The Last Line Of Defense
Louisville Metro’s Ohio River Flood Protection System exists to keep the river at bay and out of the city. The system protects more than 200,000 people, 87,000 homes and $34 billion in property over 110 square miles. It includes 26.1 miles of floodwall and earthen levee, 16 flood pumping stations, nearly 150 floodgates and 79 floodwall closures.

How Do Flood Pump Stations Work?
During times of high water on the Ohio River, the openings in the floodwall are sealed to keep the river water from backing up along our streams. Since the streams are always flowing, pumps are used to push water from the interior of the floodwall out into the river. During rain events, the pumps need to work even harder to make sure the area inside the floodwalls do not flood.

The flood pumps are only used when the Ohio River is high. When river levels are normal, streams flow to the river through gravity and no pumps are needed.

You can make a difference in the health of our streams.

Louisville’s Rainwater Flood Protection System

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Ohio River

Pumping Stations
Louisville Water takes water from the Ohio River through pipes in the river. The water passes through rotating screens to remove large debris.

Reservoirs
Mud and sand settle to the bottom of the reservoir.

Electric pumps move the water to the reservoir.

Coagulation Basins
Ferric sulfate and polymer remove any remaining mud and silt.

Water Treatment Plant
First we adjust the hardness of the water in the mixing basins, then we add chlorine to keep the water safe and clean.

Collection Systems
Wastewater can flow from homes and businesses in the community by gravity or pumps in the collection system.

Usage in Homes and Businesses
We use the water for everything from brushing our teeth, to washing clothes and dishes, to bath water. But eventually most used water goes back down the drain.

Distribution
The water travels through a series of water mains to homes and businesses in the community. We have thousands of miles of water mains in our system.

Water Quality Lab
Water quality scientists perform more than 200 tests each day on your drinking water.

Trees and other plants help reduce soil erosion, filter out pollutants, and shade streams.

Fertilizers and pesticides are carried to streams.

Stormwater Runoff and Watersheds

Water Quality Treatment Center
Wastewater is slowed down to remove heavy metals, solids, and grit.

Water is disinfected before returning to the Ohio River.

Biosolids” are allowed to settle and are removed – clarified water moves to the next step.

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