

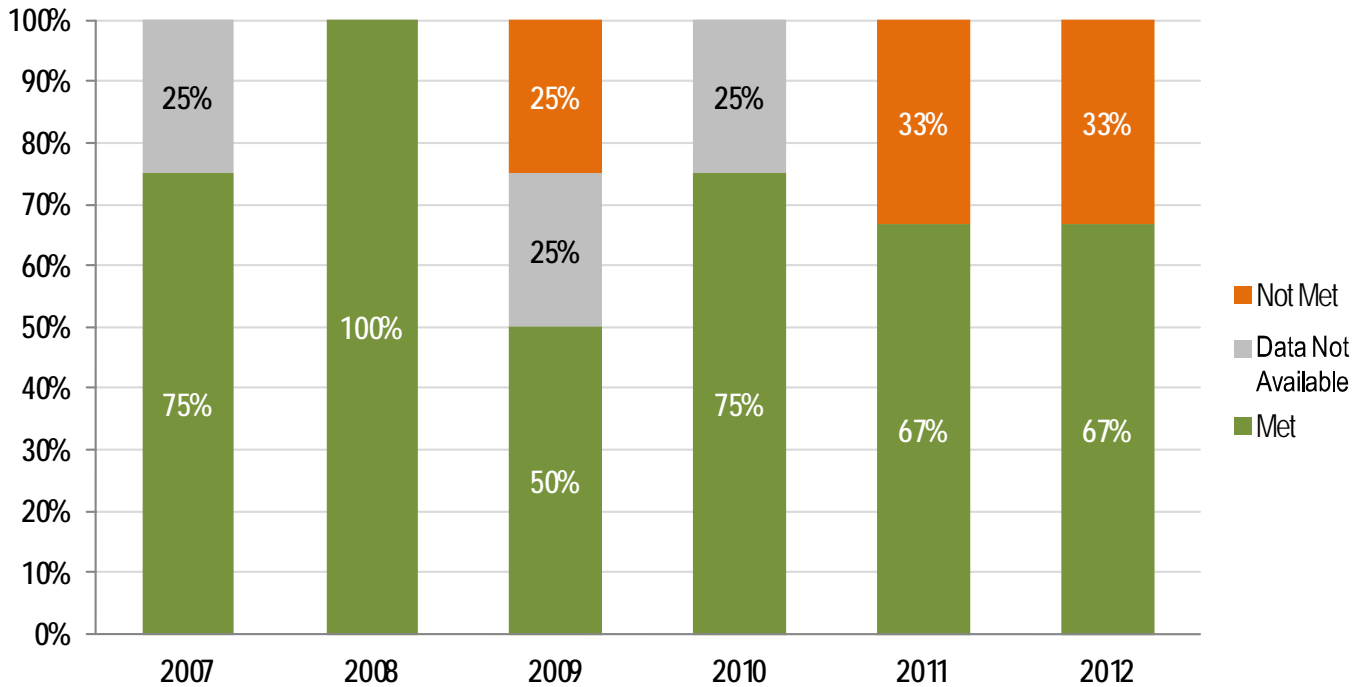
US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



## Subobjective: Safe Swimming

EPA was successful in meeting two of its three commitments under the Water Safe for Swimming subobjective in FY 2012. There has been a great deal of variability in the number of commitment measures met and not met over the past six years (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Safe Swimming Subobjective Six-Year Trend



| FY 2012 ACS Code                                  | Abbreviated Measure Description   | Results and Commitment Status |      |      |      |      |      | Appendix Page Number (D-0)/ Figure Number |
|---|---|-------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|---|
|   |   | 2007                          | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |   |
| <b>Subobjective 2.1.3 Water Safe for Swimming</b> |   |                               |      |      |      |      |      |   |
| SS-SP9.N11  | Percent beach days safe for swimming  | 95%                           | 95%  | 95%  | 95%  | 96%  | 95%  | D-14                                      |
| SS-1  | Number enforceable long-term CSO control plan with specific dates and milestones in place | 559                           | 610  | 693  | 724  | 734  | 748  | D-15/Fig.16                               |
| SS-2  | Percent significant public beaches monitored  | 100%                          | 99%  | 98%  | 99%  | 100% | 100% | D-15                                      |

Note: CSO=combined sewer overflow.

