



Where does the water go when it rains?

Fact

- When rainwater runs off the road and along the gutter and down the metal grate it's heading into the underground Stormwater system.
- Same for the rainwater that runs off your roof and down your spouting. It runs into the Stormwater system too.
- Stormwater system pipes carry all the rainwater from your neighbourhood into the sea or, if you don't live near the sea, into the nearest river.
- Stormwater is not treated or cleaned in any way so whatever goes down the Stormwater system ends up in the fish's backyard and where you go swimming!

Do you know

- Only rainwater should go down the Stormwater system otherwise our beaches and rivers become polluted.
- The Stormwater system is a system of underground pipes. The pipes from your house join bigger pipes under the road and the pipes from the houses around you join this pipe too. The metal grates in the gutter at the side of the road empty water into these pipes too. The closer the pipes get to the place they're going to empty the water out the bigger they get.
- Some Stormwater pipes are two meters wide!
- There's another system of underground pipes called the Sewerage System. These pipes carry all the wastewater from your house like dirty dishwater, bath and shower water and your poos and wees. These pipes take the wastewater to a Treatment station to be treated or cleaned.

Experiments you can do

Look at the effects of dirty Stormwater at your school with your own Stormwater system.

What you need:

A small paddling pool or clear plastic tank

An off cut of plastic pipe (about 10 cm thick)

Water

A plastic jug

A collection of dirty water like a pottle of water that your class paint brushes have been cleaned in, a pottle of soapy water from the staff room kitchen sink, a pottle of left over milk, etc.

A handful of rubbish cut into small pieces like a few pieces of chip packet, a few squares of newspaper, some plastic bags etc

What you do:

Half full the small paddling pool or clear plastic tank with clean water. Get all your other “dirty water” and “rubbish” ready. Demonstrate what happens when clean rainwater runs through your Stormwater System into your paddling pool sea by tipping a jug of clean water through the plastic pipe into the pool.

Then demonstrate what happens to your sea when dirty water goes through the storm water system. Mix your rubbish in a jug of clean water and pour that down the pipe too.

What does your lovely clean sea water look like now?

Other Investigations

Make a poster to show what happens when we let dirty water through our Stormwater System. How can people help prevent this happening?

Jokes

Why did the water make noises like thunder? Because it was stormwater.