



Wastewater Treatment History in the Carkeek and North Beach Areas¹

Early 1950s—The former Greenwood Sewer District builds the sewage treatment plants at Carkeek Park. The North Beach treatment plant is also built.

1954—The City of Seattle takes over sewer systems serving the North Beach, Blue Ridge and Greenwood areas.

The city sewer system was originally developed as separate sewer areas—meaning that sewage and stormwater were carried and discharged through different pipes. But early on, officials noted that significant amounts of groundwater leaked into the system and that significant amounts of stormwater entered from roof-drain connections. This storm-driven water caused the volumes of sewage to vary dramatically and led to overloaded sewers, backups into basements and overflows into the streets and Puget Sound.

1958—Voters in Seattle and King County approve a ballot measure to establish the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle (Metro) to handle sewage disposal and clean up the pollution in Lake Washington and local Puget Sound beaches. The Metro Council is assembled with representatives from major jurisdictions in the region.

When Metro was formed to manage regional wastewater, flows from the North Beach, Blue Ridge and Greenwood areas received primary treatment at the North Beach Plant, preliminary treatment at the Greenwood Plant (now called Carkeek), or was discharged raw from two outfalls.

1959—The Metro Council adopts the first comprehensive sewer plan for the region, including construction of regional treatment plants at West Point and Renton.

1962—Metro begins to manage operations at treatment plants operated by Seattle, suburban cities and sewer districts around Lake Washington.

1963—Metro closes the North Beach treatment plant and builds a pump station at the same location to convey flows from the North Beach and Blue Ridge areas to the Carkeek treatment plant. Metro upgrades the Carkeek treatment plant to provide primary treatment.

1966—Metro completes construction of the West Point primary treatment plant.

1972—Congress passes the Clean Water Act requiring secondary (biological) treatment at all municipal wastewater treatment plants.

¹ **Sources for this history:**

Status of King County CSO Control for Carkeek CSO Treatment Plant and North Beach CSO, Oct. 10, 2003, King County

Carkeek Transfer CSO Facilities Project Update, July 1993, Metro

Environmental Assessment – Carkeek Transfer/CSO Facilities Project, August 1989, Metro



1977—Congress amends the Clean Water Act and allows waivers from the secondary treatment requirement for discharges to marine waters (301(h) permits). Using its studies of Puget Sound and impacts of discharging primary treated effluent, Metro applies for a waiver from secondary treatment for all of its primary treatment facilities, including Carkeek.

1983—The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issues a tentative decision to give Metro a 301(h) permit.

1984—The EPA and state Department of Ecology reverse the tentative decision to grant Metro a waiver for its West Point Treatment Plant and issue a tentative denial. Metro withdraws its waiver application.

1986—The Metro Council adopts a comprehensive facility plan for secondary treatment and combined sewer overflow (CSO) control (Resolution 4780). Under the plan, the Carkeek treatment plant is to be converted to a CSO control facility and pump station with transfer of base sewage flows to the West Point Treatment Plant for secondary treatment.

1994—After a public vote, Metro merges with King County. The Carkeek CSO control facility and pump station are finished. As part of mitigation for this project, Carkeek Park receives trail improvements, stream enhancements and additions to the south park entrance.

1999—The King County Council approves the Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP), including a 30-year comprehensive program to protect the environment and public health. The plan includes 21 projects (including North Beach) to control remaining county CSOs by 2030, as well as a new treatment plant (now called Brightwater) to serve the north part of the service area.

2000—King County issues the CSO Control Plan Update, which updates the RWSP CSO Control Plan.

2006—King County issues a five-year update to the CSO Control Plan.

2009—West Point NPDES Permit is renewed, with compliance schedule for North Beach, South Magnolia, Barton, and Murray CSO Control Projects.

2011—Alternative for CSO Control identified for North Beach; construction planned for late 2013.

ALTERNATIVE FORMATS AVAILABLE
206-684-1280 / 711 (TTY Relay)