



What are sewer drains?

There are two types of drains in the urban water cycle; sewage drains and stormwater drains.

Sewer drains



These are pipes inside your homes, schools and businesses that take away the sewage, the wastewater used from your taps, sinks, baths and toilets. These drains join the 3,300km of sewerage network pipes and infrastructure that run underground through Canberra to the sewage treatment plant, Lower Molonglo Water Quality Control Centre (LMWQCC).

At LMWQCC wastewater from across Canberra is received, screened, and treated using physical, chemical and biological processes to remove the dirt and sludge, as well as the nutrients, detergents and other additives we put down the drain.

Water leaving this treatment plant is so thoroughly treated that it can return to the natural water cycle, free of pollution, and be released into the Molonglo River. It then flows into the Murrumbidgee River where it will be reused by other towns further downstream, eventually joining the Murray River system and flowing all the way to the ocean near Adelaide in South Australia.

Stormwater drains



There are also drain pipes outside your house that collect rainfall runoff from roofs, driveways, footpaths, carparks, and roads that connect to the storm water drainage network. These drains are separate to the sewage system, taking rainfall from gutters on our roads, flowing into local waterways, lakes and rivers.

As the two drain systems are separate, it is important that sewage and stormwater systems do not connect. All stormwater in our drains will eventually flow back to the Murrumbidgee River system.