



# LaRC ENVIRONMENTAL MINUTE

Standard Practice and Environmental Engineering Branch (SPEEB)

Water Quality

## WHERE DOES THAT DRAIN GO?

It's important to understand the difference between sanitary sewers and storm sewers so we can prevent water pollution to each.

A sanitary sewer system:

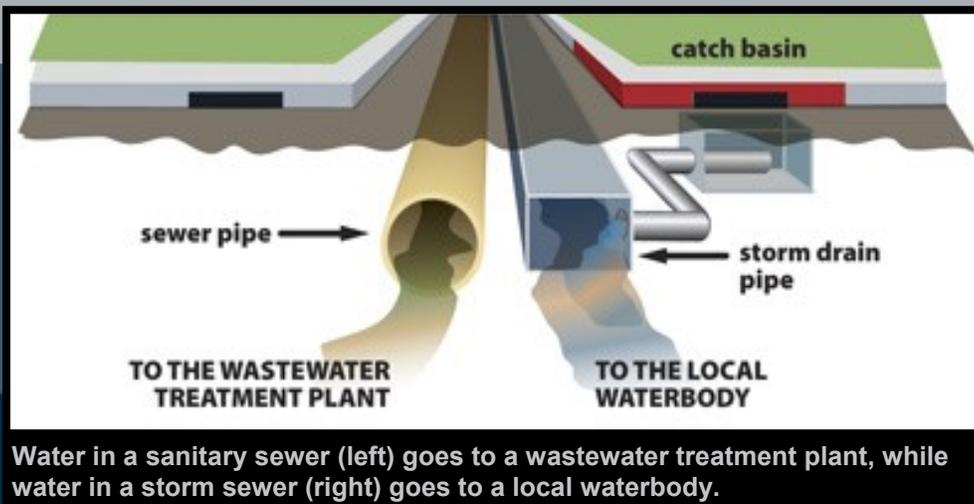
- is designed to filter and treat wastewater at a wastewater treatment plant
- consists of underground pipes and pumping stations that carry waste from bathrooms, sinks, kitchens, and select operations

A stormwater collection system:

- is designed to provide drainage for rainwater and snow/ice melt
- carries runoff in underground pipes or open ditches
- drains *untreated* water into local streams, rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay
- has inlets that are typically found in curbs and low-lying outdoor areas; Some older buildings have basement floor drains that also connect to the storm sewer system

**Disposal of oils, chemicals, or hazardous substances into any drain at LaRC is not allowed and is a violation of LaRC's water permits. Processes that discharge to these systems are specifically authorized/ permitted and must be coordinated with LaRC Environmental.**

For questions about drains or to report suspected water pollution, call the LaRC Water Program Manager at 4-7517.



Water in a sanitary sewer (left) goes to a wastewater treatment plant, while water in a storm sewer (right) goes to a local waterbody.

For more environmental info: <https://environmental.larc.nasa.gov/>