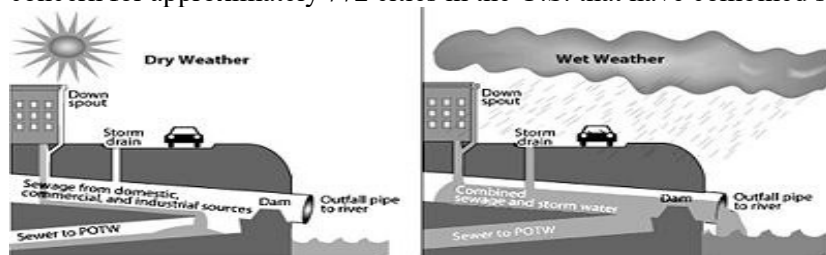




Combined Sewer Systems

Combined Sewers are sewers that are designed to collect rainwater runoff, domestic sewage, and industrial wastewater in the same pipe. Most of the time, combined sewer systems transport all their wastewater to a sewage treatment plant, where it is treated and then discharged to a stream. During periods of heavy rainfall or snowmelt, however, the wastewater volume in a combined sewer system can exceed the capacity of the sewer system or treatment plant. For this reason, combined sewer systems are designed to overflow occasionally and discharge excess wastewater directly to a stream.

These overflows, called combined sewer overflows (CSOs), contain not only stormwater but also untreated human and industrial waste, toxic materials, and debris. They are a major water pollution concern for approximately 772 cities in the U.S. that have combined sewer systems.



A major contributor to the sewer capacity issue is sump pumps. Nine (9) sump pumps running at the same time will take up the entire capacity of an eight (8) inch sewer.

Another major contributor to the capacity problem is downspouts. The City of Fostoria averages around 33 inches of rain per year. This means that if the downspouts from a 1,000-sf home are removed from the combined sewer, 21,450 gallons of rainwater will be removed from the system per year.

The City of Fostoria is currently implementing a Long-Term Control Plan which has been designed to reduce or eliminate CSO occurrences. The USEPA is requiring the plan to be completed prior to December 31, 2029.

The City of Fostoria has completed major improvements at the Wastewater Treatment Plant to increase the pumping capacity and storage capabilities. Further improvements are planned in the sewer system which include raising weir elevations in the CSO structures and removing sources of inflow and intrusion of rainwater into the sewer system. By removing the rainwater from the wastewater system, less water will need to be transported to the wastewater treatment plant and less water will be discharged to the receiving stream from the CSOs.

The reduction or elimination of the overflows will increase the water quality of the East Branch Portage River and will reduce the risks to human health, aquatic life, aquatic habitats, and will increase the public enjoyment of the river.