

Community Update #8

December 2025

Under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency oversight, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, NYCDEP, is constructing an 8-million-gallon and a 4-million-gallon combined sewer overflow, or CSO, retention tank as part of the Gowanus Canal Superfund site cleanup. A CSO retention tank is a large structure that temporarily holds excess stormwater mixed with raw sewage during heavy rain or snowmelt, preventing raw sewage from overflowing directly into the canal, allowing it to be safely treated later at a wastewater plant.

Construction of the 8-million-gallon tank

In March 2025, NYCDEP finished removing soil from within the newly constructed tank perimeter walls. NYCDEP removed about 60-65 truckloads of soil from the site each workday. NYCDEP built the perimeter walls during an earlier phase of work at the site.

During the construction of the perimeter walls, community members raised concerns about odors coming from contaminated soil. In response to the odor complaints, EPA required NYCDEP to expand air monitoring, enhance odor suppression measures, and increase community notifications during the soil removal phase of the work. Odor complaints decreased significantly during the soil removal phase of the tank construction. Air sampling data is available on the NYCDEP's website at: www.nyc.gov/site/dep/water/gowanus-canal.page.

After removing the soil in the 8-million-gallon tank, NYCDEP started to install support foundations and to build the concrete base of the tank. This portion of the tank construction is expected to be completed in late 2026.

Construction of the 4-million-gallon tank

In late fall 2025, NYCDEP finished constructing the 4-million-gallon tank's perimeter wall. NYCDEP will begin removing the soil from within the perimeter walls in early 2026. In addition, NYCDEP constructed a new permanent New York City Department of Sanitation salt shed and composting facility to replace the structures that were removed to allow for the construction of the tank.

Background

EPA's cleanup plan for the Gowanus Canal consists of removing contaminated sediment from the bottom of the canal by dredging and capping the dredged areas. The liquid coal tar that has contaminated the original bottom of the canal would be stabilized with a cement-like material so that the contamination is no longer able to move. The plan also requires NYCDEP to build two retention tanks to prevent hazardous substances in CSOs from re-contaminating the canal after dredging.

NYCDEP is building the 8-million-gallon CSO tank, referred to as RH-034, at the head of the canal (Nevins Street between Butler Street and Sackett Street) and the 4-million-gallon tank, referred to as OH-007, that is being constructed at the Owl's Head Peninsula (near 2nd Avenue and 6th Street).

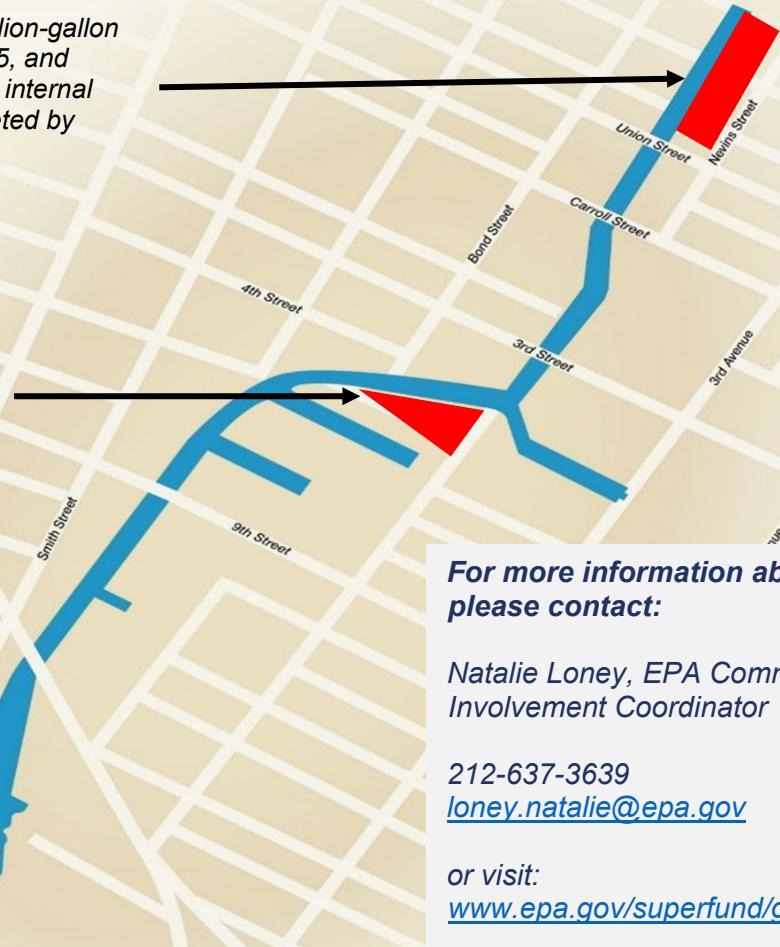


Structural support within the 8-million-gallon CSO tank

COMBINED SEWER OUTFALL RETENTION TANKS

RH-034 – Excavation for the 8-million-gallon tank was completed in March 2025, and construction of concrete base and internal supports is expected to be completed by December 2026.

OH-007 – Construction of the 4-million-gallon tank's perimeter wall was completed in early fall 2025. Excavation is expected to begin in early 2026.



For more information about the site, please contact:

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www.epa.gov/superfund/gowanus-canal