## FY 2012 Performance Highlights and Management Challenges

The nation's waters, especially beaches in coastal areas and the Great Lakes, provide recreational opportunities for millions of Americans. Swimming in some recreational waters, however, can pose a risk of illness resulting from exposure to microbial pathogens.<sup>10</sup>

**Beach Monitoring and Safety:** For coastal and Great Lakes beaches monitored by state-based beach safety programs, EPA found that 95.2% of beach season days were open and safe for swimming. This result met the FY 2012 target of 95%, and EPA has consistently met its annual targets over the past six years. Seven of eight EPA regions met their FY 2012 target (Regions 7 and 8 do not have beaches under the program) (SP-9). States monitored and managed 100% of all Tier 1 (significant) public beaches covered under the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act program in 2012, which exceeded the annual goal of 95% (SS-2). All regions met their commitments in 2012.

**Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs):** Overflows from combined storm and sanitary sewers in urban areas can result in high levels of pathogens being released during storm events. Because urban areas are often upstream from recreational waters, these overflows are a significant source of unsafe levels of pathogens. Over the past five years, EPA and the states have made consistent progress in increasing the number of CSO permits or enforcement orders with compliance schedules in place (Figure 16). As of 2012, approximately 88% (748 of 853) of the CSO permittees have approved or accepted CSO long-term control plans (LTCPs) with enforceable compliance schedules in place, which is approximately a 38% improvement over the 2008 baseline (Figure 18). Each year, progress toward the ultimate goal of 100% of CSOs approved has become more difficult because the remaining permits still needing LTCPs are often held up in various legal and political issues, even though the overall universe of these permits has decreased. As the Agency moves forward, the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA) and the Office of Water (OW) plan to work together to refine this measure to ensure consistency and consider a possible evaluation of the effectiveness of plans already put into place.

Seven of nine EPA regions with CSOs (Region 6 does not have any CSOs) met their commitment for this measure in 2012 (Figure 17). Region 3 missed their target by just 1 permit, which did not end up being reissued before the end of the fiscal year in Pennsylvania. In Region 5, the reissuance of a number of municipal permits was delayed, so even though several additional LTCPs have been approved, they have not yet been included in permits at this time.

<sup>10</sup> By "recreational waters," EPA means waters officially designated by states, authorized tribes, and territories for primary contact recreational use or similar full-body contact use.

Figure 16: CSO Permit Schedules in Place by Fiscal Year (SS-1)

