THE WATER CYCLE

Within the atmosphere, clouds form when water vapor in the air cools and becomes liquid water. This process is called condensation. Condensation creates precipitation in the forms of rain, sleet, hail, and snow. Once precipitation reaches the ground, the water can take a different journey depending on where it lands. Compare the flow of water in the natural and urban areas.

Condensation

Evaporation

Precipitation

Ocean

Water fills rivers, lakes, and oceans. Some of the water is absorbed into the soil for plants and trees through a process called infiltration.

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Buildings and roads cover soil, preventing infiltration. The unabsorbed rainwater is called runoff.

Runoff



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