

Only Rain Down the Drain

We all need and value clean water. But when it comes to where our dirty waste water and storm water goes, not all drains are the same!

Unlike the water we use in our homes and businesses which is treated through septic systems or wastewater treatment plants, the water that goes into storm drain dry wells flows through soil and into the aquifer, the source of Missoula's drinking water. In some places the aquifer or groundwater is only a few feet below the ground surface! When storm water flows past a parking lot and into the road it can enter another kind of storm drain – one that flows directly to our local rivers that we recreate, swim and fish in.

Storm Drains and Sanitary Sewers - What's the Difference?

Storm Drains are intended to collect and transport runoff from rainfall. Storm drain systems do not remove pollutants from water before it is discharged into groundwater, rivers and streams.



Sanitary Sewers collect wastewater from indoor plumbing such as toilets, sinks, washing machines, and other drains, and take it to a wastewater treatment plant. The treatment plant removes pollutants from wastewater before it is discharged to the river.



To protect our local water resources, it is **PROHIBITED** to discharge anything that does not meet the definition of storm water (or an Allowable Non-Stormwater Discharge) to a storm sewer system. In other words,

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