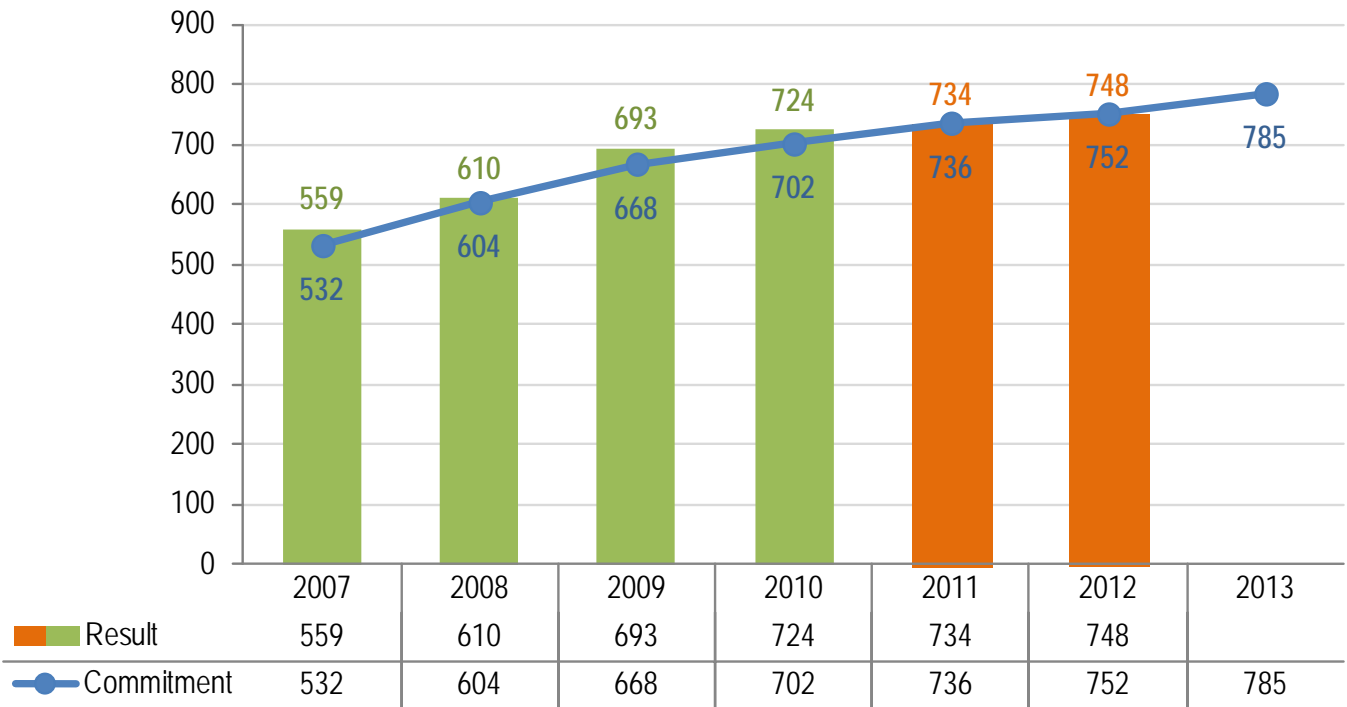


Figure 17: CSO Permit Schedules in Place (SS-1) by Region for FY 2012

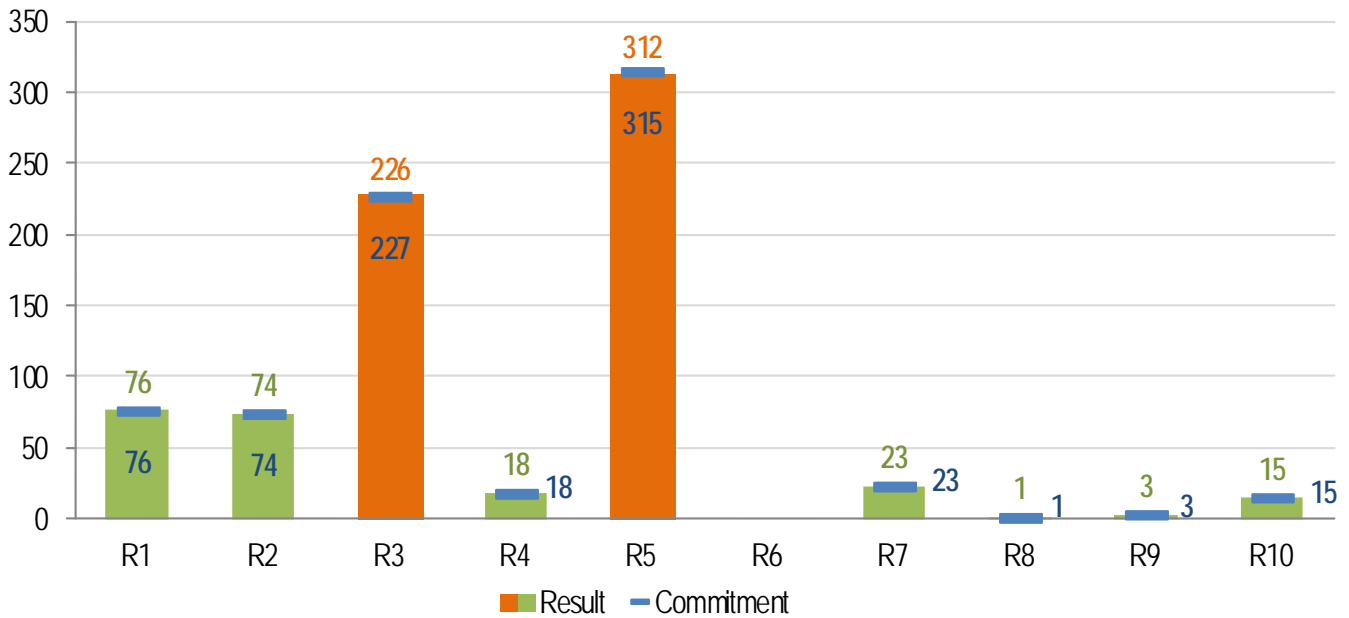


Figure 18: CSO Permit Schedules as a Percent of Universe and Percent Over Baseline (SS-1)

