

## Defining the Water Quality Challenge



Having a plentiful source of clean water is vitally important to Connecticut's environment, economy and quality of life. We have made tremendous progress over the past 40 years since the early days of environmental law when a lack of awareness and standards resulted in significant pollution of many of our surface and ground waters from industrial discharges. Today, Connecticut is privileged to have some of the most scenic rivers and plentiful ground water supplies one can find most anywhere.

However, we still have challenges that need to be addressed. While the "end of pipe" discharges from industrial and residential sources have been largely addressed through extensive regulatory and permitting programs, other sources are still negatively impacting the quality of our waters. Two sources of primary concern today are pollution from stormwater runoff and sewage over flows during heavy rains.

Both the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and our own DEEP are appropriately focusing considerable resources on these pollution sources. The primary challenge to addressing sewage overflows is money. Through grants and loans from the Clean Water Fund and other sources, municipalities across the state are upgrading their systems in a manner that prevents this type of pollution. But the needs far outstrip the available funds and it will take a continued commitment from the federal and state government to eventually eliminate these overflows as a source of environmental concern.

Further, Connecticut should continue to focus its limited resources on these priority challenges and not be distracted by controversial regulatory ventures that attempt to address perceived but undocumented environmental challenges, such as statewide groundwater usage.