



What not to put down the drains

Unless you have a septic tank or similar, your home will be connected to the wastewater network. All wastewater leaving your home is transported through a network of pipes and pump stations to be treated at a wastewater treatment plant which uses biological processes to treat the water. Wastewater from each property flows, under gravity, to the pipe network and then on to a pumping station.

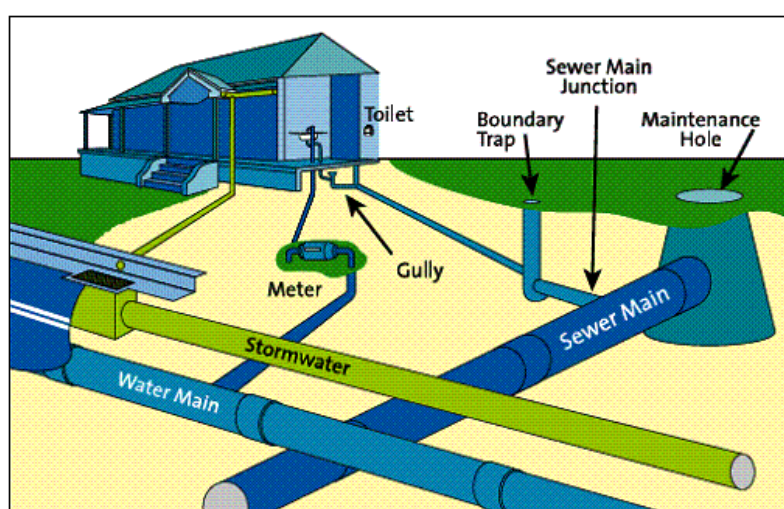


Figure 1: What not to put down the drains

Source: Sydney Water <http://www.sydneywater.com.au>

Some items should never be put down sinks or toilets as they can kill the bacteria used to treat wastewater and/or block the pump stations. These include:

- Household bleach.
- Herbicides and pesticides (contact Council on (02) 6660 0300 for the location of collection points for hazardous materials).
- Water-based paints (clean brushes and rollers over grass).
- Solvent-based paints (clean brushes in tins, leave to evaporate or put in newspaper and dispose of in the garbage).
- Disposable nappies, sanitary towels and pads (use the special bags for sanitary protection available from pharmacies and dispose in garbage).
- Clothing, cotton balls, bandages, plastics, and dental floss (dispose of these in the garbage along with other household rubbish).
- Condoms, tampons, and applicators (wrap well and dispose of in the garbage).
- Wet wipes and disposable napkins (dispose of these items in the garbage).
- Razors and blades (put these into a rigid container before placing in the bin).
- Medicines (any unwanted or unused medicines should be returned to your local pharmacy for safe disposal. Do not dispose of medicines with other household waste).
- Syringes and needles (never dispose of syringes or needles in your toilet. To dispose of these safely, please contact your local hospital or health authority who will be able to advise you on the availability of local "needle banks").

Where-ever possible use phosphorus-free (denoted by a "P" or "NP" on the packaging) cleaning products. Phosphorus-free washing and dishwashing powders help reduce the amount of chemicals used at sewerage treatment plants. Fewer chemicals mean less impact on the environment and less algal blooms.