

Study*ladder*

What Happens To Waste Water?

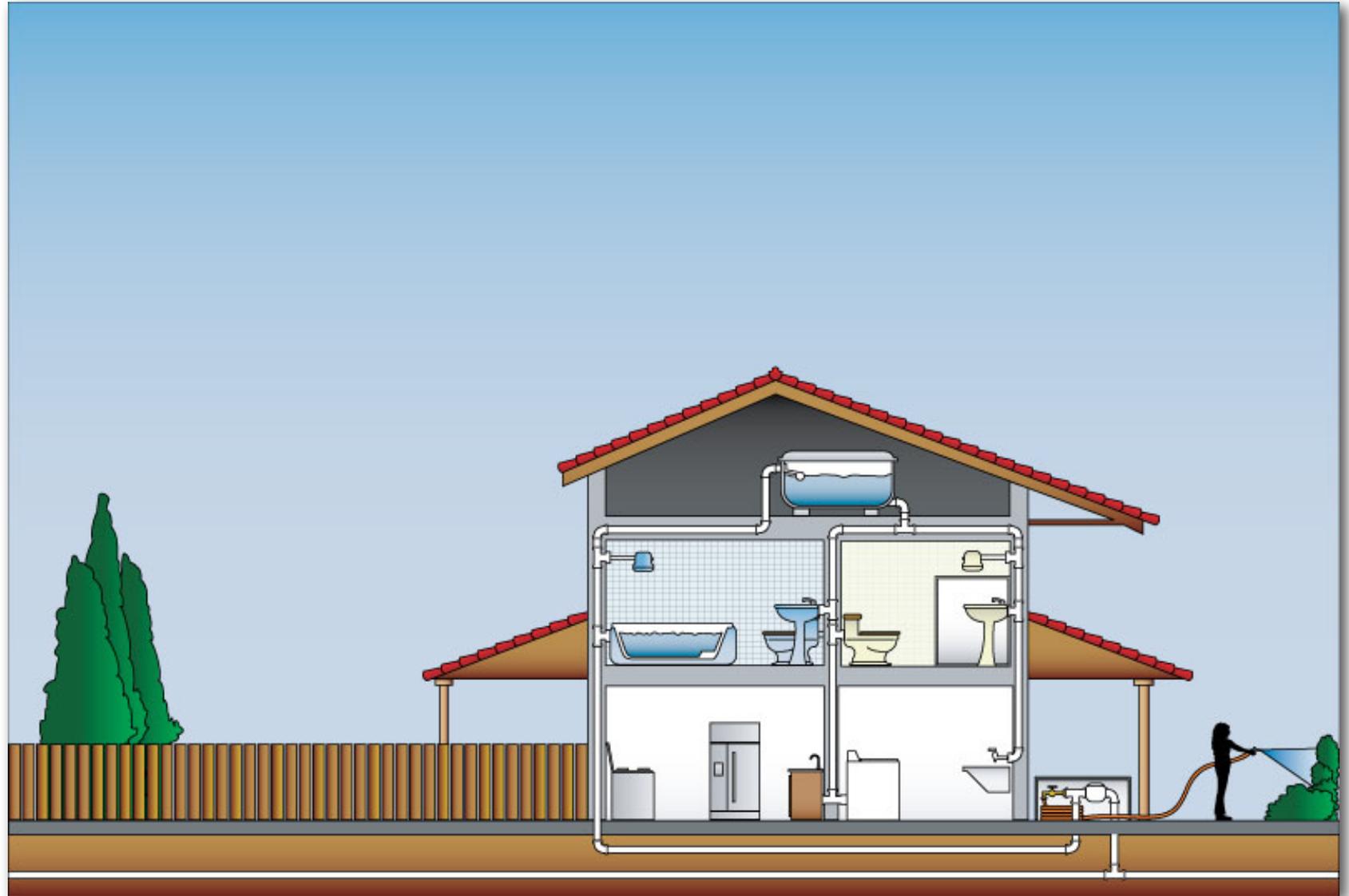


How many water outlets can you see in this bathroom? Water that we use for cleaning goes down the drain once we are finished with it. It is called *waste water*.



Where else do you have access to water in your home?

Every time we flush the toilet, wash the dishes, wash our clothes, have a shower or clean our teeth, waste water flows into pipes and is carried away as *sewage*.



Where does all of this waste water go?

