Cleaning Up Omaha's River and Streams

CSO!

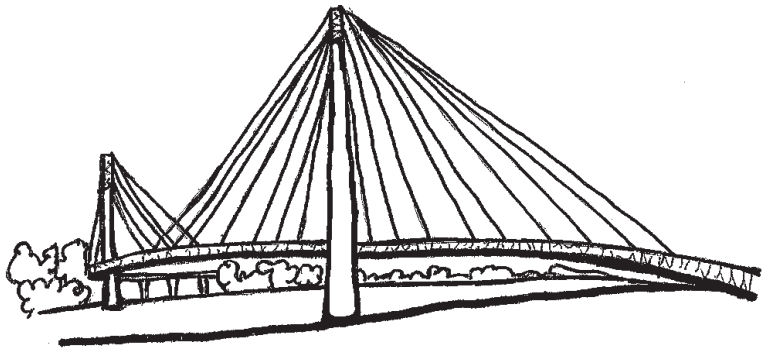
Clean Solutions for Omaha

Fontenelle Park

Fontenelle Park is more than a nature area with trails, fishing and picnic space. The park's lagoon collects stormwater to keep our sewer system from overflowing polluted water into the Missouri River.

Adams Park

Adams Park helps improve our water quality. It collects stormwater when it rains a lot and creates a temporary water pond. Special plants filter the water before it goes into the ground and a man-made structure catches the bottles and trash to keep them out of the sewer system.



Where Does Water Go?

Where do you think water goes when it rains and when you wash your hands or brush your teeth? Whether it spirals down the drain or falls on the street in a rainstorm, water collects in sewer pipes under the ground. Then, it travels through pipes to Omaha's Waste Water Recovery Facility where it is cleaned before it ends up in the Missouri River or the Papillion Creek.

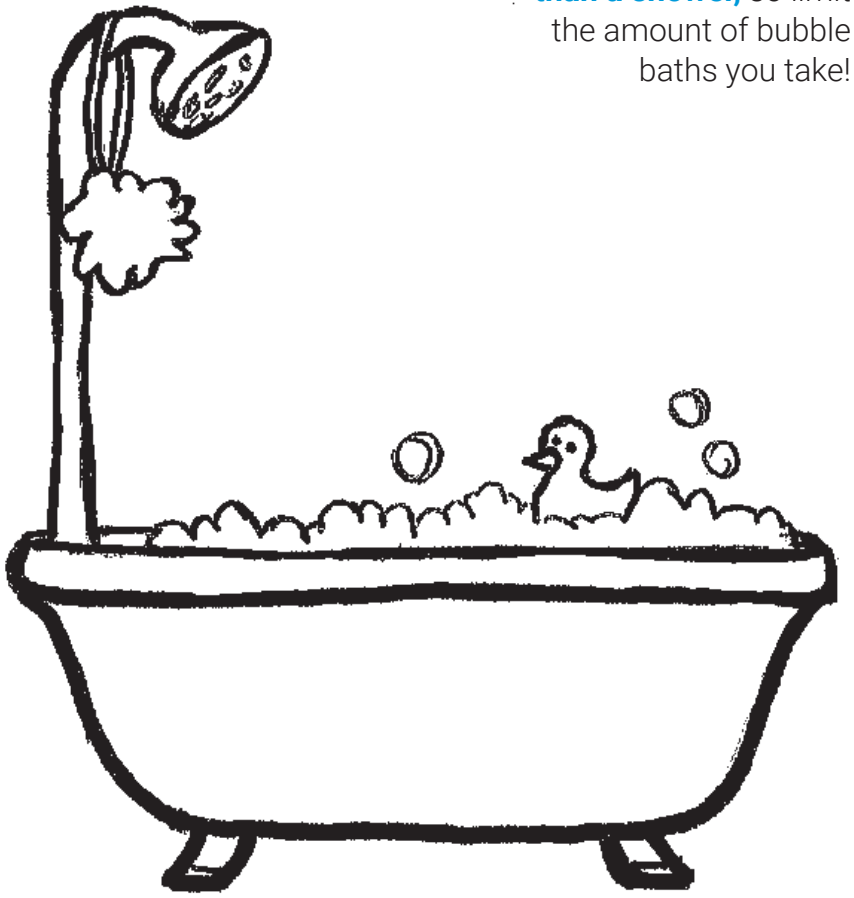
Sometimes it rains so hard that the sewer treatment facility can't keep up. About 50 times each year when this happens, polluted water from bathrooms, laundry, street dirt and other places ends up in the river and creeks. Depending on where you live, some can go into the smaller creeks, too. Some combines with water from inlets (drains) in the street and can't be treated fast enough, so it overflows to the river. Yuck!

