

The Wastewater Treatment Process

That flush may be the end for you, but for us, it's where we get started.

On an average day, you'll likely use about 75 to 100 gallons of water. After you flush a toilet, brush your teeth, wash clothes, or take a shower, that "used" water leaves your house, but it doesn't go away.

King County works with your local sewer agency to take the sewage from your home or workplace, clean it, recycle it, and return it safely to the environment.

PROTECTING WATER QUALITY STARTS WITH YOU



Don't trash the system. Putting trash, wipes, hygiene products and condoms in the toilet can clog pipes and damage pumping equipment.

Think "green" when you can. Choosing environmentally friendly, biodegradable household cleaning and personal care products minimizes the entry of harmful chemicals into the environment.



Disconnect. Too much water in the system can create overflows and pollute the environment – disconnect downspouts from the sewer system and redirect them to lawns and gardens.

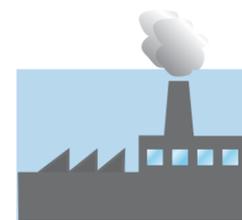
Conserve. Conserving water reduces your monthly bill and prevents excess water from entering the system, so there's less to treat.

WASTEWATER SOURCES



Homes & Businesses

Sewage travels through miles of pipelines before entering a treatment plant.



Industries

King County's Industrial Waste Program regulates the wastewater discharged to our system by businesses and industries. These standards protect our system and the quality of our reclaimed water and biosolids.

Local Sewer Pipes

Regional Sewer Pipes & Pumps

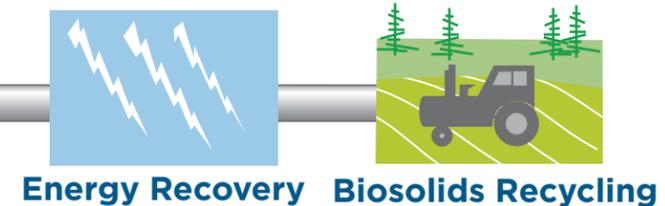
Combined Sewer Overflows

Overflows of sewage and stormwater can sometimes occur in older areas of Seattle during heavy rains. Though these combined sewer overflows (CSOs) are 90 percent stormwater, they can impact water quality and pose public health risks. King County's Protecting Our Waters Program will complete work started in 1979 to control these overflows.

REGIONAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS

Once at the treatment plant, water and the organic solids are separated. The water is treated through natural biological processes that use bacteria, oxygen and settling tanks. The end product meets stringent water quality standards prior to discharge.

RECYCLED & REUSED PRODUCTS



Energy Recovery Biosolids Recycling

All organic solids removed from the water are treated in a separate biological process that creates nutrient-rich biosolids, which are used as a fertilizer and soil amendment. Waste gas from the digester process is captured and used to run equipment and/or scrubbed and turned into natural gas or electricity.

Additional treatment

The treated water is then disinfected and either returned to Puget Sound or treated further and reused for industry or irrigation.



Recycled Water



PUGET SOUND

Clean Effluent