

WARNING!
Sewage 
Avoid contact with river after rain.



CSO Outfall No. 001
D.C. Water and Sewer Authority 202-612-3400

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When is it safe to swim?

What Level of Resources Should Society Devote Toward Enhancing Water Quality for Swimming? Communicating with the Public About Swimming Risks and Benefits and How that Affects Wet Weather Control Priorities and Levels of Control.



Facts of Urban Streams

- Data reveal that bacteria counts in natural waters are often above WQS.
- In urban streams VERY high counts are common in wet as well as dry Weather
- WQS often not met due to urban wildlife, pets, as well as exfiltration, SSOs and CSOs



Who is the Public?

- In holding daily does not mean daily, the court noted that the “decision-making process does not have to yield to the *unlikely aquatic enthusiast* who will not tolerate anything less than immediate enjoyment of river waters after disruptive storm events.”
- Case later overturned. But that is the question. Are we protecting for the unlikely aquatic enthusiast?

Communicating stream conditions and programs to the Public

- PUBLIC FEEDBACK = NO RATE INCREASES
 - But make all my creeks swimmable
- What is the best message in your experience?
- Do we/you share this information with the public? How?
 - Real time web site information
 - Flag system
 - Light system
 - email



Is it about setting priorities?

- Rebalance spending to the the 80/4/.1 rule?
 - 80 Stormwater discharges/year
 - 4 CSOs/Year
 - 1 SSO every 10 years (not)
- Is impervious area more important?
- What is the highest Priority in your watershed?
 - To you
 - To the Public
 - To the regulators



What Level of Spending?

- Up to the point of “Widespread Social and Economic Impact”?
- Knee of the Curve?
- Your Experience?



Lets hear from you

- Facts of your Streams – can your streams be made safe for your kids to swim in?
- Best Way you have found to communicate with the public
- Priorities – to you – to public – to regulators
- How much should we spend?