



2025 MIDDLE SCHOOL WATER ESSAY CONTEST THE IMPORTANCE OF WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 24, 2025

Metro Atlanta has a unique water story. You may know that water keeps metro Atlanta going and growing. It has been an important part of the success of our economy and central to our region's culture and history, which are some of the many reasons we work so hard to protect our water. In fact, since the creation of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District over 20 years ago, the per capita water use has dropped by more than 30%, thanks in part, to the water conservation efforts of metro area residents, utilities, schools, and businesses.

Though it is not as commonly discussed, wastewater is an important part of the water treatment process. When water goes down the drain or toilet at home or at school, it is considered wastewater. Then the wastewater goes to a water treatment plant. Then it goes through the wastewater treatment process before being cleaned to a high standard and returned to our natural water sources.

For the 2025 Middle School Water Essay Contest, we ask middle school students to think about what happens to water after it is flushed down the toilet, or drains into the sink or shower. Then, answer one of the following prompts:

1. Briefly describe the wastewater treatment process. Why is wastewater treatment an important part of the region's water systems? How can returning treated wastewater to our rivers and reservoirs benefit our natural water sources?
2. Just because you can flush something down the toilet doesn't mean that you should. Using the resources below, write about what can and cannot be flushed down the toilet and why. Silly and funny (but **appropriate**) answers are ok! You may also consider reading about the WIPPES Act and writing a letter to persuade your senator to vote.

Successful essays will also consider the following facts and resources:

- 💧 The average metro-Atlantan uses around 50 gallons of water a day inside their home, most of which is used for drinking, bathing, washing clothes and dishes, and flushing toilets.
- 💧 Take a [virtual tour of Johns Creek Environmental Campus](#), a state-of-the-art wastewater treatment facility in Fulton County, Georgia. See how wastewater is treated and put back into the Chattahoochee River.
- 💧 ["Your Toilet is Not a Trash Can" Graphic](#)
- 💧 Visit www.northgeorgiawater.org/essay for more information about the contest.
- 💧 [Wastewater Infrastructure Pollution Prevention Environmental Safety \(WIPPES\) Act](#)

Teachers, want to dive a little deeper?

The [Georgia Water Virtual Learning Journey](#), created in partnership with Georgia Public Broadcasting, includes a toolkit of curriculum guides for teachers and students. In particular, the Water Purification Investigation activity is written to correlate with **Georgia Standards S6E6 (6th grade)**, **S7L4 (7th grade)**, and **S8P1 (8th grade)**:

- 💧 [Teacher Guide: Water Purification Investigation](#)
- 💧 [Student Guide: Water Purification Structured Investigation](#)

We also encourage you to perform the "What's Your Standard" activity from Georgia Project WET's Urban Watershed (visit www.northgeorgiawater.org/essay) with your class to help them gain a better understanding of the natural and manmade infrastructure that keeps our water flowing. You can also check out <https://www.discoverwater.org/> for nine activities (in English and Spanish) that cover topics such as conservation, hygiene, fresh/salt water, watersheds and more.



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