The drainage pipes in our homes are connected to a network of underground pipes in our yards and in the streets. These pipes are called *sewer pipes*.



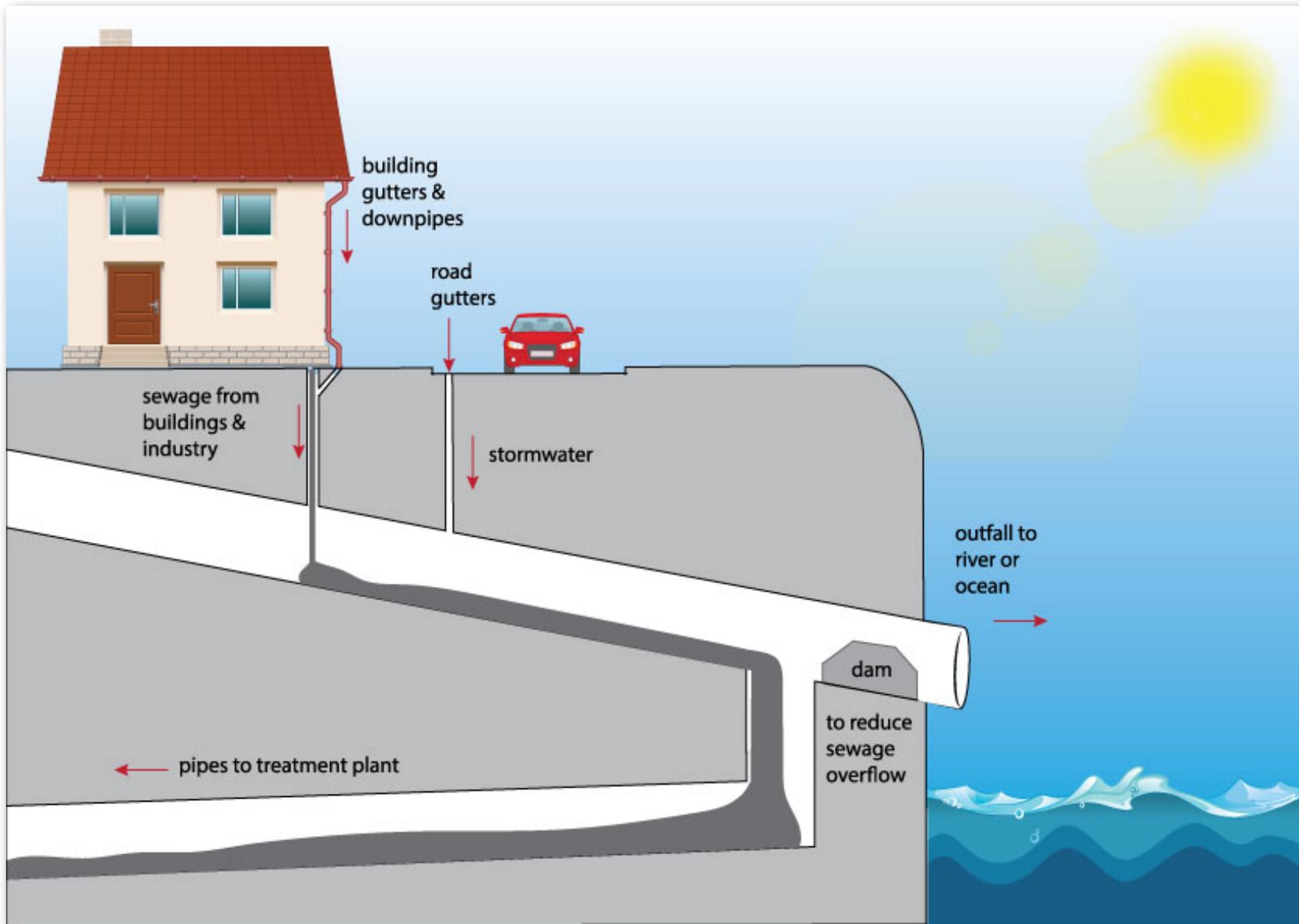
The network of pipes that carry away our waste water is called *sewerage*. The waste water itself is called *sewage*.

Our communities also need to be able to carry water away from our houses, yards and streets when it rains. This type of water is called ***stormwater***.

