

What is surface water?

Surface water is made up of all the rain that runs off roofs, driveways, footpaths and roads. The majority of rain is channelled into the surface water drainage system which carries it to island waters: streams, reservoirs, ponds and the sea.



Surface water road drain.

The drain is just for rain! Unfortunately rain water is not the only thing that ends up in surface water drains.

Surface water pollution occurs when pollutants, such as oil, sediment, litter and organic matter get carried along with rain into the surface water drainage system. Thoughtless disposal by people of oil, chemicals and litter add to the problem and can reduce the water quality of Jersey's streams, reservoirs and coastal waters.



Cement grout entering a stream which resulted in the death of a number of Carp.

When pollutants enter these drains they can have the same effect as pouring the pollutants directly into a water course. Pollutants can have a negative impact on the environment, ruining habitats and killing plants and wildlife. They can also lead to the loss of raw water used to provide safe drinking water to the Island's population.

Unlike sewage, surface water is not treated before it enters our waters. Trapping and removing surface water pollution is extremely difficult and expensive.

One in ten of Environmental Protection's pollution incidents are as a result of substances being disposed of down surface water drains.



Blue Paint that has been poured down a surface water drain and entered a local stream.

Environmental Protection regularly monitor inland and coastal waters. Please contact us if you would like to know more about our Island's water quality: Tel: 709535.

If you see pollution contact the Water Pollution Hotline
Tel: 709535

Water Pollution and the Law

Causing or knowingly permitting pollution of controlled waters (e.g. streams and groundwater) is an offence under the Water Pollution (Jersey) Law 2000. Following best practice can provide a defence under the Law.

If you extract water from a well, borehole or stream you are required to register or licence it under the Water Resources (Jersey) Law 2007. This will help Environmental Protection to protect your water supply should pollution occur. For more information please go to: www.gov.je/water



Department of the Environment

For more information please contact Environmental Protection, Department of the Environment, through the Pollution Hotline: **Tel: 709535.**

Eco-Active working in partnership with:



Information for this leaflet has been obtained from the Environment Agency, UK. Printed on recycled paper.

Drains for Rain

Blue  Fish Campaign

Protecting drinking water and our Island's environment

eco active

How surface water pollution affects humans, plants and animals

Oil (heating, cooking and motor oil) are poisonous to animals and plants, preventing them from breathing, photosynthesizing and feeding.

Chemicals (pesticides, paint, white spirits) are poisonous to plants and animals that live in water, disrupting normal functions such as reproduction and can even cause death.

Fertiliser run-off is rich in phosphorous and nitrogen and can cause algal blooms. These blooms can kill fish and other aquatic animals. Detergents such as washing up liquid and car washing products may also contain phosphorous and should not be released into surface waters.

Organic waste such as lawn clippings and leaves decay in water. This uses up oxygen and deprives plants, fish and other aquatic animals of oxygen, causing them to die.

Litter clogs water courses and can release toxins as it breaks down. Litter can also be mistaken for food by some fish and animals. Durable plastics can end up in the sea where they can choke, trap and drown marine animals and birds. A build up of debris in streams can also lead to localised flooding.

Silt/Sediment can suffocate fish by clogging their gills. It can cover aquatic plants, making streams cloudy and reducing light penetration. This affects photosynthesis and reduces plant growth.

Run-off from sewage or septic tanks and pet droppings may contain bacteria, viruses and parasites that can survive in water. Recreational water which is heavily contaminated can increase the risk of gastrointestinal and other infectious illness to humans.

DID YOU KNOW?
5 litres of oil can cover an area of water the size of two football pitches.

DID YOU KNOW?
Just one litre of solvent is enough to contaminate approximately 50 Olympic sized swimming pools.

Eventually the pollutants that are washed into drainage ditches or streams may end up in our drinking water reservoirs.

Blue Fish Campaign

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The Blue Fish Campaign is a hands on, enjoyable and effective way of raising awareness about potentially polluting substances and the impact of inappropriate disposal on the aquatic environment. It involves identifying surface water drains and putting a blue fish icon next to them in the area of your school, business or home as a reminder of where surface water goes.

The Blue Fish Campaign is run by the Department of the Environment in partnership with Eco-Active and Jersey Water to allow people to take an active role in protecting the water environment.

The primary objectives of the campaign are to:

- Raise awareness about protecting the water environment in our island.
- Encourage the adoption of everyday practices that reduce the amount of pollution reaching Jersey's waters via surface water drains.
- Help schools, businesses and States of Jersey Departments become Eco-Active members.

To become involved with the Blue Fish Campaign please contact Environmental Protection or Eco-Active tel: 441600.

More details can be found on the Eco-Active web page www.gov.je/Environment



Silt from a building site going from a surface water drain into a stream, making it cloudy.

