What do you do?

Household and garden chemicals: Offer leftovers to others to use, such as friends and schools. Give them in their original containers to avoid mistakes and accidents.

Paints: Buy water-based (acrylic) paint where possible. Offer leftovers to others to use, such as friends and schools. Give them in their original containers to avoid mistakes and accidents. Or hand the paint to Resene or Enviropaint, who will recycle it.

Only a bit left?

Let water-based paint dry in the can with the lid off (you can speed that up by adding cement, clay-based cat litter or sawdust) and put the can into the refuse bag.
Brush solvent-based paint onto newspaper so that, as it dries, the solvent evaporates. Put the newspaper into the refuse bag. Some places will recycle empty tins. Resene and Enviropaint will accept them too for recycling. You can also use them as buckets or as your working paint-pot when you paint the next time.

Lead-based (very old) and **anti-fouling paint** are **very** toxic and must be given to Resene, Enviropaint or the HazMobile.

Car products: None of these may go down drains or into landfill. They must only go to the special places at the transfer stations.

DIY products: Varnishes, solvents, glues and wood preservatives should be treated in the same way as solvent-based paint (above).

If in doubt, ask your Local Authority for advice.

This is only a very brief summary. There's much more information at www.fattrap.co.nz.

Be Waste-Wise

"The Three Waters"

Every house has **three** sets of water pipes. **One** set comes **in** to your house and **two** go **out**.

IN:

Drinking water: comes in from the reservoir.

OUT:

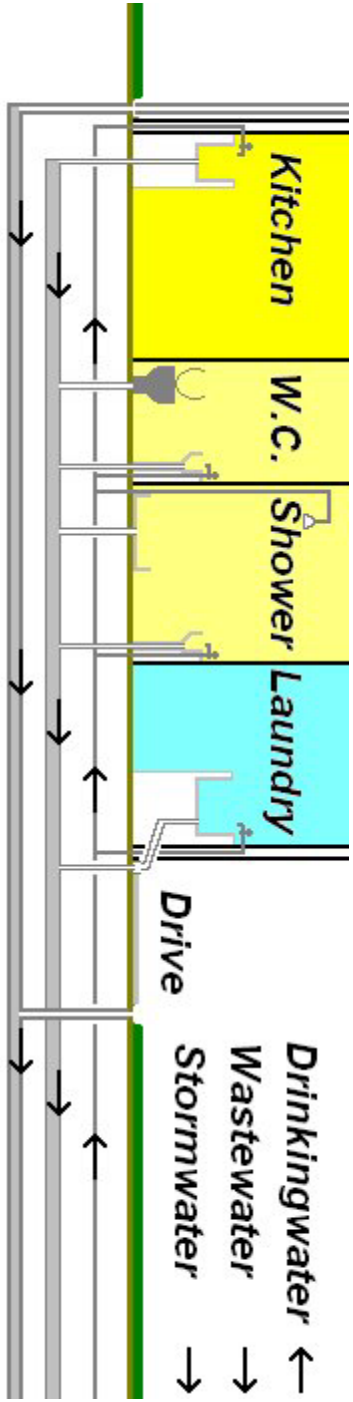
Wastewater: (sewage) goes out to the river or sea. **A treatment plant removes most of the rubbish and pollutants on the way.**

Stormwater: goes out to the sea, often via streams and rivers. **It is never filtered or treated in any way.**

The Wastewater System is only for: "natural" human waste, toilet paper, and water used to wash yourself, your clothes, your home, your food, and your cooking utensils and plates.

The Stormwater System is only for: rainwater.

You have the power to pollute both the Wastewater and Stormwater that leave your home.



What does it matter if you pollute?

It costs the Local Authority money to remove pollutants from Wastewater (sewage), and you pay them rates to do it, so **you are paying a bill you could avoid**.

They can't remove all the pollutants from Wastewater. There's no attempt to remove them from Stormwater and all of your Stormwater pollution goes into the rivers and sea.

Pollution in the rivers and sea sickens or kills plants (or makes them grow and take over), and sickens or kills creatures that live in or swim in the water – which includes you and your family.

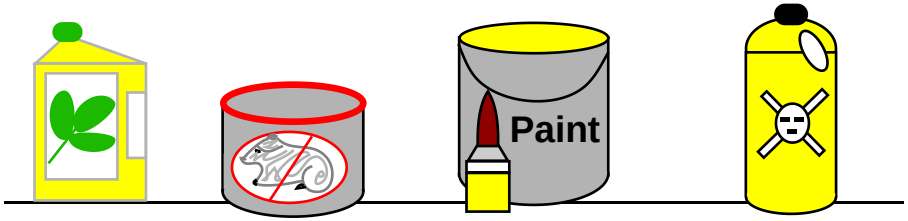
How can you pollute the Wastewater and Stormwater Systems?

Simple. Put or pour your "unnatural" wastes into them.

The Stormwater system is easy to pollute – just wash your car on the driveway or street. The detergent will run into the nearest Stormwater drain. If the stream, lake or sea looks a little frothy, that could be your doing. Wash the car at the car-wash or do it when it's parked on some grass. The detergent will be lost in the soil and won't damage your grass or other plants.

Avoid polluting the Stormwater drains. These are the ones without a little wall around them. Don't let garden waste go into them, such as leaves. Don't pour chemicals into them. If you go to wash your paint brushes over a gully trap don't make a mistake and use the wrong drain.

The water in the Stormwater drain should always be plain.



What's the harm?

It is vital to know that many creatures that live underwater – fish, shellfish and insects – breath oxygen through gills. The oxygen gets into the water from the air. Stop the air from touching the water, or use up the oxygen, and they suffer and die from suffocation.

Fuel: It damages fish gills so they can't breathe, poisons animals, and burns plants. Its cancer-causing parts accumulate in the sea.

Oil: One litre of oil can taint 6000 cubic metres of water and cover 100 square metres of the surface, oiling birds and stopping air from touching the water. Its toxic parts – metals, sulphur and acids – dissolve into water and cause serious harm to aquatic creatures.

Paint: Paint is poisonous to creatures that come into contact with it and it can cover their gills. It also reduces the light getting into the water, which means that plants get less of the sunlight / energy that they need to live, and animals find it difficult to see their food.

Food & drink: It rots and that process uses up lots of oxygen, suffocating the fish and insects.

Detergents: Even those claiming to be "biodegradable" or "environmentally friendly" can in the short term be toxic to fish, and will use some of the oxygen in the water as part of the process of breaking down into simpler chemicals.

Sewage: Nutrients from domestic sewage promote rapid growth in plants and bacteria populations within streams. Waterways become choked with weeds and can run short of oxygen because of unnaturally high populations of micro-organisms.