

## Fact Sheet: Overview of the Ann Arbor Wastewater Treatment Plant

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The Ann Arbor Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) receives its input from the City's sanitary system. The sanitary system collects wastewater from inside drains within residential, commercial, industrial, and campus facilities. Wastewater that reaches the Ann Arbor WWTP through the sanitary system is treated through a series of chemical, biological, and physical methods before being discharged to the Huron River.

The treatment process removes dirt and debris, bacteria, chemicals, organic material, and nutrients that have potential to cause adverse environmental and human health effects. The treatment process consists of the following steps:

STAGE	DESCRIPTION
1. Preliminary Treatment	Screen mechanisms physically remove large solids and heavy particles from the liquid waste stream.
2. Primary Treatment	Suspended solids "settle out" as the sewage travels through a series of settling tanks. Chemicals may be added to enhance the process.
3. Secondary Treatment (Aeration and Clarification)	The wastewater is mixed with microorganisms that digest organic matter. Air is added to the mixture to stimulate microbiological growth. The water is then sent to clarifying tanks where the microorganisms and remaining waste settle out.
4. Tertiary Treatment	High levels of phosphorus and nitrogen harm fish, so these nutrients are stripped from the effluent.
5. Final Step	The water is filtered, then sterilized using ultraviolet irradiation before it is discharged into the Huron River.

### Treatment of Solid Waste

Solid waste collected at all phases of treatment is sent to digesters where they are treated by a biological process, followed by application on farmland or disposal at a landfill.

### After Treatment

The WWTP collects and analyzes water samples each day to ensure the treated water meets state and federal discharge requirements before being discharged to the Huron River.

### Resources

[Ann Arbor Wastewater Treatment Plant](#)