

# Quarterly Update

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## Hampton Roads Investigates Buried Assets

By Richard Stahr, Brown & Caldwell

Sewer pipes are buried assets that are largely out of sight and out of mind unless some problem causes overflows of sewage into the environment. Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) and 13 Hampton Roads localities, as required by a state consent order, are embarking on an ambitious program to define the condition of these crucial community assets.

The investigations, called Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Surveys (SSES), will provide the information necessary to develop plans to repair and replace any defective assets. The surveys will employ a variety of methods to identify problems in the buried sewer piping network and pumping stations.

One technique to be used, closed circuit television inspection, will require the insertion of small TV camera into the pipe. The resulting video images will be reviewed to identify defects that allow rainwater and groundwater to leak into the sewer.

Smoke testing will be another technique used for condition assessment. Smoke blown into the

sewers will escape from areas with defects. For example, smoke will leak from a storm drain connected to the sanitary sewer in error. Likewise, if sewer pipes that serve homes and business have defects, smoke will appear from the ground. This technique is also useful in identifying improper connections such as roof leaders and sump pumps.

The SSES information, which will be gathered through November 2011, will provide the basis for developing rehabilitation plans to repair and replace those sewers that are found to be defective. These plans will be implemented after they are approved by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Funding for executing the plans, which will cost the region hundreds of millions of dollars, is expected to come from sewer user fees.

The benefits of fixing the region's sewers include reducing the likelihood of sanitary sewer overflows and extending the useful life of a hidden but crucial component of Hampton Roads' infrastructure.

### Inside this issue:

Help Protect Our  
Waterways 2

Capacity Team  
Members 2

**Regional Wet Weather Management Plan**

**Quarterly Update**

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# Help Protect Our Waterways by Reporting Suspected Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSO)

Please call the number listed for your locality if you observe an SSO.

<u>Locality</u>	<u>During Business Hours</u>	<u>After Business Hours</u>
Chesapeake Public Utilities	757-382-CITY	757-382-3550
Gloucester Public Utilities	804-693-4044	804-693-3890
Hampton Public Works	757-727-8311	757-727-8311
Isle of Wight Public Utilities	757-365-6284	757-357-2151
James City Service Authority	757-229-7421	757-566-0112
Newport News Public Works	757-269-2750	757-247-2500
Norfolk Public Utilities	757-823-1000	757-823-1000
Poquoson Public Works	757-868-3590	757-868-3501
Portsmouth Public Utilities	757-393-8524	757-393-8561
Suffolk Public Utilities	757-514-7000	757-514-7034
Town of Smithfield	757-365-4272	757-357-2151
Virginia Beach Public Utilities	757-385-1400	757-385-3111
Williamsburg Public Works	757-220-6140	757-220-6196
York Environmental & Development Services	757-890-3773	757-890-3773

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