

# WEST DUWAMISH WET WEATHER STORAGE FACILITY



 King County  
Protecting Our Waters  
*Doing our part on rainy days*

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is this project about?**

King County is designing a 1.25-million-gallon underground storage facility at the intersection of Southwest Michigan Street and 2nd Avenue Southwest to hold stormwater and wastewater that currently overflows into the Duwamish River during large storm events. These overflows are called combined sewer overflows (CSOs). In addition to the storage facility, the County will update existing structures underneath West Marginal Way Southwest and at the edge of the Duwamish Greenbelt to convey the stored water to the West Point Treatment Plant for treatment before release into the Puget Sound.

### **What are CSOs and why is King County working to prevent them?**

CSOs are relief points in sewer systems that carry sewage and stormwater in the same pipes. When heavy rains overflow the pipes, CSOs release sewage and stormwater into rivers, lakes, or Puget Sound to prevent sewage backups on streets and in homes and businesses. However, CSOs pose a risk to public health and the environment. King County is working to reduce CSOs from the South Park drainage basin into the Duwamish River to no more than one overflow per year on average.

### **What is happening now?**

The West Duwamish Wet Weather Storage Facility project is currently in the design phase. We are committed to sharing regular updates on our progress as we approach the estimated start of construction in 2025.

### **How does this project fit into King County's efforts to support the Duwamish River?**

This is just one of our many efforts to help protect the river. From large-scale planning efforts to supporting rain gardens and other green stormwater solutions on properties, King County is committed to protecting public health and the environment in the Duwamish River and surrounding communities.

### **Is this part of the ongoing Lower Duwamish Superfund cleanup?**

This project is not part of the Lower Duwamish Superfund cleanup. Rather, it will reduce future sources of pollution in the Duwamish River. For questions about the superfund, you may contact Caryn Sengupta: [caryn.sengupta@kingcounty.gov](mailto:caryn.sengupta@kingcounty.gov).

### **Will this prevent flooding in South Park?**

This project was not designed to reduce residential wastewater backups in South Park. King County Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) is working on other projects in South Park to reduce the potential for wastewater backups in homes. We are updating and adapting our wastewater system to prepare for severe storms, higher tides, and sea level rise. We are working closely with Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) to design and implement solutions, prevent wastewater backups and protect water quality, public health and the environment.

Seattle Public Utilities is working to address stormwater issues in South Park. Learn more:

- [seattle.gov/utilities/neighborhood-projects/south-park-water-quality](https://seattle.gov/utilities/neighborhood-projects/south-park-water-quality)
- [seattle.gov/utilities/neighborhood-projects/south-park-drainage](https://seattle.gov/utilities/neighborhood-projects/south-park-drainage)

**What will happen to solid waste that enters the storage facility?**

During large storm events, some solid waste might enter the facility. Solid waste that enters the storage facility during large storm events will be pumped back to the existing conveyance system after the storm and directed to the West Point Treatment Plant for treatment. King County operations and maintenance staff will occasionally access the inside of the tank to clean the facility and dispose of any solid waste that is not removed by the pumps.

**What will happen to the facility if there is an earthquake?**

King County is planning the facility with seismic resiliency in mind. The project design will include ground improvements to lessen any potential damage to the structure and its function in case of an earthquake.

**What happens when the tank is full?**

This storage tank will hold 1.25-million gallons, or the equivalent of two Olympic-size swimming pools, of stormwater and wastewater during large storms. If more stormwater and wastewater flow into the storage tank than can be held, the water will overflow at the CSO outfall. A CSO discharge location, or outfall, is considered controlled when it overflows no more than one time each year on a long-term average, and we expect that this storage facility will successfully control overflows at this site.

**How is King County managing odors at the site?**

The storage facility will include odor control at several points around the structure. Negative pressure in the storage tank facility and carbon absorption scrubbers are just two examples of design elements that will work to keep odorous airs from escaping the site.

**Will the project be sustainable?**

King County is committed to reducing our carbon footprint to fight climate change. The storage facility and surrounding site will incorporate many sustainable elements, including solar panels, an electric vehicle charging station, and new trees.

**How are you incorporating community input into the project design?**

King County works with communities to share project information, identify potential impacts, and involve the community in project design where possible. Since 2013, community members have helped the project team by informing the selected solution, weighing in during the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review, and sharing community priorities. In summer 2022, over 100 community members shared their preferences for the site design, which shaped our plans for the look and feel of the storage facility and the surrounding landscape.

**Will there be public art at the site?**

Earlier this year, 4Culture and King County WTD selected two local artists to create innovative, temporary new work for this project. The public art will create an emotional connection to one of the most important resources of our world, water, and engage issues of social, economic, and environmental relevance. Additionally, in response to community input gathered in a summer 2022 survey, the project engineering team is partnering with a local artist to design interpretive fencing panels for the storage facility site.

**How is King County supporting communities around the facility?**

King County is committed to building clean water infrastructure that brings benefits to the community and minimizes project-related burdens on the surrounding neighborhoods. The project team is implementing a process through the ESJ Action Plan Community Benefit Project program to benefit the people who live, work, and visit the South Park and Highland Park areas. Guided by input from community leadership and neighbors in South Park and Highland Park, King County is working to support community benefit projects that serve the nearby communities and align with our Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan.

**How can I stay involved?**

Please visit the project website at [kingcounty.gov/westduwamish-cso](https://kingcounty.gov/westduwamish-cso) to learn more about the project and sign up for the project email list. To share feedback directly with the project team, you may contact Demmelash Adera at 206-263-2340 or [deadera@kingcounty.gov](mailto:deadera@kingcounty.gov).

**Alternative formats available** Call 206-477-5371 or TTY:711

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