The Clean Solutions for Omaha (CSO!) Program is working very hard to prevent this from happening by cleaning the dirty water before it is released back into the river.

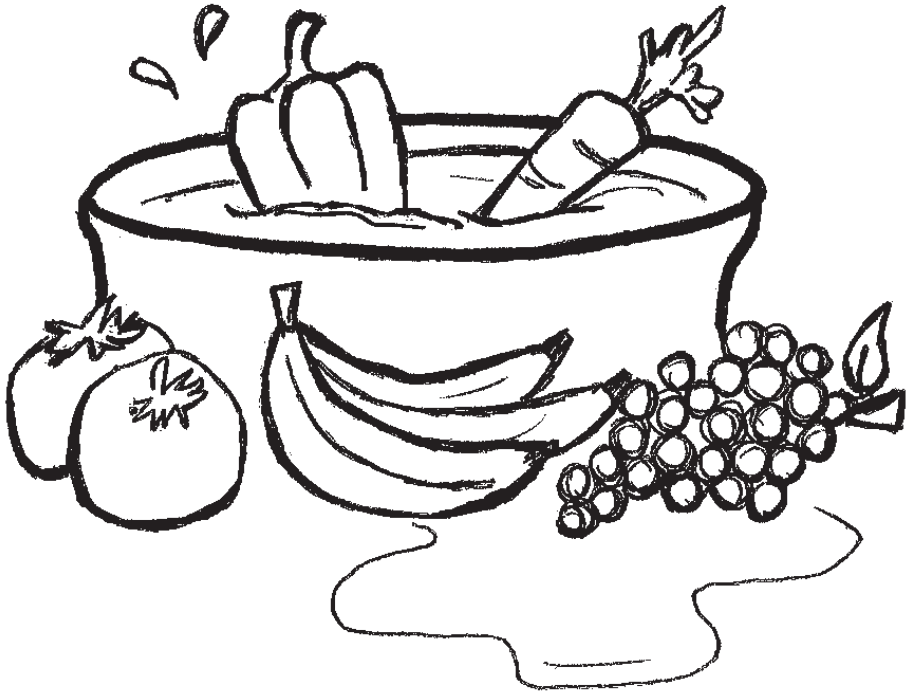
This activity guide will help you discover ways to help keep water out of our sewer system and keep the Missouri River and Papillion Creek as clean as possible.

When you brush your teeth, remember to turn off the sink! Try not to waste water when you're not using it.

A bath uses more water than a shower, so limit the amount of bubble baths you take!



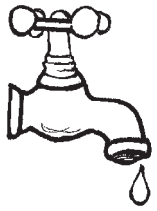
Keep trash out of the sewer systems by using a reusable water bottle. This helps prevent empty plastic water bottles from littering our environment.



Rinse fruits and vegetables in a full sink or a pan of water to reduce the amount of water you use when grabbing a snack to eat.

