



## OPERATION Ripple Effect™

## SIMPLE STEPS: BIG BENEFITS FOR THE MOHAWK RIVER

### PROJECT BULLETIN

Normally, our sanitary sewer system has enough capacity to operate properly. But, when we get heavy rains or sudden snow melts, stormwater overwhelms the system and causes overflows into the Mohawk River. That stormwater runoff enters the sanitary sewer system from multiple sources, including deteriorated and damaged public sanitary sewers and private property connections, such as roof leaders and sump pumps.

Operation Ripple Effect is a program of the Oneida County Sewer District that asks residents, businesses, and municipalities to do their part to reduce overflows. Together, we can help keep the Mohawk River clean.

### MAKING PROGRESS:

## ELIMINATING PRIVATE PROPERTY INFILTRATION AND INFLOW

What happens when you cross a roof leader, a foundation drain, and a sump pump with the sanitary sewer system? Sanitary sewer overflows!

While this may sound like a bad joke – which it is – it's also no laughing matter.

National studies have shown that as much as 50 percent of the water that contributes to sanitary sewer overflows during wet weather events (heavy rain or snow melt) comes from private properties. Known as infiltration and inflow (I/I), clean water enters the sanitary sewer system through improper connections such as downspouts and sump pumps.

For the private property owner, I/I can result in street flooding, sewage backups or additional service disruptions.

For the ratepayer, I/I can be costly to accommodate due to increased maintenance and treatment costs. Also, continued sewage overflows can result in hefty fines by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation if not eliminated by 2021.

For the environment, I/I can lead to diluted overflows of sewage into the Mohawk River.



#### Here's how you can help:

- **Reroute** by disconnecting improper system connections such as roof leaders, driveway and foundation drains, and sump pumps;
- **Reclaim** by capturing the water that used to drain into the sewer system from your roof leader by using a rain barrel;
- **Recharge** by using the excess stormwater to maintain a rain garden.

With your help, you can help extend the life of these new systems and reduce service disruptions. Learn more at [RippleEffectOCSD.org](http://RippleEffectOCSD.org).

### What is infiltration?

Infiltration is excess groundwater that seeps or flows into sewer pipes via cracks or leaky joints from the surrounding soil. In the event of high groundwater or excess snowmelt, large volumes of water can often infiltrate deteriorated sections of the system.

### What is inflow?

Inflow is clean water, from illegal connections of sump pumps, downspouts, and foundation drains, that is channeled directly into the sanitary sewer system. Any extra water flowing into the wastewater collection system from above-ground sources is inflow.

### Why is this a problem?

Our sanitary sewer system is not designed to treat clean water. Excess I/I reduces sanitary sewer capacity. This can overwhelm the system and cause sewage backups into streets and homes, and overflows into the Mohawk River. In addition, this clean water adds unnecessary costs for treatment.



Contact [cmanion@paigegroup.com](mailto:cmanion@paigegroup.com) to schedule a briefing.  
For more news and reports, visit [www.RippleEffectOCSD.org](http://www.RippleEffectOCSD.org).  
*An Initiative of the Oneida County Sewer District*

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