

For Immediate Release
July 13, 2010

Swimming Advisory at Edgewater

Heavy rainfall causes Edgewater combined sewer outfall to discharge raw sewage into Lake Erie.

Cleveland – Today, the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District posted a public advisory at Edgewater Beach. The advisory was posted as a result of a combined sewer overflow (CSO) event at Edgewater, which discharged raw sewage into Lake Erie during last night's heavy rain event. Visitors – particularly children, the elderly and those in ill health – are advised to avoid contact with the water and debris.

Since 1972, the Sewer District has reduced the volume of CSO by half – from 10 billion gallons to 5 billion gallons – and continues efforts to reduce CSO from entering local waterways. For example, the Mill Creek Tunnel, which is near completion, will be able to contain 75 million gallons of raw sewage when fully on-line, redirecting sewage to the Sewer District's Southerly Wastewater Treatment Plant as opposed to the region's local waterways.

Additionally, the Sewer District has \$3 billion plan to continue constructing additional tunnels throughout Greater Cleveland, further reducing the discharge of raw sewage into local waterways. Other Midwest cities, with similar combined sewer infrastructure, are also addressing combined sewer overflow issues.

Throughout the mid-1970s, the combined sewer outfall at Edgewater Beach discharged raw sewage into Lake Erie approximately 40 to 50 times per year. However, because of the Sewer District's improvements to aging infrastructure, the Edgewater combined sewer overflow discharges have significantly decreased: the overflow, on average, discharges only once every two years.

The Sewer District will test Lake Erie waters near Edgewater Beach a minimum of twice daily and notify local officials and the media as soon as the swimming advisory can be lifted.

Media Contact

Jeannie Chapman, Senior Public Information Specialist, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District
216.881.6600 | 216.214.2215 mobile |

About CSOs

Greater Cleveland's earliest sewers (primarily within the City and its inner-ring suburbs) are combined sewers. Built around the turn of the 19th century, these sewers carry sewage, industrial waste and stormwater in a single pipe

During heavy rains, there is a dramatic increase of water flowing through the combined sewers. When this happens, control devices may allow some of the combined wastewater and stormwater to overflow into area waterways to prevent urban flooding. This event is called a Combined Sewer Overflow, or CSO, and harms our clean water environment.

Additional information about combined sewer overflows can be found at www.neorsd.org/cso.

About the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

The Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District operates three wastewater treatment plants and related water pollution control facilities on Lake Erie and the Cuyahoga River to assure clean water for a Greater Cleveland. We serve more than one million people in 61 suburban communities and the City of Cleveland, treating more than 90 billion gallons of wastewater annually. Please visit www.wheredoesitgo.org for more information.

###