

Storm Update – July 22 & 23, 2010

(Milwaukee, WI) -- The Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) is reporting the following information to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources regarding sewer overflows that resulted from extreme rainfall and flooding in the Milwaukee area on July 22 and 23.

At the peak of the storm, District gauges recorded up to four inches of rain in one hour. Three locations measured more than eight inches of rain for the total storm with a high of 8.98 inches.

One inch of rain on MMSD's service area equals 7.1 billion gallons of water.

MMSD filled the Deep Tunnel system to 515 million gallons, 98.8% of its 521 million gallon capacity. To reduce the risk of basement backups and reserve room in the tunnel for separate sewer flows, the District started a combined sewer overflow at 6:10 pm on July 22. That action preserved 371 million gallons (71%) of available storage for separate sewer flows.

Unfortunately, overflows from MMSD and local sewer systems were not enough to prevent basement backups. The relief points could not get excess rain and flood water out of overburdened sewers fast enough.

Local communities have reported thousands of basement backups. MMSD is fully committed to working with those communities and neighbors to help assess the causes and develop solutions. It is important for people to report basement backups to their local community and to MMSD so that all agencies are aware of the problem areas. Phone numbers and a backup reporting form are available at mmsd.com.

Five days after the start of intense rain, MMSD is still treating rainfall that entered private laterals, community-owned sewers, and the regional sewer system. The District estimates that it will have captured and treated more than 3.2 billion gallons of water and wastewater when it's done handling all the rain.

The storm resulted in combined sewer overflows and separate sewer overflows of untreated stormwater and wastewater from MMSD's regional sewers estimated at 2.1 billion gallons. The combined sewer overflow is estimated to be 1.985 billion gallons. The separate sewer overflow is estimated at 171 million gallons. These numbers do NOT include any overflows from local communities.

Also, to reduce sewer overflows and reserve room in the Deep Tunnel for separate sewer flows from the suburbs, MMSD blended 100 million gallons of stormwater and wastewater at the Jones Island Water Reclamation Facility by pumping it out of the Deep Tunnel, blending it with wastewater that went through the first three stages of treatment and sending the entire flow through the disinfection process before releasing it to Lake Michigan.

MMSD OVERFLOW VOLUMES

