

Technical Information: Frequently Asked Questions

King County will build a wet weather treatment station in Georgetown to help protect the Duwamish River from future pollution. During heavy rainstorms, the new wet weather treatment station will clean sewage and stormwater that otherwise might flow directly into the river. Below are some of the frequently asked questions the project has received about words or phrases that get used a lot. There is also information about the technology that will be used by the facility to clean the sewage and stormwater.

What is sewage?

Sewage is used water that goes down drains and/or toilets in homes and businesses.

What is stormwater?

Stormwater is rain or snow that washes off roofs, streets and parking lots.

What is a combined sewer system?

A combined sewer system is sewer pipes that carry both stormwater and sewage. The Georgetown neighborhood has a combined sewer system.

What is a combined sewer overflow (CSO)?

A combined sewer overflow (CSO) is a release of excess stormwater and sewage into water bodies from a combined sewer system that is caused by heavy rain or snowmelt.

What is a wet weather treatment station?

A wet weather treatment station is a facility that cleans sewage and stormwater before it enters water bodies. It only runs when water volume in the pipes exceeds the pipes' capacity.

Does this treatment facility impact the Duwamish diagonal pipe?

The Georgetown Wet Weather Treatment Station will not affect the Duwamish diagonal. The Duwamish diagonal is a large pipe that receives flows from multiple City of Seattle and King County pipes. One of the King County CSOs that releases into the Duwamish diagonal (Bayview South) is already controlled. The other two (Bayview North and Hanford at Rainier) will be controlled with a storage project that will begin construction in 2016. The storage tank will be built near the corner of S. Hanford Street and Martin Luther King Way S.

To learn more about the storage tank project visit:

www.kingcounty.gov/environment/wtd/Construction/Seattle/HanfordCSO.aspx.

What is advanced primary treatment?

Advanced primary treatment has additional solids settling technology as compared to standard primary treatment. Coagulants and flocculants are added to the treatment process to accelerate the solids settling process. The new facility will use advanced primary treatment.

Where has the advanced primary treatment technology planned for the Georgetown Wet Weather Treatment Station been used successfully?

The Bremerton CSO treatment facility is the closest both geographically and technologically. The system has been working successfully since 2003. Learn more about the technology used at the Bremerton CSO treatment facility- ballasted sedimentation and UV disinfection, here:

www.kingcounty.gov/environment/wastewater/CSO/Library/PlanUpdates/2012Plan.aspx. Scroll down the page to 'supporting technical documents' and view TM 700: Treatment Technology Selection.

What is the ratio of stormwater to sewage at these outfalls?

Currently, overflows average 75% stormwater and 25% sewage. After the treatment station is built, the one allowable CSO is projected to be 95% stormwater and 5% sewage. This is because that one event per year (on average) accounts for the biggest storms, with the most stormwater entering the system, in comparison with current overflows which can occur with smaller amounts of rain.

How much industrial waste will be coming into the treatment station, and how is it managed?

King County has an industrial waste program that supports industry and business in meeting federal regulations for the discharge of industrial waste. Industries along the Duwamish River, such as metal plating businesses and Boeing's North Field, must go through stringent pre-treatment before they can discharge their waste into the sewer system. These businesses are inspected at least annually to ensure compliance.

Most industrial waste that would reach the Georgetown Wet Weather Treatment Station has already been treated. There is no additional treatment planned at the station. For more information on King County's Industrial Waste Program, visit:

www.kingcounty.gov/environment/wastewater/IndustrialWaste/Regulations.aspx.

For more information:

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Visit the project website:
www.kingcounty.gov/GeorgetownWWTS