Potomac Interceptor Repairs

February 24, 2026

- No overflows entering the Potomac River have occurred in 16 days. The last release into the river occurred on February 8, supported by the enhanced bypass system that has provided a significant increase in pumping capacity to improve redundancy and reliability.
- Crews continue working 24/7 to provide cleaning and maintenance and keep the bypass pumps running.
- Repairs are moving forward, with crews closer to reaching a debris dam and large rocks blocking a section of the damaged Potomac Interceptor. Work has been completed to fully extend the excavation site and install trench boxes to stabilize and isolate the additional pipe sections.
- Crews are preparing for next steps to cut into the crown of the pipe where the blockage is located to inspect and begin safely removing the large rocks and debris inside the sewer line. This work will involve both manually removing rocks and heavy equipment for larger boulders.
- On-site preparations are underway as part of remediation efforts. An Environmental Restoration Plan is being developed in coordination with federal, state, and local regulators and will be released to the public when approved.
- Coordination continues with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) on-site to assist with stormwater management to protect pumping operations.

Water Quality Sampling Results

DC Water is performing daily water quality sampling. It's important to note that historically the E. coli levels in the Potomac and Anacostia rivers vary widely from day to day. This is reflected in recent sampling results with stormwater runoff from rain and snow impacting water quality. Fluctuations in water quality are influenced by factors such as weather events, river flow, runoff, pollutants, releases of combined overflows, and other sources discharging into waterways.

Given these variables, measurements taken much further downstream cannot be attributed solely to this incident.

For the Potomac River, historical water quality data shows E. coli levels may vary from a range as low as 10 MPN/100mL to as much as 5,000 MPN/100mL on a given day. A more detailed explanation is posted on the District Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) website at doee.dc.gov/release/potomac-interceptor-update-and-faqs.

Below are the results of sampling during the period from February 16 – present. Past results may be found on our dedicated Potomac Interceptor Response page.

	***E. coli* (MPN/100 ml)**							
Sample Date	**Old Anglers Inn (upstream of collapse)**	**Near Drainage Channel @ Overflow (Swainson Island)**	**Between Minnie's Island and north shore of Potomac River**	**South Side of Minnie's Island**	**Fletcher's Boathouse**	**Georgetown @ Wisconsin Ave**	**Anacostia @ S. Cap St**	**National Harbor**
2/16/2026	76	173,000	N/S	N/S	111	238	1,550	138
2/17/2026	59	16,700	N/S	N/S	3	387	23	88
2/18/2026	43	5,000	3,300	1,600	105	162	40	121
2/19/2026	49	15,200	17,800	14,800	387	435	128	62
2/20/2026	53	7,600	1,550	770	365	4,400	172	326
2/21/2026	135	1,700	727	107	107	190	205	345
2/22/2026	285	1,000	261	238	365	517	1050	238
2/23/2026	204	1,100	299	299	461	613	687	304

Note: MPN = most probable number
*Consistent with public health and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency standards, swimming is not recommended when *E. coli* levels exceed 410 MPN/100 mL.

Historical data indicate typical E. coli levels in the Potomac River can range from 10 to 5,000 MPN/100mL. Variability in E. coli results is common and influenced by factors such as weather conditions, runoff, aging sewer infrastructure, and illicit discharges.

For more information about the ongoing repair efforts go to dcwater.com/Potomac-interceptor-collapse.