

How does our waste reach the sea?

Sewerage System

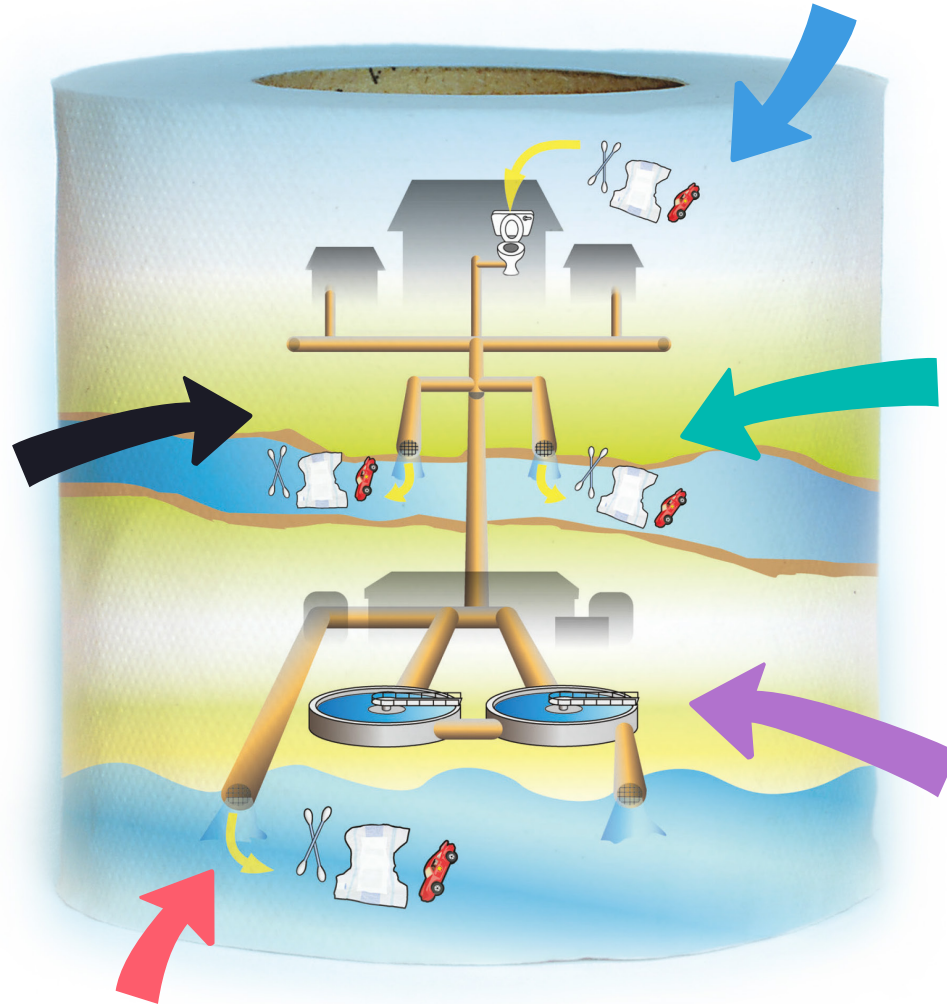
Our homes, schools and other buildings are connected to our sewerage system. This is a network of pipes designed to take human waste after it has been flushed down the toilet, to the sewerage treatment works where it is processed, made safe to humans and animals and then returned to sea. Our sewerage system also collects rainwater from drains and directs this to the sea, to prevent our towns from flooding.

Overflows

These are the sewerage networks emergency release valves. During heavy rain, or if the pipes become blocked with items that should not be flushed down the toilet, there is not enough room in the pipes and they have to release into local streams and rivers. This is so that the waste does not back up and flood people's homes!

Overflows

There are grills over the end of outflow pipes but smaller items, like cotton buds and bits of plastic that have been flushed down the toilet still get through, and can end up in the ocean and on our beaches.



Misconnections

This is when household drains are plumbed into the wrong external drain. Sewage water that should be transported to wastewater treatment plants is instead drained directly into rivers.

Sewerage Treatment Works

This is where our waste water and sewage is treated to a series of processes to make sure that it is safe to be released into the sea and back into the water cycle. Water from here is no longer harmful to us.