



### What is a catchment?

The street and neighbourhood where you live is part of a 'catchment' – an area where water is collected by the natural landscape. Even if you can't see your nearest waterway from where you live or work, what you do with your litter, household rubbish and other waste can affect the water quality in our creeks, rivers, bays, beaches and harbours.



### What is stormwater?

Every drop of rain that falls on our streets and doesn't soak into the ground, ends up in the gutter as stormwater. It then runs through an underground system of pipes and eventually flows directly into the nearest waterway, untreated. As it runs over roofs, paths and gutters it picks up and carries with it any pollutants it comes into contact with. The faster water moves on hard surfaces, the more particles it can pick up along the way. Fast moving water can also be a cause of erosion, flooding and poor water quality.



### What is wastewater?

Wastewater is the used water that goes down sinks, toilets and drains. This water is taken to a wastewater treatment plant and does not go directly to the river system. However, if the pipes that carry this water become blocked, cracked or damaged, they can cause an overflow of sewage into our homes, yards and rivers. Stormwater plumbed into sewerage systems can also cause sewage overflows.



### What sort of things pollute our waterways?

- Rubbish and litter
- Pet waste
- Detergents, oils and paints
- Fertilisers and chemicals
- Garden waste like grass, mulch and soil
- Fine particles you can't always see like microplastics
- Sediment run-off from building sites and renovation projects
- Untreated sewage overflow when there are blocked pipes.

To find out more, visit:

[georgesriver.org.au/love-your-waterways](http://georgesriver.org.au/love-your-waterways)

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Everything we do in and around our homes, backyards, parks, schools, workplaces and public spaces affects the quality of water that runs off our streets, goes into the stormwater drains and ends up in our local waterways. Your nearest waterway could be a stream, creek, river, bay, beach, harbour or even the ocean!

Even if you can't see your nearest waterway from where you live or work, what you do with your litter, household rubbish and other waste can affect the water quality, making it unhealthy for people and marine life.

*Love Your Waterways* is a community campaign that encourages people to take up five simple actions to reduce litter, pet waste, gardening materials, chemicals and other pollutants from entering our waterways.

Whether it's picking up after your dog, washing your car or other household equipment, gardening or just putting your rubbish in the bin, there's something we can all do to help reduce pollution in our local waterways and make them clean and safe for everyone to enjoy!



**REDUCE YOUR RUBBISH**

**Dispose of your litter correctly and swap soft and single-use plastics for reusable products.**

 Litter that is not disposed of correctly blocks pipes, pollutes our waterways and kills marine life.

**LEAVE ONLY PAW PRINTS**

**Pick up after your pet to stop bacteria and other bugs from entering our waterways.**

 Pet waste contains harmful bacteria and parasites that spread diseases and cause serious illness in humans.



**WASH IT WISELY**

**Wash your car and household equipment the right way to prevent cleaning products from affecting water quality and marine life.**

 Some cleaning products contain toxic chemicals and microplastics that can build up in marine organisms, harming them and the animals that feed on them, including us.



**KEEP IT CLEAR**

**Rain water is the only thing that should go down a stormwater drain.**

 Liquids and small particles that enter stormwater drains travel directly into creeks and rivers, which negatively impacts water quality.

**COVER IT UP**

**Keep dirt, leaves and other garden waste away from stormwater drains.**

 Grass clippings and garden waste that ends up in our waterways contributes to algal growth, depriving marine life of oxygen.

