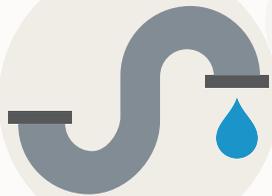


10

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PITTSBURGH'S WATER AND SEWERS



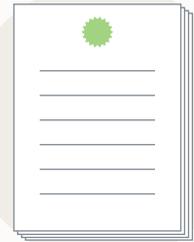
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1. Pittsburgh's first public sewer lines were built as early as 1840 in present-day Shadyside and Oakland. These lines discharged stormwater and wastewater into the Monongahela River. By 1908, more than 390 miles of underground sewer lines were in place, establishing the start of our 1200-mile combined sewer system still utilized today.

2.

On October 10th, 1907, a special city committee on municipal sanitation prepared a report for the Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce on the need to build a "modern" sewer system. However, **the regional treatment of stormwater and wastewater did not begin until 1959**, when ALCOSAN was fully operational.



3. For most city properties, storm drains and toilets deposit water into the same pipe. **This combination of stormwater and sewage is creating public health and safety issues**, including raw sewage backups and flash flooding.

4.

Today, with less green space to absorb rainfall and more impermeable roadways, sidewalks, and buildings, stormwater runoff is increasingly problematic. **New infrastructure projects built to absorb more water can help reduce flooding and make our neighborhoods safer.**

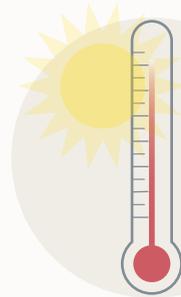


5.

In addition to more impervious surfaces, Pittsburgh also faces increases in annual rainfall. **In fact, 2018 was the wettest year on record for the city.** Almost 58 inches of rain fell in 2018, well above the average 38 inches.



6. The increases in rainfall paired with increases in average temperature led to more flash floods, sewer backups, and landslides in 2018. **Higher temperatures mean the atmosphere can hold more moisture, encouraging heavier rainfall over shorter periods.**



7. Our sewers are supposed to move all wastewater and stormwater to a treatment plant before releasing the water back into the environment. But when our sewers overflow, raw sewage and polluted water flow into our creeks and rivers. **By ensuring that water is treated first, we cut down on pollution for us and our downstream neighbors.**

8. **Everyone can help create safer, more flood-prepared neighborhoods.** The Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority (PWSA) is leading the way by building stormwater solutions like rain gardens, bioswales, and underground storage—making the city more resilient by temporarily detaining or storing water and increasing infiltration. Home and business owners can contribute to these solutions by installing rain barrels, planting trees, and using paving materials that absorb water.



9. Funding for stormwater projects and other services come from rates based on water meter readings. But this means that properties without a water meter do not pay anything for the runoff they send to the sewers. This fee imbalance can be corrected by **restructuring rates based on how much water each parcel of land actually contributes to the sewer system.**

10. Many other cities already use a parcel-based fee structure for stormwater services. This structure has gained national acceptance because it **fairly represents the impact that each individual parcel has on the sewer system.** Pittsburgh can do the same. Together we can solve our stormwater challenges.

