

Notice of Treated CSO Discharge MWRA Cottage Farm CSO Treatment Facility

In accordance with the conditions of the Lower Charles River Basin Variance for Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO) issued by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to the MWRA on October 1, 2010, you are hereby notified of a discharge of treated combined sewage to the Charles River at MWRA's Cottage Farm CSO Treatment Facility (Outfall MWR 201).

The Variance allows CSO discharges, and requires the MWRA to notify local health agents, DEP, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Charles River Watershed Association by email within 24 hours of a discharge. **The Cottage Farm CSO Facility discharged on Thursday, December 27, 2012, beginning at approximately 8:50 AM and ending at 1:35 PM.**

The Cottage Farm CSO Treatment Facility is located adjacent to the Charles River at 660 Memorial Drive in Cambridge, between Magazine Park and the BU Bridge. The facility provides hydraulic relief for MWRA's North and South Charles Relief Sewers and is the primary upstream relief point when wet weather flows in large storms exceed the hydraulic capacity of MWRA's Ward Street Headworks in Boston. The headworks direct flows to the Deer Island Wastewater Treatment Plant via a deep rock tunnel. Hydraulic relief through the facility is necessary to prevent system surcharging and backups into streets and buildings in large storms. The Cottage Farm CSO Facility provides screening, sediment reduction, and disinfection (with dechlorination) of combined storm water and sewage before discharging to the Charles River. The Cottage Farm CSO Facility discharges only during large storms.

There are several other permitted combined sewer overflow outfalls which occasionally discharge untreated combined sewage to the lower Charles on both banks of the river. During large storms, such as those that cause Cottage Farm discharges, untreated CSO can discharge to the Charles River. Public health officials recommend avoiding contact with the river during rainstorms and for 48 hours afterwards, as there may be increased health risks due to bacteria or other pollutants.

If you need additional information about the most recent discharge at the Cottage Farm CSO Facility, please contact the MWRA Wastewater Operations Control Center at 617-305-5940.

For related information, please visit the following links:

Description of CSO Discharges and MWRA's CSO Control Program
<http://www.mwra.state.ma.us/03sewer/html/sewco.htm>

Charles River Variance
http://www.mwra.state.ma.us/harbor/html/cso_variance.htm

Charles River Water Quality
http://www.mwra.state.ma.us/harbor/html/cr_wq.htm

CSO Discharge Monitoring Reports
<http://www.mwra.state.ma.us/harbor/pdf/currentdmrcso.pdf>