

*Have you ever stopped to think about what happens after you flush the toilet or let the plug out of a sink? Most of us think it just disappears and we don't give it another thought.*

Everything that we flush down the toilet or pour down our sinks goes into the sewers and is called wastewater. The wastewater from your property travels along a network of pipelines and pump stations to one of our 27 wastewater management facilities, where it undergoes a treatment process to clean it up so that it can be reused.



## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION



Goulburn Valley Water

ABN 84 578 076 056

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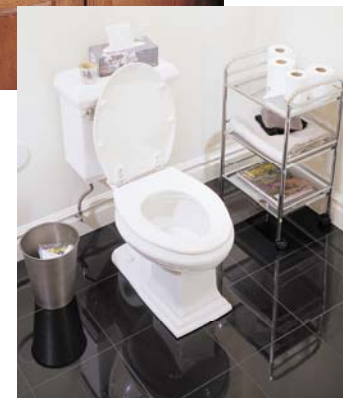
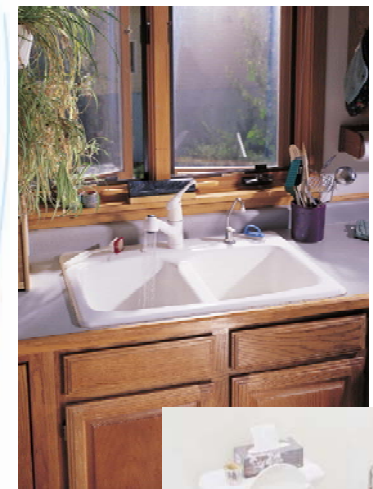
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**Stop and Think  
Before You  
Flush or Pour**



GOULBURN VALLEY WATER

*...running water from the  
Mountains to the Murray ...*

# Stop and think before you Flush or Pour

## The Treatment Process

Most of our wastewater management facilities operate using two treatment levels. The first stage is called Pre-treatment and involves the removal of the larger inorganic solids using screens. The next treatment phase is biological treatment. This phase occurs in lagoons where organic material in the wastewater is broken down into natural by-products, including biosolids, gases and reclaimed water.

The lagoons are called facultative, this means they have an aerobic surface layer (contains oxygen) over an anaerobic lay (without oxygen), which maximises treatment efficiency. The lagoons vary in size the first lagoon is usually the largest and is where about 70% of the treatment occurs. In this lagoon the organic

material is broken down into methane and other gases. The left over material remains at the base of the lagoon and is called biosolids.

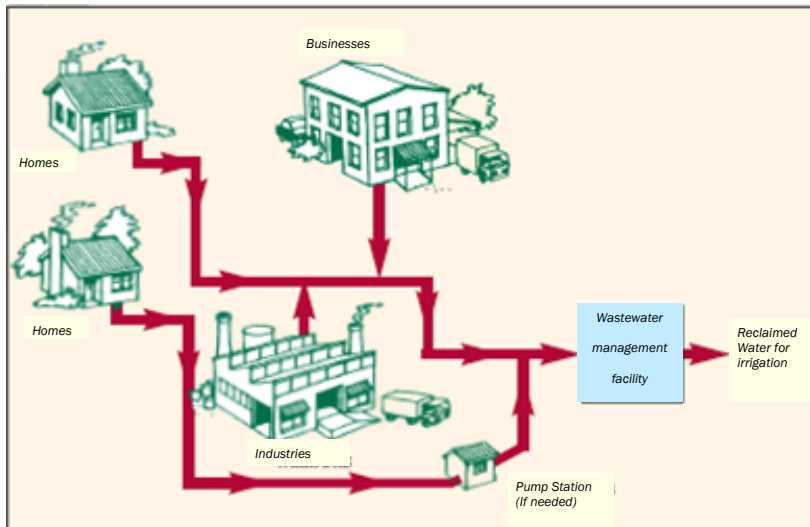
Other lagoons operate in a similar fashion, but with slightly reduced breakdown of organics. The other key function of the lagoons is to allow sufficient detention time for die off of bacteria to a level suitable for reuse.

The final lagoon in the network is a winter storage. This lagoon stores the reclaimed water over winter when it is too wet to irrigate. During summer the reclaimed water is used to irrigate pasture, woodlots or provided to third party users such as farmers and golf courses.

## Think before you flush it or pour it

We have talked about the treatment process, but there are some things that end up in going through the sewerage system that can't be treated or can cause major problems at our wastewater management facilities, they can block your sewer, or they can be harmful to the environment. So think before you flush something down the toilet or before you pour something down the sink.

Outlined in the table to the right is a list of common household wastes that we deal with regularly in the home and how you should dispose of them



Item	Method of Disposal
Food Scraps (including tea leaves and coffee grounds)	Place in your compost bid, feed to chooks or wrap and place in the bin.
Cooking Oil & Fats	Put in a sealed container or wrap and place in the bin
Nappies, Sanitary Products, Condoms, Cotton Buds etc	Wrap and place in the bin
Tablets and Medicines	Take them to your local pharmacy
Paints and Painting Products, including oil based paints and varnish, paint brush cleaners and turpentine, paint stripper, acetone glue (solvent base)	Give to a licensed hazardous wastes contractor for proper disposal or contact your local council for advice.
Chemicals, including fertilizers, fungicides, herbicides, insecticides and household insect sprays and rat poisons.	
Vehicle and Engine Oils/ Fuels – including petrol, diesel and kerosene, any vehicle or engine fluids including antifreeze, automatic transmission fluid, battery acid and brake fluid.	Put into a container and take to local garage or oil recycling centre