

Factsheet

Mt Martha Sewage Treatment Plant

Welcome to the Mt Martha Sewage Treatment Plant! Our plant is one of eight in South East Water's service area. The work that these plants do means that the water that we use everyday can be recycled or safely released back into the environment.

1. Quick facts

- Mt Martha Sewage Treatment Plant opened in 1978 and serves the townships of Mornington, Mt Eliza, Somerville, Pearcedale, Baxter and Mt Martha.
- 13 million litres of sewage is treated at the plant every day.
- The sewage that arrives at the plant is 99.97 per cent water.

2. Mt Martha Sewage Treatment Plant



3. The story so far...

A long time ago there was no way of treating sewage so people simply got rid of their waste by throwing it out the door. It would then flow into rivers and creeks which would become very dirty. You wouldn't want to go for a swim in that!

Eventually thunderboxes were created. Thunderboxes were small cubicles outside of homes, which had buckets for people to go to the toilet. A very unlucky night man came every week to empty the bucket. Imagine having that job! Yuck!

Because of the smell thunderboxes were often built as far from the house as possible so people had to walk to the back of the yard just to go to the loo.

As the population of Melbourne got bigger people decided that they needed a safer way to get rid of their waste. So in 1889 a man named James Mansergh developed plans for Melbourne's first ever sewerage system. The system would take away all the sewage from houses.

The first treatment plant was built in Werribee and the first homes were connected in 1897 and before too long people could walk around without holding their noses anymore!

Since then more treatment plants have been built for the growing number of people who live in Victoria. This includes the one at Mt Martha!

4. What happens when we flush the toilet or pull the plug?

When sewage goes down the sink or toilet it travels through sewage pipes. These underground pipes are connected to your house and are very long. The pipes take the sewage to a treatment plant where it is cleaned. The treatment plant gets rid of all the poo, dirt and bad bugs in the water. The cleaned water is then reused to water gardens or recycled back into the ocean.

Activity:

There are many names for toilets ranging from “the dunny” to the “outhouse”. How many names can you think of for the toilet?

5. Did you know?

- Almost all of the sewage that arrives at the plant is water.
- The average person spends about 380 days of their life on the toilet!
- The average person uses 57 sheets of toilet paper a day.
- Rats like to live in sewer pipes because they know there is food nearby.
- Many people all around the world don't have access to clean and safe toilets.

6. Want to know more?

More information about South East Water and our sewerage network can be found at southeastwater.com.au

Activity answers:
Loo, Lav, Lavatory, Thunderbox, Little Boys Room, Little Girls Room, the Jon, the Office, the Boardroom, the Throne and many others!

