

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. The shapes are primarily triangles and polygons, creating a dynamic, layered effect. The central area is white, providing a clear space for the text.

What are TMDLs and why are they important to Sanitary Sewer Overflows?

What is a TMDL?

- ▶ A TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) is a water quality improvement project — process is a science-based approach preventing waterways from becoming dangerous to use. A TMDL is a numerical value that represents the highest amount of a pollutant a surface water body can receive and still meet the standards. A TMDL is like a budget for pollutants for impaired waterbodies. It estimates the amount of a pollutant like that a water body can receive and still support its designated uses like fishing, general recreation and general support of aquatic life. In North Central Texas, the primary pollutant of concern is *E. coli*.

What is *E. coli* and Where does it come from?

- ▶ *Escherichia coli*, commonly known as *E. coli*, is a type of bacteria. Specific strains of *E. coli* can cause food poisoning and lead to symptoms such as severe abdominal cramps, watery stool (which may be bloody), vomiting, and fever. These harmful strains can be transmitted through contaminated food, **Contaminated Water**, or person-to-person contact.
- ▶ *E. coli* can come from a variety of sources, including pet waste, sanitary sewer overflows, agricultural practices, wastewater treatment plants, illicit discharge, septic systems, wildlife waste, and more.

What are SSOs and What Causes them?

- ▶ Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSOs) occur when untreated or partially treated sewage is released from a municipal sewer system into the environment. These overflows can carry harmful bacteria, viruses, protozoa, helminths (intestinal worms), and inhaled molds and fungi. It's essential to address SSOs promptly to protect public health and prevent environmental damage.
- ▶ Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSOs) occur when areas of the sewer system have exceeded capacity. They can be caused by extreme rainfall, **obstructions in sewer lines**, sewer main breaks, or improper sewer design. SSOs can discharge to surface waters, streets, parklands, buildings, or other property.

How to Prevent SSOs?

- ▶ SSOs can be prevented by only flushing the three P's: Pee, Poop, and Toilet Paper and properly disposing of Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOGs).
- ▶ FOGs should always be thrown in the trash or recycled in a grease trap. Though they are liquid at room temperature, FOGs solidify and trap other materials which causes blockages in pipes and drains.
- ▶ Limiting harsh and toxic chemicals like cleaning products that go down the drain also help in preventing SSOs.
- ▶ Materials such household products (including some marked 'flushable') such as baby wipes, facial wipes, sanitary pads, and tampons. All of these create blockages as well.



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The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is working with stakeholders to implement best management practices to address and prevent bacteria impairments in the North Central Texas region.

To view the current Implementation Plan, or to utilize available resources, please visit www.nctcog.org/TMDL