



CITY OF ATLANTA

MAYOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS
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NEWS RELEASE

Mayor Franklin Pledges Clean Water For All Atlanta Citizens As CSO Plan Is Unveiled

ATLANTA, October 16 -- Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin said today that the City of Atlanta will have the cleanest possible water for all its citizens, then outlined a program and immediate steps to reach that goal. The Mayor made her announcement along with the Atlanta City Council, members of the Clean Water Advisory Panel, and business, environmental and community leaders during a public briefing in the Old City Council Chambers at Atlanta City Hall.

Designed to tackle both short- and long-term water issues, *Clean Water Atlanta* is the most aggressive and thorough program yet initiated by the City of Atlanta to ensure clean drinking water for all residents, and clean streams and clean wastewater flows for Atlanta and its downstream neighbors. The program weaves together a combination of monitoring and enforcement of water quality issues, as well as lays out the long-anticipated plan to improve Atlanta's aging sewer system.

"What I am interested in is creating the cleanest streams and rivers of any large city in America. And that is the single, overriding goal of *Clean Water Atlanta*," said Mayor Franklin. "My commitment to you is to create the cleanest urban streams and rivers in the country within a decade."

Mayor Franklin said the City's efforts will require the attention and support of all Atlanta citizens, and the work to achieve and maintain clean water must be taken seriously. "Today I want to focus on our responsibility to have a sewer system that works, and on our responsibility for clean streams and clean rivers. We owe to our neighbors, to our children and to the environment. It is our responsibility to future generations," she said.

The five-point strategy of *Clean Water Atlanta* is to:

1. **Reduce flooding and pollution caused by stormwater.**
2. **Eliminate sanitary sewer spills.**
3. **Monitor the water quality of every major stream and river in Atlanta.**
4. **Ensure professional management of the City's Consent Decree projects.**
5. **Implement a combined sewer overflow (CSO) solution that achieves high water quality, low cost and timely completion of Consent Decree obligations.**

By endorsing the recommendations of the blue-ribbon **Clean Water Advisory Panel**, chaired by President Wayne Clough of Georgia Tech, the Mayor set in motion the City's work to meet the federal consent order that requires CSO compliance by November 2007. On October 11, the panel presented its recommendations to the Mayor, who today said she had notified both the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the state Environmental Protection Division (EPD) that **Refinement Option 1** is the City's preferred plan.

According to the **Clean Water Advisory Panel's** final report, **Refinement Option 1** effectively addresses all the major needs of the wastewater improvement program and separates 27 percent of the City's combined sewers, which are located largely in the downtown district. It also "eliminates two CSO facilities including the McDaniel facility, which has been deemed 'the worst violator' by the federal EPA."

According to the Clough report, "This option uses well-established technology, exceeds the water quality expectations in the Consent Decree, can most likely be completed by 2007, has the second lowest cost of all options (\$150 million less than the approved plan), and will cause a relatively low level of construction disruption... Seizing the opportunity now to bring its infrastructure up to standard will go a long way in helping Atlanta achieve its aspirations of becoming one of the great cities of the world."

"When I came into office, the City had a formal policy to achieve full sewer separation within 25 years. I believe in separation, and I intend to keep the City's commitment to full separation in that time frame," said Mayor Franklin. "By following the Clough plan, I will be doing my part – in my four years in office – to move toward the 25 year goal. We currently have 85 percent separation in the City of Atlanta. Under the Clough plan, we will reach 90 percent separation in just four years."

Mayor Franklin said that the panel's approach "provides a way to ensure that any future sewer separation has a built-in way – through tunnel storage and treatment – to treat polluted stormwater," a critical component of any truly effective separated sewer system.

Clean Water Atlanta Specific Goals and Objectives

- ❑ Complete the City’s Consent Decree obligation two years ahead of schedule.
- ❑ Create a Stormwater Utility focusing on greenspace solutions to flooding and pollution created by polluted run-off.
- ❑ Conduct **Operation Clean Sewer** – an aggressive preventive maintenance program aimed at eliminating the 1,000 annual spills from the City’s sanitary sewer system.
- ❑ Achieve 90 percent sewer separation within four years, keeping the City well ahead of schedule on its stated goal of full separation within 25 years.
- ❑ Build a CSO tunnel storage and treatment plant that is the most cost effective alternative (\$834 million)
- ❑ Implement a CSO solution that achieves 65 percent better water quality than full separation, and 17 percent better water quality than the current authorized plan.
- ❑ Hire a full-time Director of *Clean Water Atlanta*, and a full-time finance director charged with effectively managing the \$3 billion in construction projects.

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