



# NO Wipes in the Pipes!

*Your toilet is not a trashcan*

The label might say “flushable”, but what the label doesn’t tell you is that disposable wipes continue to clog our sewer lines and damage pumps and other equipment. Not

only are these problems expensive to fix, they can also cause raw sewage overflows into homes, businesses and local waterways. It’s a very costly problem for both the customer and CFPUA.

**FACT:** Wipes, paper towels, and similar items are the second leading cause of all sewer spills in Wilmington/New Hanover County. **25%** of the spills that occurred over the past year included wipes.

**FACT:** These products **do not** dissolve. Many household cleaning products are labeled and marketed as “disposable” or “safe for sewers and septic systems”, but the truth is, they’re not. Many things are “flushable” (a sweatshirt, for example), but that doesn’t mean they should be flushed down the toilet. Throw them in the trash where they belong!

Toilets, sewer pipes, and wastewater treatment facilities were originally designed to transport and handle toilet paper and human waste only. The following items should **never** be flushed down the toilet:

- disinfecting/cleaning wipes
- paper towels
- rags, towels, washcloths
- towelettes
- kitty litter
- needles, syringes and other medical waste
- baby wipes
- toilet seat covers
- diapers
- feminine hygiene products
- dental floss
- mop/cleaning brush refills



According to a Seattle Times report, consumers in North America bought around **83,000 tons** of disposable wipes in 2004. That’s about 9,000 18-wheel semi-trailers full; about 30% of these were meant for home cleaning. In addition, the wipes market has grown by about 3% each year.



This is a picture of a sewer catch screen. It catches bigger objects as wastewater passes through it on its way to the treatment plant. The stuff you see here is a collection of paper towels, wipes and other non-disposable products that could not pass through the screen. CFPUA has 140 pump stations which utility workers clean out every.

Circle the items that are OK to flush down the toilet. Put an X through the things that should be tossed in the trash.



How many words can you find in the following?

### WIPES CLOG PIPES

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