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# EPA Completing Another Step in Cleanup of the Gowanus Canal Brooklyn, New York

**Community Update #5**

**December 2023**

## Site Update

Under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) oversight, contractors finished installing several layers of the multilayered cap on the bottom of the northern stretch of the Gowanus Canal. Two of these layers are made of material that will remove contamination in the groundwater that could well up from below, as well as a layer of sand that will protect the treatment layers.

Contractors are now installing the final armor layer, a layer of concrete blocks that fit together to form a mat that prevents erosion. The concrete mat, called articulated concrete, protects the underlying layers from boat traffic and canal currents. Contractors will place clean sand on top of the armor layer to fill in the gaps in the articulated concrete mats and to restore the canal bottom as a habitat for plant and animal life.



*Articulated concrete mat being placed in 4<sup>th</sup> Street Turning Basin*

City of New York contractors started constructing the 8-million-gallon combined sewer outfall (CSO) tank at the end of September 2023. This first phase of the project involves installing a belowground bentonite slurry wall to prevent the walls of the excavation from collapsing and to minimize water flow into the excavation area. The contractors are working 24 hours a day Monday through Friday, Saturdays from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., and Sundays from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. This schedule will continue until the slurry wall work is completed in early summer 2024.

City contractors are also preparing the site for the 4-million-gallon CSO tank. They finished replacing the bulkhead in the area at the end of October 2023. The city is reviewing bids for construction of the belowground portion of this tank. Construction is scheduled to begin by March 2024. Both the 8 million and 4 million-gallon tanks are scheduled to be completed and operational by the spring of 2029.

## Next Phase of Work

EPA is currently working on the design and scheduling for the work in the portion of the canal from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> Streets. The first phase of construction in this area will be replacing all the bulkheads in this stretch of the canal. This work is expected to begin as soon as the capping is completed in the first section of the canal.

## Bridge Closures

Work in the canal requires frequent bridge closures as they are opened to allow work vessels to pass through. Traffic disruptions will continue for the duration of the field work at Hamilton Avenue, 9<sup>th</sup> Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, and Union Street during bridge closures. Bridge closures may be extended during periods of heavy construction activity. EPA is coordinating bridge and street closures with the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT). The closures will be implemented on certain weekdays, based on the need to conduct specific construction activities. For a schedule of planned Union Street bridge closures, please visit: [gowanussuperfund.com/bridge-information/](https://gowanussuperfund.com/bridge-information/). NYCDOT's contractor is currently designing the repairs for the Carroll Street bridge. The bridge is expected to remain closed until further notice.

**[www.epa.gov/superfund/gowanus-canal](https://www.epa.gov/superfund/gowanus-canal)**

# Capping in northern stretch of canal nearing completion



Capping material being placed in Gowanus Canal



Cleanup of canal from  
3<sup>rd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> Streets  
expected to start in 2024

## Community Hotline

A hotline has been established that people can call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. During hours when work is being conducted at the site, complaints and concerns will be relayed to a

For more information about the site,  
please contact:

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