



Connecticut Fund
for the Environment

Save the Sound®

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 3, 2017

Contact: Laura McMillan 540-292-8429
Melissa Schlag 860-398-0569

Danbury Sewage Pollution: CFE Files Amended Complaint

More sewage releases added and two more organizations join lawsuit

NEW HAVEN, CONN. – Connecticut Fund for the Environment and its bi-state program Save the Sound has filed [an amended complaint](#) against the City of Danbury claiming the city failed to report 20 additional bypasses of raw sewage releases to the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the Environmental Protection Agency, and adding Rivers Alliance of Connecticut and Friends of the Lake, Inc., as co-plaintiffs. The filing amends the original complaint made in December 2016.

The groups allege that Danbury repeatedly violated the federal Clean Water Act by illegally releasing raw or partially treated sewage into area rivers and streams over the past five years, and exceeding permitted discharge limits for lead, copper, and zinc.

“These discharges are severe, unacceptable, and illegal under state and federal law,” **said Jack Looney, staff attorney for CFE/Save the Sound.** “Danbury must prioritize maintenance of its sewage collection system and make a detailed plan to get its discharges of untreated sewage and toxic metals under control. Additionally, the City must commit to accurate and responsible reporting of discharges so environmental agencies have the data they need, and citizens know what’s in the brooks flowing through their neighborhoods.”

In total, CFE/Save the Sound has now identified 68 bypasses of almost 500,000 gallons of raw or partially treated sewage that have leaked into Limekiln Brook and the Still River.

Less than two months after the original complaint was filed, DEEP designated Limekiln Brook and Still River as priority waterbodies under the agency’s Water Quality Restoration Action Plan. This means DEEP will focus extra effort to ensure that these polluted and impaired waterbodies are cleaned up.

“Danbury has done an admirable job of revivifying its city in many ways. But it has neglected the basic task of properly managing its sewage so as not to contaminate public waters. The city can and must do better,” **said Margaret Miner, executive director of Rivers Alliance.**

In addition to the Still River and Limekiln Brook, sewage was discharged into Beaver Brook and Padanaram Brook. The Still River flows into the Housatonic River in New Milford, and then to Long Island Sound. Releases and leaks of sewage pollute waterways with disease-causing bacteria and excessive nitrogen that fuels dead zones in bays, harbors, and Long Island Sound.

“The release of raw or partially treated sewage into Lake Lillinonah or its tributaries from the Danbury facility is irresponsible and completely unacceptable,” a **spokesperson for Friends of the Lake stated**. “Friends of the Lake has joined this legal action to ensure that Danbury is required to take immediate and effective action to eliminate the causes of these improper discharges. We also intend to see that Danbury is held properly accountable for its past failures to act responsibly.”

CFE/Save the Sound is asking the courts to order Danbury to:

- Take all steps necessary to eliminate the discharge of sewage and other pollutants at locations not authorized by permit.
- Permanently cease discharging lead, copper, zinc, and other substances in amounts exceeding permit limits.
- Pay a civil penalty of up to \$37,500 per day, per violation, for all violations of the Clean Water Act occurring after January 12, 2009.

###