

Urban Water Solutions Working Group

2015 Objectives

The Urban Water Solutions Working Group is a diverse group of practitioners and thought leaders working to transform urban water infrastructure in New Jersey. The group is focusing initially on facilitating best-practice solutions to combined sewer overflows. (See an early guiding document, the [Agenda for Change](#), for more information.)

Coordination Objectives

1. Hold quarterly Working Group meetings.
2. Continue to receive weekly email with updates on CSO progress, news, training, funding, etc.
3. Expand Working Group to 100 members to ensure broad representation.
4. Distribute monthly e-newsletter highlighting Working Group member efforts.

Programmatic Objectives

1. Create and implement a **recognition program** to encourage the use of best-practice CSO solutions.
2. Create **municipal best-practice proclamation** and resolution. 21 mayors & governing bodies adopt.
3. Create a utility best-practice resolution or related document. Eight utilities adopt.
4. Draft a cooperation agreement for utilities and municipalities to prepare LTCPs with a regional component. A majority of the CSO towns and utilities enter such an agreement.
5. **Events and education:**
 - Co-host at least two regional training sessions for permittees and community groups.
 - Hold a statewide conference in the fall on water infrastructure and CSO progress.
 - Provide a resource library and facilitate knowledge-sharing among permittees.
6. **Increase public awareness** through the media (at least 200 news articles, six editorials, and 12 op-ed articles), and social media. Highlight stories that show success is possible.
7. Help ensure that every CSO municipality and sewer utility has a robust CSO-related web presence.
8. **Educate community groups and citizens** on local water issues and facilitate links with CSO permittees.
9. Elevate the visibility and increase the number of **green infrastructure** projects statewide.
10. Help advance the implementation of a **stormwater fee** in at least one city.

Recommendations for State and Federal Action

1. NJDEP and USEPA provide written guidance on the existing CSO permit requirement for green infrastructure.
2. NJDEP improves guidance in its BMP manual on performance expectations for green infrastructure.
3. NJDEP supports regional CSO permittees in requiring upstream flow reductions to reduce CSOs.
4. NJDOT (perhaps in partnership with NJDEP) makes a public policy statement in support of green streets and allows program funding, such as transportation funding, to be used to implement.
5. NJEIFP and the NDEP continue low-cost loans, principal forgiveness and grants for green infrastructure and NJDEP increases financial support for LTCP development.
6. NJDEP natural resource programs identify appropriate opportunities and legal mechanisms to allow for stormwater management facilities in urban parks.
7. NJDEP strengthens requirements for green infrastructure in development and redevelopment.

*** Note that not every working group member is directly involved with or in formal support of each objective or recommendation ***

Appendix

Specific Topics to Include in Working Group Activities (Education, Resolutions and Other Resources) as recommended by working group members.

For Permittees:

- Asset management and system optimization, including operations and maintenance procedures.
- Water conservation, including ordinances.
- Effective and strong community outreach/public participation programs for the Long Term Control Plan process.
- Integration of green infrastructure into community planning and development, through incorporation into land-use plans, redevelopment plans, neighborhood plans, and their implementing ordinances.
- Permittee ownership/maintenance of LTCP-related reports, models and data, including GIS data.

For Community Groups:

- The connection between green infrastructure and local water quality, flooding, neighborhood improvements and job creation.
- The connection between neighborhood impacts (flooding, sewer back-ups, etc.) and the CSO regulatory process.
- Creation of peer-to-peer networks.