

# Waste Water and Sewage



Toolbox Talk #42

## Sewage and Waste

Sewage contains large amounts of harmful microorganisms such as viruses, parasites and bacteria. Yes, sewage treatment reduces the water content and removes some debris; but it does not rid all microorganisms. Working with sewage does put you at risk for many health issues the most frequent one to have is mild gastroenteritis, symptoms are diarrhea, vomiting and stomach pains. Long-term exposure can lead to more serious health issues like hepatitis, inflammation of the lungs, and Weils disease.

## How do microorganisms enter the body?

Through Hand to Mouth Contact

- Eating, drinking
- Smoking

Wounds

- Cuts
- Scratches

## How to avoid microorganisms enter the body while working with sewage?

- Employers should ensure that each worker has been provided with appropriate training and supervision
- Suitable PPE should be supplied (waterproof gloves, footwear, respiratory protection, and face visors)
- Employees should shower and clean up immediately after working, to make sure they don't bring any contaminants home



Information Retrieved [support.fitforwork.org/working-with-sewage](http://support.fitforwork.org/working-with-sewage)

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