

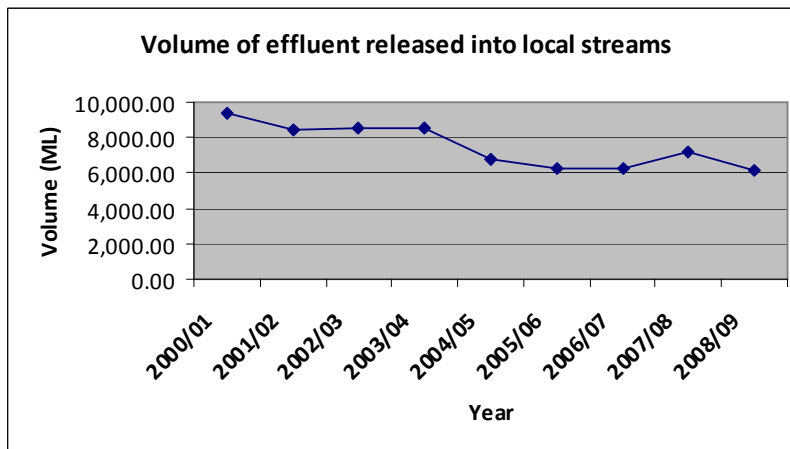
Water – surface water

What are we monitoring?

The volume of treated effluent released into Blue Mountains streams.

What is the trend?

The volume of treated effluent released into Blue Mountains streams declined steadily between 2000-2001 and 2005-2006. The volume increased between 2005-2006 and 2007-2008. This upwards trend may be impacted by the increase in properties connected to the reticulated sewerage system over this period. There was a decrease in the amount of treated effluent released between 2007-2008 and 2008-2009. This decrease may have been impacted by increased water conservation by the Blue Mountains community.



The volume of treated effluent (ML) released into local streams.								
Year	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Megalitres of treated effluent released into local streams	8,431	8,500	8,500	6,750	6,231	6,254	7,205	6,196

Between 1996 and 2006 the North Katoomba, Wentworth Falls, South Katoomba and Glenbrook Sewage Treatment Plants were decommissioned. Blackheath Sewage Treatment Plant came off line in June 2008. Mt Victoria Sewage Treatment Plant came off line in August 2008. Winmalee STP is the only remaining Sydney Water Sewage Treatment Plant currently discharging tertiary treated effluent into the Blue Mountains LGA. The quality of the treated effluent released locally into Streams must meet acceptable environmental standards as dictated by the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*.

Why is monitoring this trend important?

Sewage waste and wastewater is disposed of in three ways in the Blue Mountains: the reticulated sewerage system, on-site wastewater systems and on-site pump systems. The sewerage reticulation system involves transport of wastewater off-site through pipes (sewers) and treatment in a sewage treatment plant (STP). The wastewater is then discharged to local waterways. Increasing the proportion of properties connected to the reticulated sewerage system can potentially reduce negative impacts on water quality and weed infestation. This can in turn positively impact the health of the community and the natural environment. Clean creeks and waterways are an important part of protecting the environment, preserving biodiversity and enhancing people's enjoyment of this natural

asset. The number of properties with access to reticulated sewerage services has increased significantly since the Sydney Water Upper Blue Mountains Sewerage Scheme commenced construction to connect properties in the Upper Blue Mountains villages of Medlow Bath, Blackheath and Mt Victoria in 2006. More eligible properties are expected to connect to the reticulated sewerage system in the coming years, thereby increasing the volume of effluent released into local streams. This is a desirable outcome as it reflects a reduction in the number of on site sewage systems. Increasing the proportion of properties connected to the reticulated sewerage system can potentially reduce negative impacts on water quality and weed infestation. This can in turn positively impact the health of the community and the natural environment. On the other hand, increased water conservation by local residents should result in a decrease in the volume of effluent released into local streams. This is also a desirable outcome. Due to the concurrent increase in properties connected to the reticulated system and likely decrease in water use by residents a desirable trend is unlikely to be confirmed until the majority of eligible properties have connected to the reticulated sewerage system.

Source: www.sydneywater.com.au