Water Hunt

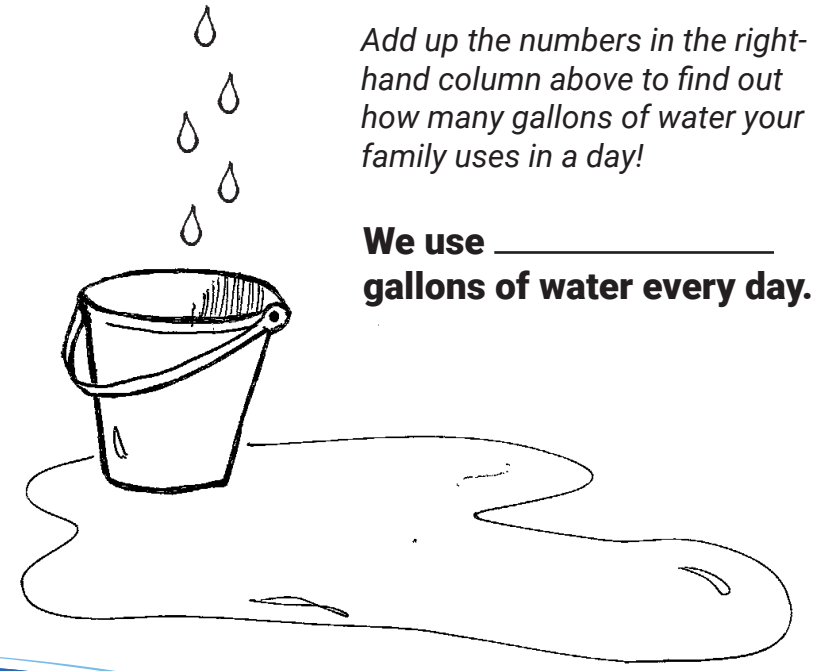
Record how many times/how many minutes a day you and your family use these water resources at home!



Restroom (trips)	_____	x 3.5 Gallons (1 flush) =	_____
Bath/Shower (minutes)	_____	x 4 Gallons (1 minute) =	_____
Brushing Teeth (minutes)	_____	x 1.5 Gallons (1 minute) =	_____
Dishwasher (cycles)	_____	x 6 Gallons (1 cycle) =	_____
Laundry (loads)	_____	x 40 Gallons (1 load) =	_____

Add up the numbers in the right-hand column above to find out how many gallons of water your family uses in a day!

We use _____ gallons of water every day.



Now let's find out how many gallons of water your family uses in a week, month, or year!

