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An engineering success with a community benefit...

*MSD Shawnee Park Basin is now in service,
preventing up to 20 million gallons of wastewater pollution
in the Ohio River with each rainfall*

LOUISVILLE, KY – Under the Great Lawn in Shawnee Park, sits the MSD Shawnee Park Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Basin. The top of the basin is approximately 12 feet below grade, with three-foot-thick reinforced concrete walls. When it rains, the basin is hard at work protecting the Ohio River, the Park and the neighborhood from combined sewer overflows. Today, MSD along with Mayor Greg Fischer and Shawnee Park neighbors celebrated the end of more than two years of construction work on the basin.

How it works

Rainwater enters the combined sewer system through stormwater pipes and catch basins. This added water can overwhelm the sewer system sending a combination of wastewater and rainwater into the Ohio River. The Shawnee Park CSO Basin is a sealed, watertight concrete structure that captures and stores 20 million gallons of wastewater and stormwater during rain events and gradually release it back into the sewer system when treatment capacity is available. The mixture of rainwater and wastewater then flows through the sewer system to MSD's Morris Forman Water Quality Treatment Center for proper treatment and release into the Ohio River. When the basin is empty, water is flushed across the structure floor to clean any remaining debris.

Project amenities

The project was a collective effort between MSD, Louisville Metro Parks, the Olmsted Parks Conservancy, community leaders, and local residents to also feature new park amenities including an open-air pavilion, restrooms, restoration of Paul Hornung Field, refurbished basketball courts, a new paved parking area for the spray ground and a resurfaced Loop Road. Also, funds were provided to Louisville Metro Parks for additional renovations in the park.

“This project is a great leap forward in restoring Shawnee Park, while at the same time addressing the health and safety of our entire community by capturing combined sewer overflows. My thanks to Tony Parrott and his team at MSD for their work,” says Louisville Metro Mayor Greg Fischer.

Job opportunities

The Shawnee Park CSO Basin project also included a pledge from the Design-Build contractor Ulliman Schutte to utilize local labor. The project had 225 Jefferson County residents working in positions such as carpenters, ironworkers, electricians, masons, pipefitters, heavy equipment operators, and more. Ulliman Schutte reported an 83 percent local labor usage, with 21 percent Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and 14 percent with Women Business Enterprise (WBE) participation.

“I appreciate all MSD does to ensure that contractors utilize local labor whenever possible. These efforts do not go unnoticed by the community, states Joseph Scott, owner of Joash Construction. Scott is not only a neighbor of the project but was also the sub-contractor for the basketball courts and concrete work associated with the courtyard, pavilion and restrooms.

“This project is a model example of how all of our processes, communications, and policies came together for a community benefit and a big win for MSD and the community. We believe that by hiring local labor on our construction projects, we invest in the health, safety, and quality of life for our contracting community and ratepayers,” states MSD Executive Director Tony Parrott.

The big picture

The \$78 million Shawnee Park CSO Basin is part of a \$1.15 billion mandate from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to clean up local waterways. The Shawnee Park Basin is the largest of 10 underground CSO basins. The basins and the 4-mile long Waterway Protection Tunnel will work together to greatly reduce combined sewer overflows by the end of 2020.

Underground storage is part of MSD’s endeavor to prevent wastewater from overflowing into Louisville’s waterways. MSD has recently completed – or is close to completing the last four of ten basins.

- Logan Street CSO Basin, operational December 2017, complete
- Clifton Heights CSO Basin, operational December 2018, wrapping up site work
- Shawnee Park CSO Basin, operational March 2019, site work nearly complete
- Portland CSO Basin, operational date of November 2019, construction continues

Construction of the Waterway Protection Tunnel is underway. The tunnel is expected to be operational by the end of 2020.

History

Combining wastewater and stormwater in a single pipe and designing the system to overflow during periods of heavy rainfall was considered state-of-the-art wastewater technology in the late 19th and early 20th centuries when Louisville's combined sewers were constructed. It was a typical infrastructure design for the time, though later in the 20th century, experts realized that the CSOs were contributing pollution to urban streams and rivers.

For photos of the basin during construction, visit:

<https://www.webcargo.net/l/pTzKlh3ayQ/>



About MSD

The Louisville/Jefferson County Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) works to achieve and maintain clean, environmentally safe waterways for a healthy and vibrant community. The organization's more than 650 employees provide wastewater management, drainage and flood protection services across the 376 square miles of Louisville Metro. In addition to operating and maintaining Louisville Metro's sewer system, floodwall system, water quality treatment centers and flood pumping stations, MSD invests in hundreds of infrastructure improvement projects each year, plants more than 1,000 trees and other vegetation annually to enhance water filtration and reduce runoff, and provides numerous outreach programs to inform and educate the community about protecting our waterways.