

Frequently Asked Questions Related to Water Quality

Homeowners:

Q: My basement is flooded. Can I pump the water to the storm drain or outside my house?

A: Yes. You can discharge clean uncontaminated water to the a storm drain or outside your home but be mindful not to impact your neighbor or their property.

Q: The storm drain is clogged on my street. What should I do?

A: Trying to clear a storm drain is a potentially dangerous situation and should not be attempted. If large volumes of water are covering the drain and the surrounding area, clearing the drain can create suction and pull a person into the pipe. Contact your local government or public works department for assistance.

Q: I am a homeowner and wastewater from the municipal collection system has backed-up into my basement. Who do I contact?

A: Contact your local sewage authority or municipality; you may also report this to the DEP Hotline at 1-877-WARN-DEP

Q: Raw sewage is discharging into the street from a manhole, pumping station or other municipal collection system location. Who do I contact?

A: Please report all such events to the NJDEP Hotline at 1-877-WARN-DEP. You may also contact the local sewage authority or municipality.

Q: My septic system is flooded and not working. What can I do?

A: Unfortunately, very little can be done to resolve the issue until the ground water table returns to normal levels. If problems continue, contact your local Health Department for assistance.

Utilities and Public Works

Q: I own/operate a sewage treatment facility and it has reached hydraulic capacity. We need to bypass. Who do I notify?

A: In accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.10, the permittee is required to notify the NJDEP Hotline at 1-877-WARN DEP within two hours of commencement of the bypass, or the permittee becoming aware of the bypass.

Q: I own/operate a sewage treatment facility and the excessive rain has caused us to exceed our discharge limits. Who do I contact? Will I be penalized?

A: In accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.10, the permittee is required to notify the NJDEP Hotline at 1-877-WARN DEP within two hours of commencement of the non-compliance, or the permittee becoming aware of the non-compliance. The permittee will be required to submit information including but not limited to documentation supporting that the bypass/non-compliance was unavoidable to prevent loss of life, personal injury, or severe property damage. Please see NJAC 7:14A-6.10 for complete requirements.

Q: My company discharges process wastewater to the sanitary sewer. My local sewage treatment plant is flooded and they cannot accept any of my process wastewater. Can I discharge my process wastewater to the storm sewer/surface water or the ground?

A: No. Store the process wastewater on-site to the maximum extent possible. If necessary and where feasible, ramp-down your process operations that generate this wastewater. Discharge of the process wastewater should occur only when adequate treatment is available at the local sewage treatment plant. Contact your local sewage treatment plant before commencing discharge of the process wastewater. If you need additional assistance, please contact the Bureau Pretreatment and Residuals at 609-633-3823.

Q: Our sewage sludge management site is not accepting customers. How can I identify alternative sites for sewage sludge management in New Jersey?

A: A list of approved New Jersey sewage sludge management sites and transfer stations is available at www.nj.gov/dep/dwq/pdf/nj_residual_management_options_2010.pdf. Additional information is available at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/dwq/sludge.htm>.

Q: My treatment system needs emergency repair as a result of the storm. What can I do?

A: The Department has developed a process to respond expeditiously when emergencies occur so that owners/operators can quickly undertake the needed repairs and maintain eligibility for those expenditures through the Environmental Infrastructure Trust Finance Program For wastewater, see: http://www.nj.gov/dep/dwq/pdf/cwf_2012P_cwpl.pdf

For drinking water see:

http://www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply/pdf/ffy2012_iup_proposed.pdf

*Should you have additional any questions about Water Quality Issues, contact
the Division of Water Quality at 609-292-9977*