

What not to flush

Wet Wipes are not the only culprit. You'd be amazed at what we find in the wastewater system. Items that specifically list the term 'flushable', but should not be flushed include:

- Disposable nappies
- Tampons and sanitary pads
- Cotton balls and swabs
- Unused medications (Return them to your local pharmacy)
- Condoms
- Cleaning wipes
- Facial tissues
- Bandages and bandage wrappings
- Grease
- Rags

While these may get flushed out of sight, they can build up in the pipes and cause a blockage.

What you can do

- Scrape food scraps into the compost bin
- Pour grease into a can, let it harden and throw in the rubbish

*Don't flush anything
other than human waste
and toilet paper
down the toilet...*

*... wrap everything else
and place in the rubbish*



*No wipes
down
the
pipes*

A Guide to

Wet Wipes and Wastewater



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The information in this brochure is a guide only and is not a statutory document

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The Problem

Items of rubbish such as wet wipes, cloths and rags are being found in our sewer system. Many of these are labelled as 'flushable', but while they may clear the toilet, they cause problems downstream.

Rubbish items clog wastewater pipes and pumps, causing blockages. This means time and money are wasted on repairs. In the worst cases a blockage results in wastewater overflows to our streets and streams.

Did you know?

In September 2015, a single wet wipe blocked the pump in the Rangataua Pump Station. It took four hours to clear!

This is a cost to us, the Ratepayer, and to our environment that we can avoid.

The Solution is Simple

Rubbish items such as Wet Wipes, cloths and rags need to be put in the rubbish bin.

Bin it ...



... don't flush it

No Wipes down the Pipes!

Wet Wipes in particular are becoming an increasing problem for our wastewater system.



Commonly used wipes include baby wipes, car cleaning wipes, hand wipes and facial wipes. These need to go in the rubbish bin after use!

Toilet paper is usually made from short, natural fibres which break down in water.

Many wet wipes are made from long synthetic fibres which are highly bonded and entangled and do not break up. Instead they cause pipe blockages and damage to pumps.

Toilet paper breaks down in water while many wipes do not.



The Greasy Issue

Wipes also cause problems when they become lodged on the inner surface of wastewater pipes and become a catching point for fats, grease and oils. As further products become caught the size of the blockage increases until it interferes with the amount of wastewater able to pass through the pipe and damage to the system occurs.

The London Fatburg

In 2013 a "bus-sized lump" of food fat mixed with wet wipes was pulled from London drains.



The sewer was almost completely clogged with over 15 tonnes of fat which had reduced the sewer to just five per cent of its normal capacity. The blockage was discovered after local residents complained of being unable to flush their toilets.

Many other cities are also experiencing serious problems and millions of dollars worth of damage.

While the problem isn't as bad as what you see happening overseas it is definitely a growing problem in New Zealand and it's something we're keen to nip in the bud.