

WATER

WHAT IS **STORMWATER?**

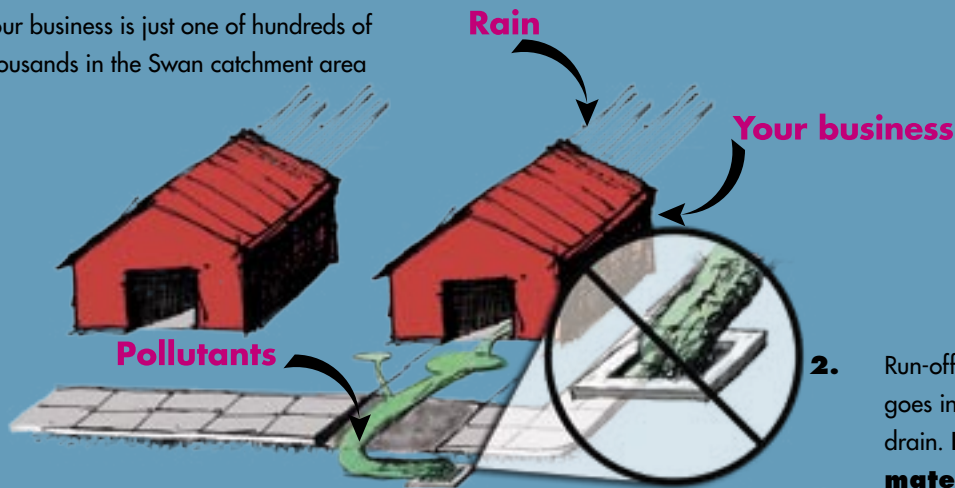
information sheet 01



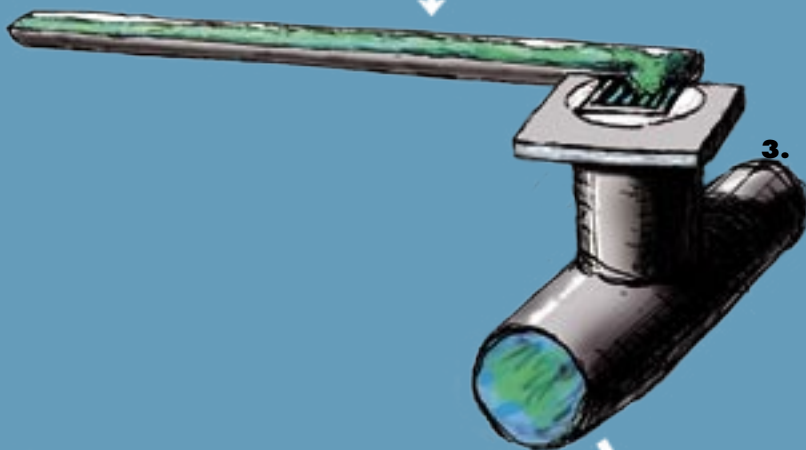
STORM

How stormwater travels from your business to our waterways

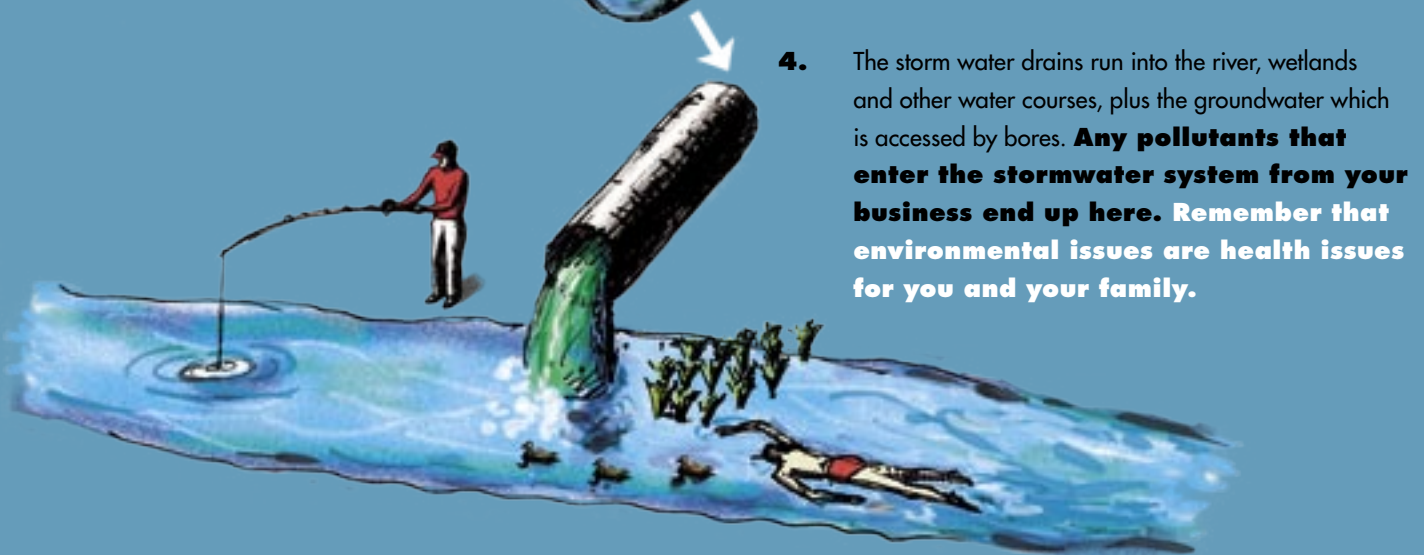
1. Your business is just one of hundreds of thousands in the Swan catchment area



2. Run-off water from your business goes into the storm water drain. **Do not let waste materials, polluted water or other liquids into any drain or soak well.**



3. Water from the storm water drain runs into the main drains. **This is distinct from the sewage system.**



4. The storm water drains run into the river, wetlands and other water courses, plus the groundwater which is accessed by bores. **Any pollutants that enter the stormwater system from your business end up here. Remember that environmental issues are health issues for you and your family.**

Allowing stormwater to become polluted is an offence that can result in an on-the-spot fine or prosecution under new environmental regulations

What's the difference between stormwater, wastewater and sewage?

Stormwater is rainwater that flows across the surfaces of your business, such as roofs and paved areas like roads, driveways, footpaths or yards, into the stormwater system. The stormwater system includes street gutters, drains, underground pipes and channels that transport rainwater to waterways and groundwater. Stormwater is not treated to remove pollutants.

Trade wastewater is any water used or contaminated in conducting your business processes and activities. Wastewater from businesses may contain pollutants such as litter, sediment, chemicals, oil and petrol. Businesses must have appropriate approvals before discharging wastewater. Check with your local council, Department of Environment or Water Corporation on permits required. ***It is important not to allow wastewater from your business activities to enter the stormwater system.***

