forming and Utilizing Your Supplemental CSO Team

For New Jersey's Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Permits and Long Term Control Plans

The Supplemental CSO Team is a resource to you. The Supplemental CSO Team will be beneficial in soliciting input from the public throughout the Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) process, and will enable you to better develop an outreach program that reaches a broad base of citizens. Through the Supplemental CSO Team, you, as the permittee will gain a public perspective on CSOs, local water quality issues and sewer system problems, and the public's willingness to participate in efforts to eliminate CSOs.

The members of the Supplemental CSO Team are not expected to be experts on CSOs or have extensive engineering backgrounds to participate. Members should be representative of the permitted communities or areas served by the sewage treatment plant. The Supplemental CSO Team can provide local information on flooding issues, neighborhood priorities, and community willingness to accept or participate in CSO alternatives (such as building or maintaining green infrastructure).

The Supplemental CSO Team, as part of your public participation process, is a two way dialogue and an opportunity for you to share information about your work and an opportunity for the team to provide input.

The Supplemental CSO Team should be provided with information to help it better understand the issues, costs, and operation of the collection and treatment systems. The Supplemental CSO Team should be aware of the various permit milestones and due dates. These milestones include installation of signs, public participation plan, the characterization of the combined sewer system, evaluation of alternatives analysis to reduce or eliminate CSOs, selecting alternatives, and implementation schedule, for example.

**Excerpt from Section G.2.c of the NJPDES CSO Permit (see <http://www.nj.gov/dep/dwg/cso.htm>)
describing the Supplemental CSO Team**

The permittee shall invite members of the affected/interested public to establish a Supplemental CSO Team to work with the permittee's assigned staff from Section F.1 and to work as an informal work group as a liaison between the general public and the decision makers for the permittee. The goals of the Supplemental CSO Team could consist of the following elements:

- i. Meet periodically to assist in the sharing of information, and to provide input to the planning process;*
- ii. Review the proposed nature and extent of data and information to be collected during LTCP development;*
- iii. Provide input for consideration in the evaluation of CSO control alternatives; and*
- iv. Provide input for consideration in the selection of those CSO controls that will cost*



Should a regional Supplemental CSO Team be formed that incorporates several hydraulically connected communities or would multiple supplemental teams be more effective?

It is up to you. Regional teams, if created, should be reflective of the various communities, populations, and social and environmental needs of the areas served by the sewage treatment plant.

Community-based Supplemental CSO Teams, as opposed to a regional Supplemental CSO Team, may be more effective if the communities in the hydraulically connected region:

- are unique;
- are geographically distant;
- are large in size or population;
- have widely diverse or various priorities; and/or
- have many active groups.

Both community-based and regional Supplemental CSO Teams may be needed in some cases. Community-based teams can be utilized to reach a more localized population, while a representative from the community-based team can participate in the regional Supplemental CSO Team as well.

Justification regarding the composition of the Supplemental CSO Team or Teams should be articulated in the public participation plan, as well as a discussion of the goals of the Supplemental CSO Team, feedback received so far from the Supplemental CSO Team, and frequency and type of team interaction.

Who should be involved in the Supplemental CSO Team?

The Supplemental CSO Team should be customized to meet your needs and the needs of your community. Consider inviting individuals or group representatives to participate in the Supplement CSO Team who have been involved in your past public participation efforts or who are currently involved with or concerned about CSOs and related issues (such as redevelopment, environmental improvement, waterfront access, community engagement, stormwater, or economic development).

The structure, organization and responsibilities of the Supplemental CSO Team should be representative of the issues and possible alternatives. The Supplemental CSO Team should represent the community's diverse perspectives and address the needs of the affected public. When considering the makeup of your Supplemental CSO Team you should keep in mind that pursuant to Section II.C.2 of the National CSO Policy, the affected public includes rate payers, industrial users of the sewer system, persons who reside downstream from the CSOs, persons who use and enjoy these downstream waters, and any other interested person.

Consider including representatives from the following interest groups:

- Community/neighborhood groups
- Environmental groups
- Recreational Water Users
- Business, Industry, and Redevelopment community
- Local Institutions (ex: academic, business, healthcare)
- Representatives of Local Government
- Faith based and social service based organizations

The optimum size of the Supplemental CSO Team can be determined by you but each team should be diverse and representative of the population served while still small enough to have effective meetings and dialog among the team members.



When inviting the public to participate on the Supplemental CSO Team, share with them what they should expect by participating and how much time they should plan to dedicate to this effort. Keep in mind that the public participation process will involve more than the Supplemental CSO Team. Therefore, if there are members of the public that are unable to commit to the Supplemental CSO Team, they should be invited to participate in the broader public participation effort.

Several CSO communities may have teams formed around issues related to CSOs, such as a community based green infrastructure team, municipal action team, or green team. These teams may or may not include the diversity of representatives that are needed for the Supplemental CSO Team. Evaluate how best to utilize and build off of these existing teams.

What frequency should my Supplemental CSO Team meet?

The role of the Supplemental CSO Team may differ among permittees and their participation in the LTCP development process should correlate with the area impacted; the number of people impacted; and resources needed to implement the LTCP. The Supplemental CSO Team should meet as often as needed for the team to ultimately be able to meaningfully provide input on the evaluation of CSO alternatives. However, the Department would expect the Supplemental CSO Team to meet in person no less than when important milestones and reports are completed throughout the LTCP development process. The Supplemental CSO Team may need to meet frequently in the beginning of the LTCP development process in order to establish goals and learn about the LTCP and less frequently while studies and reports are being conducted and developed. As the time approaches to evaluate and provide input on alternatives, the Supplemental Team may need to again meet more frequently. Meeting types and locations may differ from one permittee to another as well as from one task to another throughout the LTCP process. In person meetings might be the primary way for the Supplemental CSO Team to operate. There are other methods that may be helpful to share information and gain feedback from the Supplemental CSO Team, such as conference calls, emails, online surveys and website updates, among others.