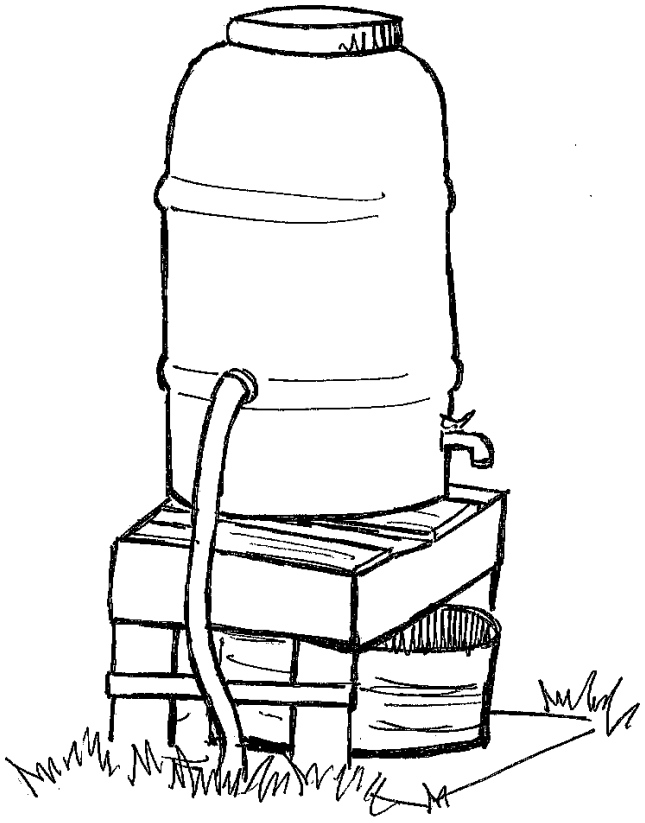
_____ **gallons/day**

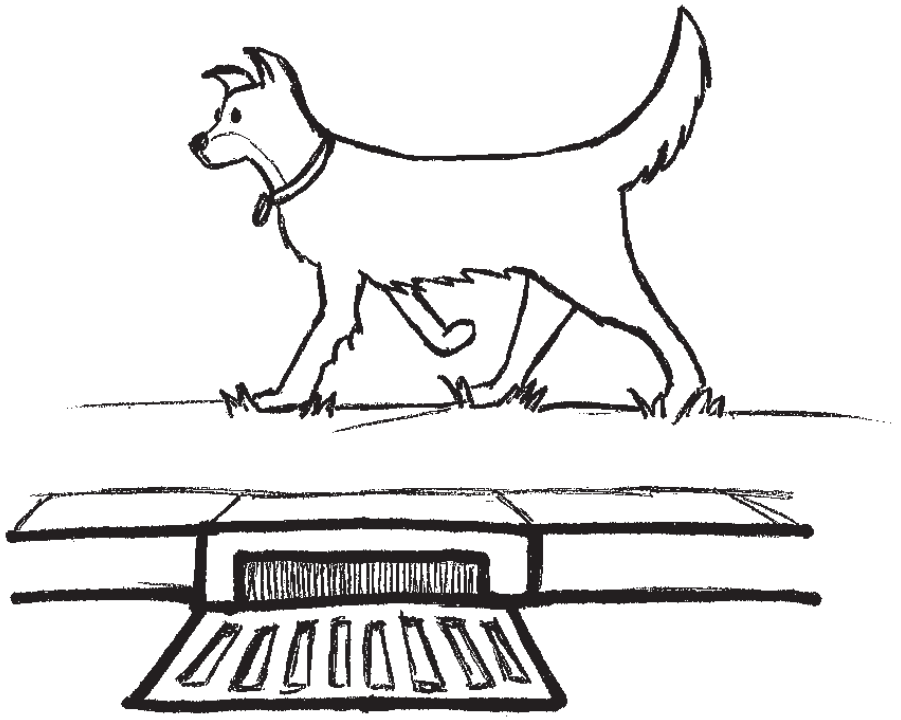
x 7 days = _____ **gallons/week**

x 30 days = _____ **gallons/month**

x 365 days = _____ **gallons/year**

A rain barrel captures runoff from your roof, helping to spread rainfall over longer periods of time.





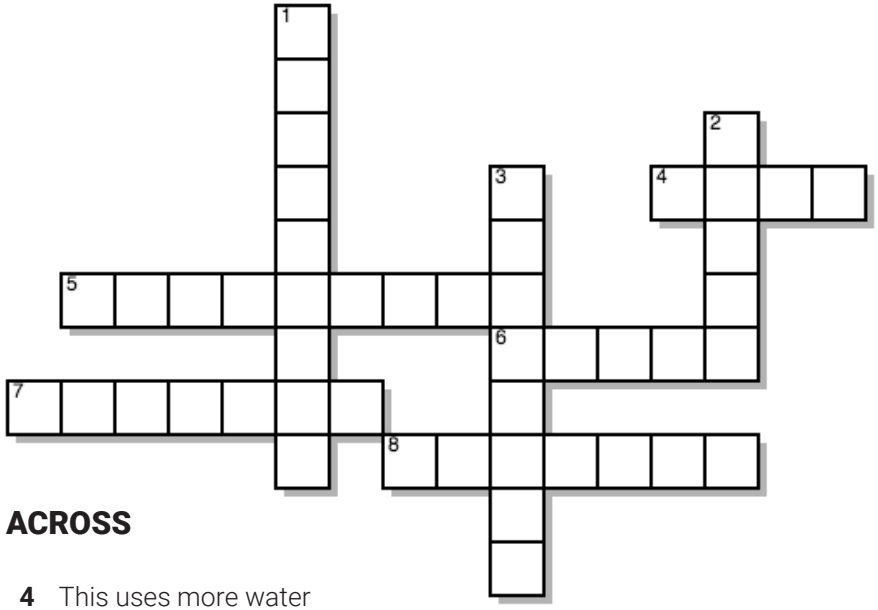
Pick up after your pets! When it rains, it's not just water that goes into the sewer. Along the way, rain picks up pet waste and other items that do not disintegrate. Ick! Now what happens?

Bad things can wash into sewers like trash and lawn chemicals. Clean up after yourself and dispose of chemicals properly so everyone can enjoy Omaha's parks.

Can you draw some people, animals and plants enjoying the clean water at the park?

Put your water-saving knowledge to the test!

Use the clues below to complete this crossword puzzle about CSO! and improving water quality in Omaha's river and streams.