Sewage systems are separate from and different to the stormwater system. Sewage systems include underground pipes and main lines which transport sewage from homes and wastewater from businesses, to wastewater treatment plants. After the sewage is treated and the solids removed, the liquid or effluent is discharged to the ocean.

Why is stormwater management important?

The stormwater from your business travels via the gutters and drains and eventually ends up in a creek, river, lake, estuary, beach or groundwater. If it is contaminated with pollutants such as litter, green waste, animal waste, sediment, chemicals, oil and fertilisers it can kill fish and other water life, and seriously pollute the environment where people swim, fish and play.

The cumulative pollution effect from all industries can have a devastating impact on our waterways, leading to serious pollution problems.

It is against the law to pollute water or place a pollutant in a position where it could be blown or washed into a drain, gutter or local waterway.

Pollutants include any sediment, sewage, animal waste, fertilisers and pesticides, detergents, organic solvents, acids and alkalis, metals, paints, petrol and oil. ***Allowing stormwater to become polluted is an offence that can result in an on-the-spot fine or prosecution under new environmental regulations.***

Refer to Information Sheet 2 for more information on how to prevent pollutants from entering our waterways.

For further information contact:

- Your local council or shire Environmental Health Services department.
- Your relevant industry association or local business support group.
- The Swan Catchment Centre for your local Industry Support Officer on telephone (08) 9374 3333.
- The Department of Environment on telephone (08) 9278 0300.

WATER

These information sheets have been produced by the Swan Catchment Council in consultation with our partners.
Call (08) 9374 3333 or check out our website at www.swancatchmentcouncil.org

April 2007

Printed on 100% recycled paper using vegetable-based inks



STORM