

- Know the Difference -

Storm Sewers & Sanitary Sewers

STORM SEWERS

Storm sewers DO NOT take storm water to a treatment plant. Once water runoff from rain, snow melt, car washing, and even hosing down the driveway, enters the storm drain it travels through the storm sewer to the end of the sewer pipe and discharges typically to an open body of water like a pond, wetland, creek or stream.

All of the pollutants that storm water picks up off the ground as it flows into a storm drain remain in the water and are discharged into the receiving water or structure, adding pollution with every runoff event.

SANITARY SEWERS

All of the wastewater (a.k.a. sewage) from your sinks, toilets, showers, washing machines, and dishwashers flows through pipes throughout your home and leaves your house through another pipe to the main sanitary sewer out in the street or alley near your house.

The wastewater flows through the main sanitary sewer by gravity and by force from lift stations towards the wastewater treatment plant. The wastewater then gets processed at the treatment plant, and clear, cleaner water is discharged after meeting strict federal and state water quality standards.

Keeping pollutants like fertilizers, pet waste, and litter out of storm water runoff and out of storm drains is very important because as you now know, it is not treated at a treatment plant and ends up in our local waterways and waterbodies.