ACROSS

4 This uses more water than a shower.

5 Bad things can wash into sewers like trash, pet waste and ____.

6 This is where water goes after it spirals down the drain.

7 Plants should be watered in the ____ so the plants get the most water before heat causes evaporation.

8 One load of ____ uses 40 gallons of water.

DOWN

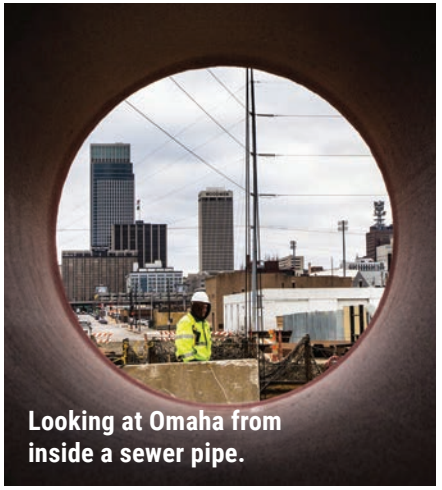
1 CSO! stands for Clean ____ for Omaha.

2 The CSO! program works to improve the ____ quality in our local river and streams.

3 About 50 times a year, dirty wastewater flows into this river.

How can YOU help keep Omaha's water clean?

Draw a picture of one way you've learned to save water.

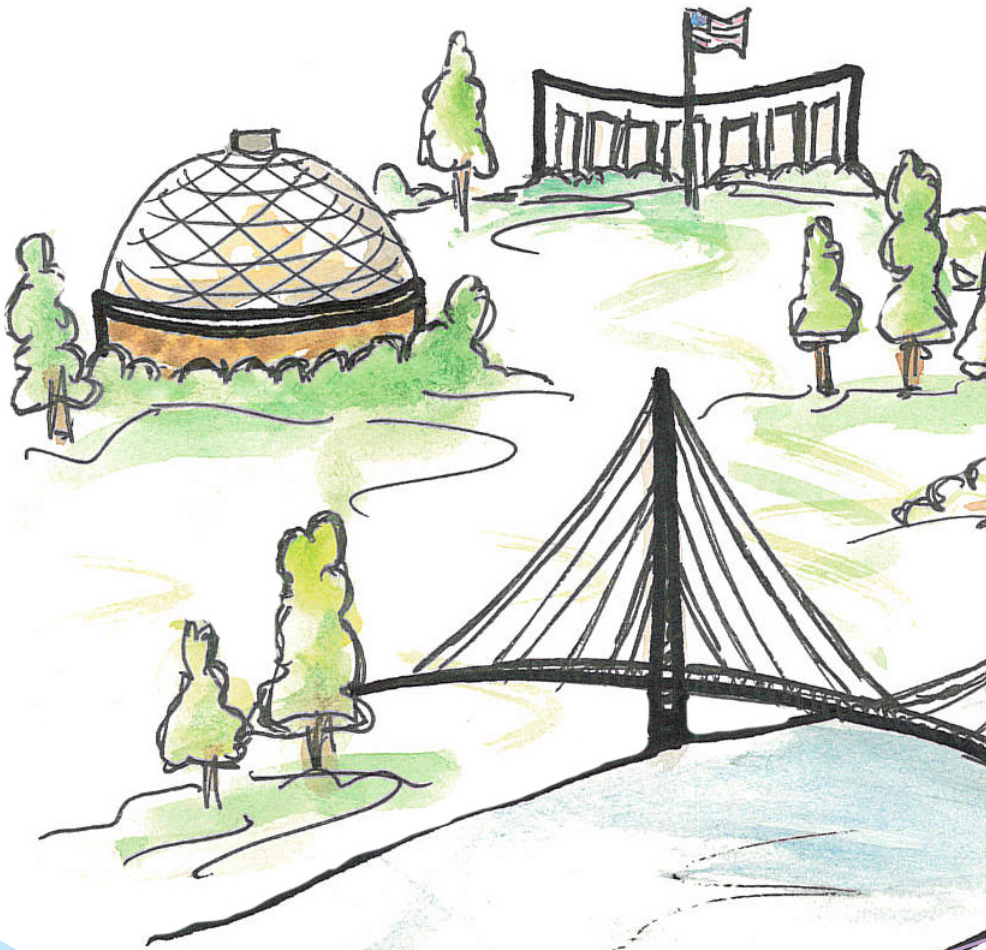


Looking at Omaha from inside a sewer pipe.

A big sewer pipe to be put in the ground.

Pipes in a treatment facility.

A construction trench to bury the sewer pipe.



CSO!
Clean Solutions for Omaha

OmahaCSO.com

September, 2019