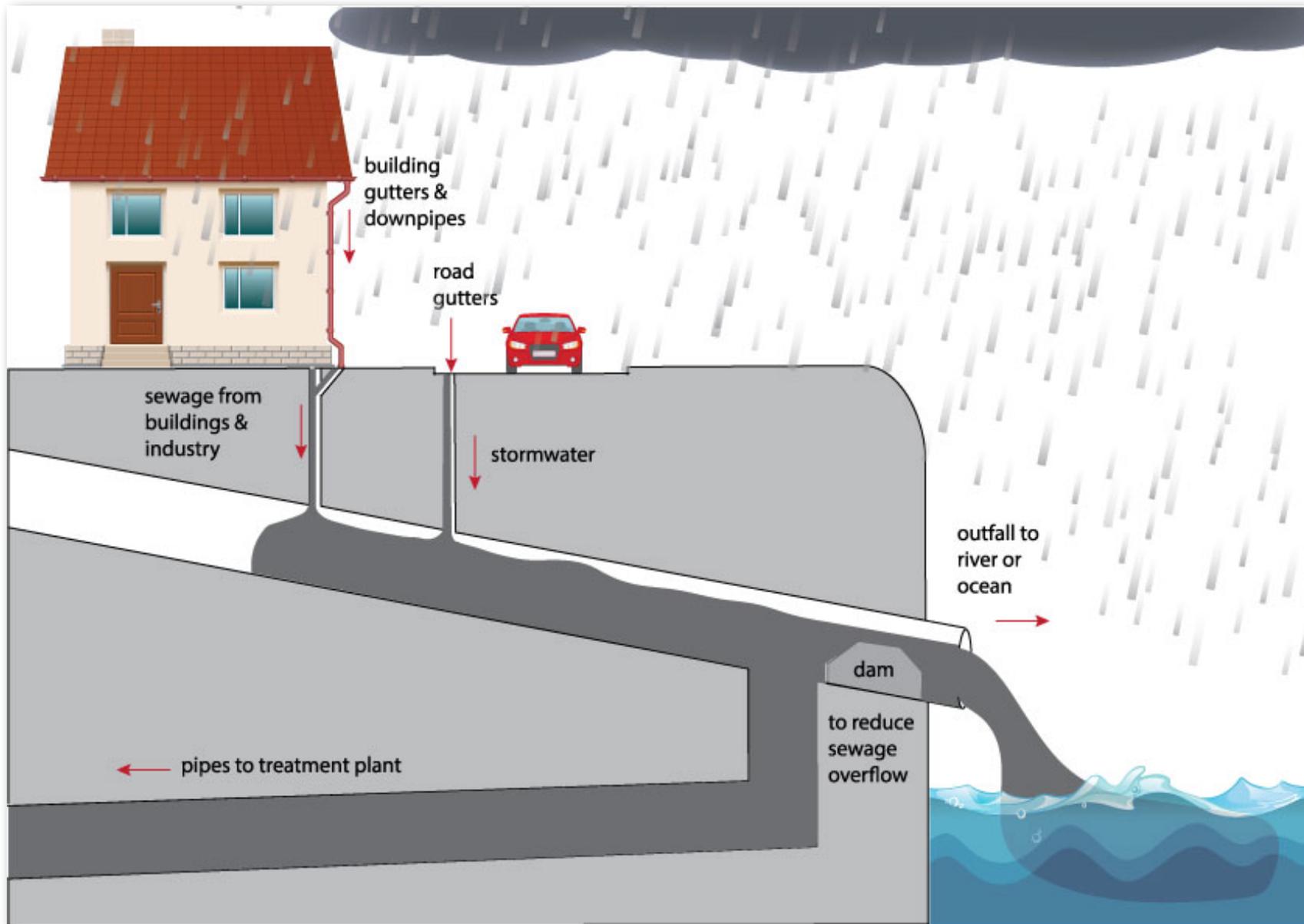


Pipes, open drains and canals redirect stormwater to avoid flooding. It can be released directly into a natural water source like a river or the ocean.





A combined sewer system carries both sewage and stormwater. On a sunny day when there is no stormwater, sewage from buildings and industry travels through pipes to a sewerage plant.



But on days of heavy rainfall, sewage can overflow through outlets into rivers and oceans. This kind of sewerage system is no longer used when building new housing areas as the pollution risk is too great. But old systems still exist in many cities.



Environmental Protection Agencies ensure that our sewerage systems do not carry polluted water. Industrial waste containing dangerous chemicals is not allowed to be released into the sewer. But in some areas there is an increased risk of sewage polluted water being released into rivers and oceans during periods of heavy rain.