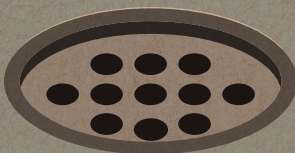
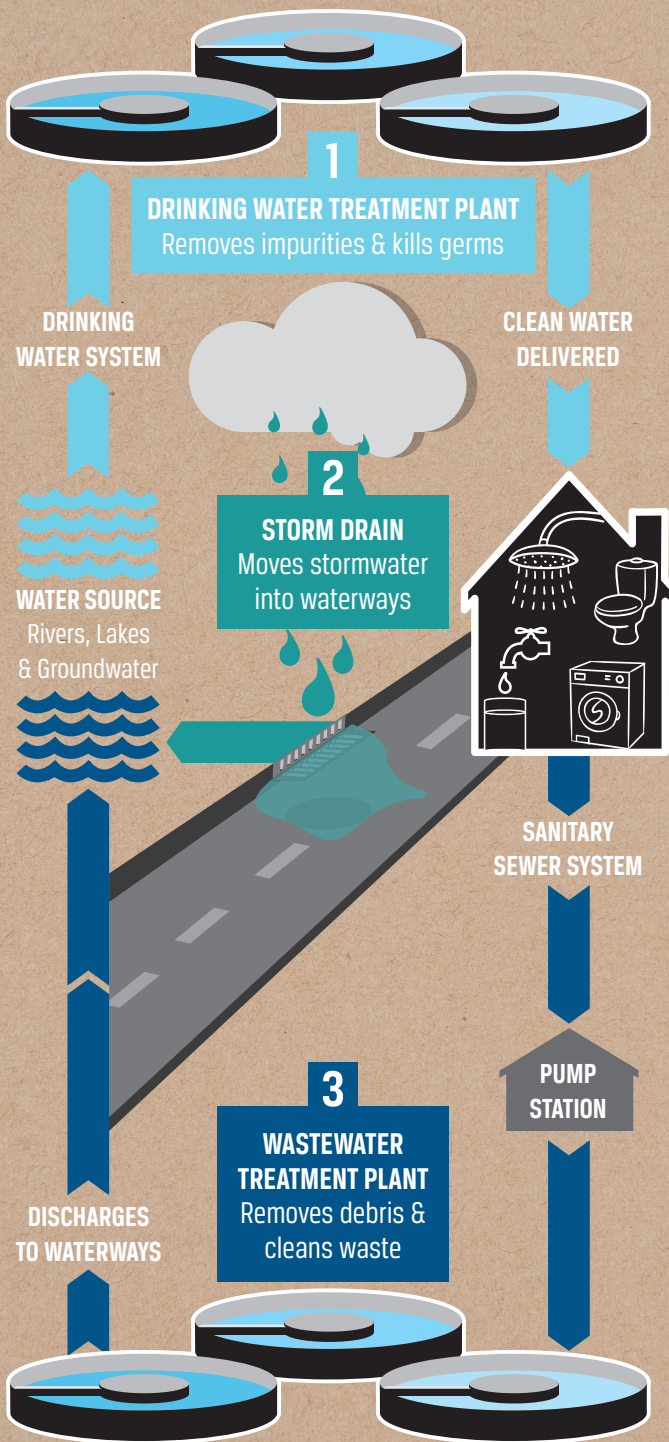


# DOWN - *the* - DRAIN

Learn how **water** finds your tap,  
and what is **safe** to send  
down the drain.



# *The* URBAN WATER CYCLE



You've flushed a toilet, let the faucet flow and watched water rush down the street during a rainstorm.

**But do you really understand where water comes from—and where it goes? In Hampton Roads, three very important water systems make up our regional infrastructure.**

Each system has a separate and specific purpose from the others. Knowing how each of these separate water systems work is key to understanding how your actions affect them and what you can do to protect them.

## 1 DRINKING WATER SYSTEM

Brings clean, safe water to our homes.

## 2 STORMWATER SYSTEM

Takes rain water away from homes and streets through the stormwater openings you see on your neighborhood curb or the grates on public streets.

## 3 WASTEWATER SYSTEM

Takes water away from our homes when we flush the commode, take a shower or otherwise run water down our drains. This water is known as wastewater.

## Please FLUSH RESPONSIBLY

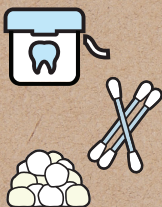
Flushing your trash may block sewer pipes causing untreated wastewater to back up into your home and nearby waterways. It's not just a messy situation; it's a dangerous one for you and our waterways.

### DON'T FLUSH THESE FREQUENT OFFENDERS



#### WIPES

Wipes clog pipes! Never flush disposable wipes down the commode.



#### PERSONAL HYGIENE PRODUCTS

Make sure your trash makes it into your wastebasket, not your wastewater. Dental floss, cotton balls/swabs and feminine hygiene products should always go in the trash.



#### MEDICATION

Once medication is dissolved in the water, there's no getting it out. Look for medication drop-off locations or destroy the medication and place it in the garbage.



#### CAT LITTER

Human waste belongs in the toilet, kitty's litter belongs in the garbage can.



#### PAPER TOWELS

Sturdy paper towels may be tough enough for cleaning, but they are too tough for our pipes. Toss them in the garbage, don't flush them.



# *Please* **COOK RESPONSIBLY**

Be mindful of what you wash down the drain while cooking and cleaning up in the kitchen. When leftover food scraps, fats, oils and grease go down the drain, they cause buildup on pipe walls. Over time, blockages form resulting in sewer overflows into our streets, storm drains and waterways. It's not just a messy situation; it's a dangerous one for you and our waterways.

## **PREVENT SEWER OVERFLOWS BY FOLLOWING THESE “GOOD TO DO” STEPS**



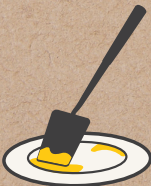
### **CATCH THE SCRAPS**

Mealtime scraps don't belong in the drain so ditch the disposal. Catch food scraps in your sink with a strainer and toss them into the garbage or compost bin.



### **CAN THE GREASE**

Pour used cooking grease into an empty, heat-safe container, such as a soup can, and allow it to cool. Once solidified, toss the can into the garbage.



### **SCRAPE THE PLATE**

Before washing, wipe all pots, pans, dishes and cooking utensils with a paper towel to absorb grease and scrape food scraps into the garbage or compost bin.



# GOOD to DO

## *Please dispose of* **HAZARDOUS WASTE RESPONSIBLY**



Household hazardous waste (HHW) such as paint, chemicals, CFL lightbulbs, pesticides, electronics etc., cannot be poured down the drain, on the ground, into a storm drain or put out with the trash. Dispose of these appropriately according to their type.

**DON'T THROW THEM IN THE TRASH.**

**SHARE OR DONATE LEFTOVERS.**

**BRING UNUSED MATERIALS TO A  
HHW COLLECTION SITE OR EVENT.**



Cleaning wastewater every day for a better Bay.

For more information about  
wastewater treatment:

[www.HRSD.com](http://www.HRSD.com)

To learn more about **PROTECTING** our **WATER SYSTEMS**

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