

Drains are Streams

Help Restore Waterways

A drain is the headwaters of a complex network of underground streams that flow untreated into our beautiful streams, rivers and lakes.

Together we can learn how drain systems work and restore our waterways to create healthy wai (water) and habitats for endangered species.



What is stormwater?

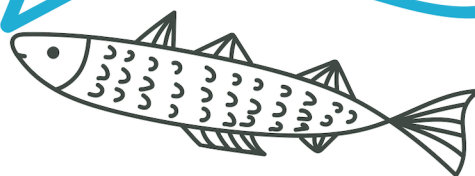
Stormwater comes from the rain that runs off rooftops, lawns, cars, driveways, hard surfaces and streets.

As stormwater flows towards a drain, it picks up dirt, leaves, sticks and other organic materials. It also carries things you may not see, such as pesticides or fertilisers from your garden, car oil, grease, paint and cleaning products. Rubbish, including microplastics, and sediment can also be washed into drains.

Most of the non-organic materials are toxic to freshwater ecosystems. The pollutants and contaminants that wash into our drainage system start a journey straight to our urban streams, rivers and lakes.

Stormwater drains are underground streams that we do not see

Did you know?
Whatever goes down our drains eventually flows untreated into our waterways



Current Situation:

- Water quality is getting worse in most of our rivers
- We shouldn't swim in about half of our rivers due to contamination
- Endangered species are at risk including freshwater fish and native tuna (long-finned eels)



Photo: Tuna - Jason Burton

[1] <https://www.nz.co.nz/news/national/487040/a-really-damning-report-latest-data-shows-dozens-of-aotearoa-species-at-risk>

Endangered Species

Freshwater fish species need healthy streams and awa (rivers) to live in. Endangered species include freshwater fish and native tuna (long-finned eels).



Photos: DOC

How Can You Help?

- Drain only rain
- Use only eco-friendly cleaning, house and garden products
- Clear litter from your drains
- Join a tree planting project near you
- Dispose of pet waste in the bin. Animal poo can carry a lot of toxins.
- Wash your car in a proper car-cleaning facility
- Adopt a Stream!

Report Pollution

If you see something that doesn't look or smell good, going down the drain, report it to the Waikato Regional Council on **0800 800 401**.



Adopt a Stream

Sign-up to our adopt a stream programme to receive information about how you can adopt a drain

endangeredspecies.org.nz/adopt-a-stream

Remember!
Don't add anything
to the water that
you wouldn't want
to drink yourself

