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Department of Environmental Protection Set to Begin $40 Million Upgrade to the Sewer System in South Ozone Park That Will Help Improve the Health of Jamaica Bay

Large Interceptor Sewer Will Increase the Capacity of the Drainage System and Reduce Sewer Overflows into Bergen Basin

Installation of Three Hydraulic Levees within the Sewers Will Optimize Carrying Capacity and Reduce Overflows into both Bergen Basin and Thurston Basin

Renderings and Maps of the Project can be Viewed on DEP's Flickr Page

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today announced that construction is set to begin in early 2015 on a new, large, $29 million interceptor sewer in south Ozone Park that, when completed, will provide significant additional capacity within the areas drainage system and thereby reduce sewer overflows into Bergen Basin. In addition, at a cost of $11 million, later in the spring DEP will begin work to install three hydraulic levees at key junction points within the area's sewer network that will optimize the carrying capacity of the pipes during rain storms and reduce sewer overflows into both Bergen Basin and Thurston Basin. Modeling shows that taken together, the two projects will ensure that an additional 300 million gallons of combined sewer flow

More Information

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are routed to the Jamaica Wastewater Treatment Plant each year, where it will be treated to Federal Clean Water Act standards, rather than being discharged untreated into the tributaries of Jamaica Bay. Installation of the three levees is expected to be completed by the summer of 2016 and construction of the new interceptor sewer is expected to be completed in early 2017.

Currently, two 36-inch sewer lines carry combined flow from North Conduit Avenue, under the Belt Parkway, to 150th Street and 126th Avenue, where it connects to a 72-inch sewer line which brings the flow to the Jamaica Wastewater Treatment Plant. Due to increased development in southern Queens, the twin 36-inch sewers no longer have sufficient capacity to carry the combined flow generated north of the Belt Parkway and act as a bottleneck in the areas drainage system. During heavy rain, the bottleneck causes Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO) to be discharged into Bergen Basin. To relieve this bottleneck, at a cost of $29 million DEP will build a parallel 48-inch sewer under the Belt Parkway. It is anticipated that this new sewer line will reduce CSOs into Bergen Basin by 135 million gallons each year. In order to minimize disruption to traffic on the Belt Parkway during construction, DEP will use a microtunnelling machine to install the new sewer line. This will include launching the microtunnelling machine from a shaft site between North Conduit Avenue and the Belt Parkway and retrieving it on the south side of the Belt Parkway. The delivery of materials and staging for the construction work has already begun, and it is expected that the microtunnelling machine will be launched by the fall. It is expected that the work will necessitate some alternate closure of lanes on the Belt Parkway during the overnight hours and on weekends. DEP will work with the Department of Transportation to notify communities and motorists in advance of any closures. Construction is expected to be completed in early 2017.

To further reduce CSOs into Bergen Basin, as well as into Thurston Basin, at a cost of $11 million DEP will install three hydraulic levees, or bending weirs, at key points in the areas sewer system to optimize the capacity of the pipes to store the combined flow during rain storms. During rain storms, the weirs will be kept in an upright position by counter-balanced weights. This will hold the flow in the pipe until there is enough pressure to force it down, which is only expected to occur during intense rain storms. Once the rain storm has passed, the flow will continue on and receive treatment at the Jamaica Wastewater Treatment Plant. Installation of the three weirs is expected to reduce CSOs into Bergen Basin by 65 million gallons each year and into Thurston Basin by 102 million gallons a year.

New York City, like other older urban communities, is largely serviced by a combined sewer system where the stormwater that falls on roofs, streets, and sidewalks, and the wastewater from homes and businesses are carried through a single sewer line to treatment plants. The City's 14 treatment plants can manage and treat to Federal Clean Water Act standards all the wastewater created in New York City on a dry weather day, or about 1.3 billion gallons on average. However, during intense precipitation events, the stormwater that falls on the city's impervious surfaces exceeds that capacity and CSOs can be discharged into local waterways. If the overflows were not discharged, the City's treatment plants could be flooded and severely damaged and wastewater could backup into homes and businesses.

Over the last decade the City has invested more than $10 billion in upgrades to wastewater treatment plants and related efforts to reduce CSOs and testing confirms that the water in New York Harbor is cleaner today than it has been in more than a century. However, CSOs remain the City's top Harbor water quality challenge. In 2010, DEP launched the Green Infrastructure Plan. An alternative approach to improving harbor water quality, it combines traditional "grey" infrastructure upgrades, such as the new interceptor sewer and hydraulic levees, and the integration of green infrastructure to capture and retain stormwater runoff before it can ever enter the sewer system and contribute to overflows. Over the next two decades, the City is planning for $1.5 billion in public funding, and another $900 million in funding connected to new development or

redevelopment, for targeted green infrastructure installations, as well as approximately $2.9 billion in cost-effective traditional grey infrastructure upgrades, to significantly reduce sewer overflows and further improve the health of local waterways.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of water each day to more than nine million residents, including eight million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with nearly $14 billion in investments planned over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. This capital program is responsible for critical projects like City Water Tunnel No. 3; the Staten Island Bluebelt program, an ecologically sound and cost-effective stormwater management system; the city's Watershed Protection Program, which protects sensitive lands upstate near the city's reservoirs in order to maintain their high water quality; and the installation of more than 820,000 Automated Meter Reading devices, which will allow customers to track their daily water use, more easily manage their accounts and be alerted to potential leaks on their properties. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on Facebook at facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/nycwater.

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