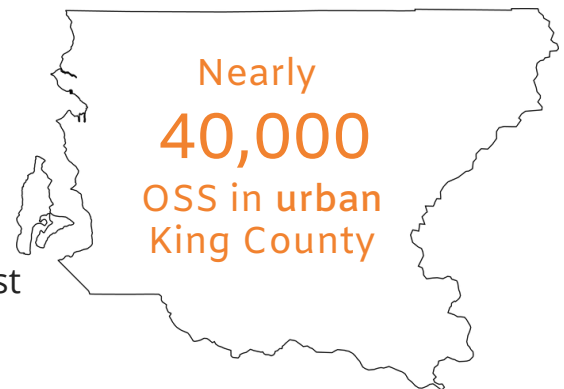


Equitable wastewater futures in King County

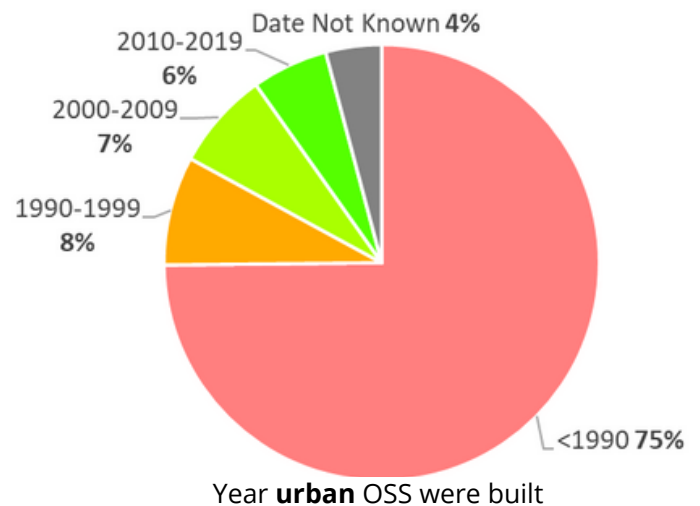
Urban King County is home to nearly 40,000 on-site sewage systems (OSS), many of which are past their intended life span and vulnerable to failure.

Public Health – Seattle & King County's Equitable Wastewater Futures Program works to identify the best wastewater treatment solutions for these properties, which includes sewer connection or OSS replacement.



Why we're tackling this

- **Commitment to equity:** Historic inequities excluded certain communities (including parts of Seattle, Tukwila, Burien, Federal Way, Kent and Auburn) from sewer connections. Today, 44% of urban OSS are in areas highly vulnerable to public health emergencies.
- **Protecting public health:** Many of these systems are aging and more likely to fail, which can expose people to untreated sewage and contaminate nearby bodies of water.
- **Reducing costs:** Replacing an OSS costs about \$40,000, and sewer connections can be even more expensive! These costs are usually wholly covered by the homeowner. By proactively planning, we can reduce costs and help secure grant funding.
- **Planning for the future:** When you replace an OSS, it can't go in the exact same location. Smaller urban lots can only replace their OSS so many times. Sewer connections can be more sustainable long-term and provide more housing options.
- **Preparing for a changing climate:** OSS are more vulnerable than sewers to flooding, which will occur more in King County due to climate change.



What's next

- We're using \$2 million from the King County Climate Equity Capital Pool to extend sewer connections to up to 24 homes in 2024. This work will also make sewer connection opportunities available to new neighborhoods.
- We're working to secure funding sources for more sewer connections. We'll prioritize funding applications using the CDC's social vulnerability index.