

# A Note from *your* Wastewater Treatment Facility

## What Not To Flush!

Do we want to protect our environment and keep our sewers flowing and trouble free? You bet, but how? It's easy!!

### Don't flush trash!!

Use a trash can instead of the toilet to dispose of used wipes, hygiene products and other items that don't break down like toilet paper.

Even if the label says "flushable", wipes and other trash can build up in the sewer system and cause overflows that might damage property, hurt the environment, or make people sick.

There's also the increased cost for sewer system operation and maintenance.

Wipes, trash and debris are a costly problem for cities and local sewer agencies, too. Putting the wrong things down sinks and toilets might also cause expensive plumbing problems in your home or business.

### Don't flush grease

- Use screens to keep hair, fruit stickers and other stuff out of drains and pipes.
- Scrape out greasy bowls, pots, and pans before washing.
- Keep fatty foods and meats out of the garbage disposal, and put cooled, solidified grease in the trash.

#### What happens when grease is washed down the drain?

When grease is washed down the drain, it sticks to the inside of sewer pipes (both on your property and in the streets). Over time, it builds up and can block an entire pipe.

Garbage disposals do not keep grease out of the pipes, they only shred it into smaller pieces. Commercial additives, including detergents that claim to dissolve grease, may pass it down the line and cause problems away from the source.

#### The results of a grease-blocked sewer pipe can be:

- Sewage overflows in your home or your neighbor's home
- Expensive and unpleasant cleanup that often must be paid for by the property owner. The average cleanup cost is about \$3,000 which does not include replacing carpets and repairing walls.
- Possible contact with disease-causing organisms
- An increase in operation and maintenance costs by the local sewer treatment system, which causes higher sewer bills for customers.

### Don't flush medications or chemicals

Don't put unwanted medications down the toilet or sink. Worried about keeping discarded meds away from kids or pets? Most Pharmacies or Law Enforcement Agencies have a "Return Unused Medications" Day or Return policy.

Got paint, pesticides and other household chemicals/cleaners you no longer need or want? There are much safer alternatives to putting these things down the drain!

### Don't flush Phosphates

K.D.H.E. requires our Wastewater Facility to take Phosphorus, one of the leading causes of the deadly Blue-Green Algae, out of the water to a level below 1.5 ppm (parts per Million). Although most products sold today are low in this element, we ask that you be proactive and request and/or buy products with low or no Phosphates. Some cleaners and solvents are very high in phosphorus and other harmful chemical that are detrimental to the bacteria for Wastewater Treatment. The "dumping" of large amounts of any chemical into the sewer system can not only be harmful, it can be illegal.

### Unsure what you can/can't flush?

Human waste and toilet paper are the **only** things to flush. Nothing else belongs in the toilet!

Source: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/services/environment/wastewater/education/protect-environment/flush-trouble.aspx?print=1>