Meetings held on a consistent schedule and at a convenient location enable continued participation. Weekend and evening meetings may work best for your team members. When selecting a meeting location think about if the location is accessible via public transportation, has free parking, and does not require extensive security checks.

Who should facilitate the Supplemental CSO Team?

It is ultimately your responsibility to ensure that the Supplemental CSO Team is conducted and facilitated so that all permit requirements are met. The Supplemental CSO Team could be led by staff within your organization or municipality or by hired professionals. Whomever you choose to lead your Supplemental CSO Team, you should seek individuals that have the following facilitation skills:

- experience engaging with the public;
- ability to translate complex issues;
- facilitate and encourage active listening and;
- accepting of different perspectives and ideas.



What's the Supplemental CSO Team's role in public participation?

The Supplemental CSO Team will be a great asset for developing and implementing parts of the public participation process. Members of your Supplemental CSO Teams are likely to be members of other networks and can be conduits for sharing information with their peers and neighbors. Providing feedback on community reaction, effective ways to share information, and input on your public participation strategy are great ways to utilize the Supplemental CSO Team. You may find that your Supplemental CSO Team will assist you in public participation activities.

The Supplemental CSO Team will be beneficial in soliciting input from the public throughout the planning process, and will enable you to better develop an outreach program through public meetings and public hearings that reaches a broad base of citizens. By using the Supplemental CSO Team to develop and implement a larger public engagement process, you will gain a public perspective on local water quality issues and sewer system problems, the amount of public concern about CSOs in particular, and the public's willingness to participate in efforts to eliminate CSOs.



Supplemental Team Examples

CSO communities in other states have implemented networks similar to Supplemental CSO Teams. The following two examples can provide helpful information on how to organize and utilize these teams. Links are provided for additional information on Philadelphia and Nashville’s public participation process for developing their Long Term Control Plans and engaging the public.

Philadelphia, PA



Business

- Building Industry Association

Citizen Groups

- Northern Liberties Neighborhood Association
- Passyunk Square Neighbors Association
- Washington West Civic Association

Interest Groups

- Community Legal Services, Inc.
- Delaware River City Corporation
- Impact Services Corporation
- PennFuture (Next Great City)
- Pennsylvania Environmental Council
- Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership
- Schuylkill River Development Corporation
- Sierra Club

Regulatory Agencies

- Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP)

Local Government Agencies

- Fairmount Park Commission
- Mayor's Office of Sustainability
- Philadelphia Water Department

See table 2-1 at the following link for the advisory committee membership:

http://www.phillywatersheds.org/ltcp/LTCPU_Section02_Public%20Participation.pdf

The Public Participation Program Team assembled a diverse group of stakeholders to comprise the *Green City, Clean Waters* Advisory Committee. The committee consists of key city, state and community representatives (including civic organizations in neighborhoods affected by sewage backups during intense rainstorms), as well as leaders of local, regional and national environmentally -minded organizations. Targeted efforts were made to invite civic leaders of the impacted neighborhoods (and who represent ratepayers), industrial users, and organizations that represent people that live near and use the impacted areas. A majority of the representatives who actively participate on the advisory committee belong to organizations whose missions concentrate on civic and environmental issues. (Section 2.2.1, page 2-4)

This is an example of an advisory committee or local stakeholder team. Your Supplemental CSO Team is likely to include many of these sub-groups and it is important for local decision makers (City Council, Planning Boards, Zoning Boards, Redevelopment Committees, to name a few) to either be a part of this group or ensure its involvement in the LTCP development through other methods.



Nashville, TN

Nashville developed a Citizens Advisory Committee along with many other public engagement activities. Their Citizen Advisory Committee was designed “to extend the public engagement initiative far into communities, and to generate the most thorough input from residents, businesses, neighborhood associations, and other organizations. These were individuals who were recognized as leaders and experienced conveners in their respective neighborhoods. In this case, these leaders and their respective organizations were located throughout the urban core, the most affected areas of the LTCP Update.” (Section 8.3) Members included representatives from faith based organizations, academia, historic committee, metropolitan council, neighborhood and park organizations, transit authority, health department, and business groups to name a few.

<http://www.cleanwaternashville.org/content/resources/pdfs/pdr/LongTermControlPlan.pdf>

8.2 Public Engagement Highlights

From fall of 2009 through the spring 2011, MWS, supported by its consultant team, conducted a public engagement and input campaign, the highlights of which include:

- Created a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to participate and be the primary community voice in the campaign on an ongoing basis. This group includes representatives from neighborhood and business organizations, professional experts, river users, and community stakeholders.
- Developed the “Clean Water Nashville” theme for the campaign.
- Organized a series of ongoing community meetings throughout Nashville’s urban core, which is the combined sewer system (CSS) area. These meetings introduced the community to the LTCP Update program and provided ongoing updates; the final report will be the subject of a future meeting.
- Made presentations to Nashville’s leading environmental groups.
- Engaged more than a dozen leading neighborhood associations, and more than ten major Nashville area business organizations.
- Involved all district Metro Council members in the affected CSS areas.
- Involved the Public Works Committee Chairman of the Metro Council as a leader in the public process.
- Developed Web and Public Access Television programming, including an on-line catalog of LTCP Committee and CAC activity.
- Collected meaningful input from stakeholder groups that has helped shape the overall LTCP plan and its recommendations.