

Fact Sheet

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- There are 520 miles of shoreline in NYC ¹
- There are 426 Combined Sewage Overflows (CSOs) in NYC ²
- There are 3,700 streetwater outfalls in NYC, carrying known and suspected sources of fecal bacteria
- The City of New York has a permit to dump 27 billion gallons of raw sewage into the river every year.
- As a result of the CSOs and streetwater outfalls, the inner harbor of NYC cannot be designated by the Department of Environmental Protection as an area safe for swimming.
- In 1972, Congress passed the Clean Water Act, which established ambitious goals to reduce water pollution and enable safe recreational use of navigable waterways.
- In 2013, the Environmental Protection Agency rated 55% of U.S. rivers and streams as poor and identified an astounding 71% of waterways as poor in the Southeast.
- In Latin America, 70% of the river water in the region is contaminated, according to a report published by the World Bank.
- The Asian Development Water Outlook report of 2013 indicated that 80% of Asia's rivers are in poor health and overwhelmed by pollution.
- According to the United Nations Environment Programme, 90% of wastewater in developing countries is discharged untreated into rivers, lakes and oceans.
- In the late 1800s, there were [14 floating baths](#) in and around the New York Harbor ³
- In the 1920s, environmental degradation resulted in the closure of the floating baths.
- In 2007, Ann L. Bittenwieser re-created the vision for the floating baths with Floating Pool Lady, a pool installed atop a barge.
- The City's CSO Long Term Control Plans (LTCPs) fail to meet federal health standards for safe contact with water ⁴

¹ All facts taken from NYC Department of Environmental Protection except where noted

² What is a CSO? New York City, like other older urban centers, is largely served by a combined sewer system where stormwater and wastewater are carried through a single pipe. During heavy storms, this combined flow can exceed the system's capacity. The system is designed to discharge a mix of stormwater and wastewater—called combined sewer overflow or CSO—into nearby waterways in order to prevent the biological processes at the wastewater treatment plants from becoming compromised. In the combined system, wastewater flows through a series of progressively larger sewers into a regulator, which controls wastewater flow (from the 2012 EPA State of the Harbor Report)

³ NYC Parks and Recreation

⁴ S.W.I.M. Coalition