

identified in section I.B.2. These electronic submissions will be accepted in WordPerfect or ASCII file format. Avoid the use of special characters and any form of encryption.

2. *By Mail.* Send an original and three copies of your comments to: Water Docket, Environmental Protection Agency, Mailcode 4101T, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460, Attention Docket ID No. OW-2003-0025.

3. *By Hand Delivery or Courier.* Deliver your comments to: EPA Docket Center, EPA West, Room B102, 1301 Constitution Ave., NW., Washington, DC, Attention Docket ID No. OW-2003-0025. Such deliveries are only accepted during the Docket's normal hours of operation as identified in section I.A.1.

C. How Should I Submit CBI To the Agency?

Do not submit information that you consider to be CBI electronically through EPA's electronic public docket or by e-mail. You should send information that you consider to be CBI in one of two ways: (1) By U.S. Mail to: Kevin Weiss, Office of Wastewater Management, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Mailcode 4203M), 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460—Attention Docket ID No. OW-2003-0025; or (2) By courier or delivery to: Kevin Weiss, Office of Wastewater Management, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, EPA East Building (Room 7334), 1301 Constitution Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20004—Attention Docket ID No. OW-2003-0025. You may claim information that you submit to EPA as CBI by marking any part or all of that information as CBI (if you submit CBI on disk or CD ROM, mark the outside of the disk or CD ROM as CBI and then identify electronically within the disk or CD ROM the specific information that is CBI). Information so marked will not be disclosed except in accordance with procedures set forth in 40 CFR part 2.

In addition to one complete version of the comment that includes any information claimed as CBI, a copy of the comment that does not contain the information claimed as CBI must be submitted for inclusion in the public docket and EPA's electronic public docket. If you submit the copy that does not contain CBI on disk or CD ROM, mark the outside of the disk or CD ROM clearly that it does not contain CBI. Information not marked as CBI will be included in the public docket and EPA's electronic public docket without prior notice. If you have any questions about CBI or the procedures for claiming CBI, please consult the person identified in

the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

D. What Should I Consider as I Prepare My Comments for EPA?

You may find the following suggestions helpful for preparing your comments:

1. Explain your views as clearly as possible.
2. Describe any assumptions that you used.
3. Provide any technical information and/or data you used that support your views.
4. If you estimate potential burden or costs, explain how you arrived at your estimate.
5. Provide specific examples to illustrate your concerns.
6. Offer alternatives.
7. Make sure to submit your comments by the comment period deadline identified.
8. To ensure proper receipt by EPA, identify the appropriate docket identification number in the subject line on the first page of your response. It would also be helpful if you provided the name, date, and **Federal Register** citation related to your comments.

Acronyms Used

BOD₅ five-day biochemical oxygen demand
 CSO combined sewer overflow
 EPA Environmental Protection Agency
 I/I infiltration and inflow
 NPDES National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
 POTW publicly owned treatment works
 SS total suspended solids
 SSO sanitary sewer overflow

II. Background

A. Why Is EPA Taking This Action?

Wastewater collection systems collect domestic sewage and other wastewater from homes and other buildings and convey it to wastewater sewage treatment plants for proper treatment and disposal. The collection and treatment of municipal sewage and wastewater is vital to public health in our cities and towns, and to the viability of our receiving waters. The proper functioning of wastewater systems is among the most important factors responsible for the general level of good health enjoyed in the United States. The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention named clean water and sanitation technology one of the twentieth century's great public health achievements (see *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, April 2, 1999, v. 48, no. 12, pp. 241–243), while the

National Academy of Engineering included such technology on its list of the 20 engineering achievements that had the greatest impact on quality of life in the twentieth century. (National Academy of Engineering, press release, February 22, 2000).

Municipal collection systems and treatment facilities are an extensive, valuable, and complex part of the nation's infrastructure. In the last twenty years, communities have spent \$1 trillion in 2001 dollars on drinking water treatment and supply and wastewater treatment and disposal (see *The Clean Water and Drinking Water Infrastructure Gap Analysis*, EPA, September 2002). Another source estimates that wastewater treatment and collection systems represent about 10–15 percent of the total infrastructure value in the United States. (Fragile Foundations: A Report on America's Public Works. Final Report to the President and Congress. National Council on Public Works Improvement. February 1988.) The collection system and treatment facilities of a single large municipality can represent an investment worth billions of dollars.

The efficiency of wastewater treatment at a wastewater treatment plant depends strongly on the design and performance of the collection system. Many collection systems in the United States are subject to high volumes of infiltration (including rainfall-induced infiltration) and inflow during wet weather conditions. High levels of infiltration and inflow (I/I) increase the hydraulic load on treatment plants, which can reduce treatment efficiency, can exceed the capacity of components within the treatment process, and in extreme situations make biological treatment facilities inoperable (e.g., wash out the biological organisms that treat the waste).

In 1972, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, also referred to as the Clean Water Act (CWA), dramatically increased the role of the Federal government in protecting water resources by establishing a framework for upgrading the nation's wastewater infrastructure. With respect to the municipal wastewater infrastructure, the 1972 Act: established a minimum pollution control standard based on the application of secondary treatment; mandated the development of more stringent standards where necessary to protect water quality; established the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program to ensure implementation of standards; and dramatically increased Federal funding for municipal treatment works.