

By The Numbers

(per September 2020 NACWA study)

- Ryerson University in Toronto conducted a disintegration test on 101 single-use wipes, and found that **none** of the wipes disintegrated enough after 30 minutes to safely pass through an average home's plumbing system without risk of clogging or causing damage to infrastructure. **In comparison, toilet paper breaks down in 8 seconds.**
- Flushable wipes cost utilities throughout the state of Michigan an estimated \$18.2M per year in additional operating costs, averaging to almost \$50,000 in additional operating costs per utility per year.
- Flushable wipes cost utilities throughout the United States an estimated \$441M per year in additional operating costs.

*** SAVE YOUR ***

**PIPES
DON'T FLUSH YOUR
WIPES**



Downriver Utility Wastewater Authority
25605 Northline Road
Taylor, MI 48180

Be Smart, Reduce Repair Costs, and **PREVENT CLOGS!**



Do Not Flush

“Flushable” Wipes Down the Toilet.

They Can Create
Blockages, Backups
and cause **Costly Repairs.**

DOWNRIVER
UTILITY

WASTEWATER

AUTHORITY

Allen Park
Belleville
Brownstown Twp.
Dearborn Heights
Ecorse

Lincoln Park
River Rouge
Riverview
Romulus
Southgate

Taylor
Van Buren Twp.
Wyandotte

What are Flushable Wipes?

Flushable wipes are disposable moist toilet tissues that are made from non-woven, fibrous materials and consist of many natural and synthetic fibers, like plastic resins, making them more durable. This non-woven pattern is the same that is used in dryer sheets and baby diapers, both of which are disposable, but not flushable. Flushable wipes are often used in place of toilet paper because they remain strong when wet; however, their durability prevents them from breaking down when flushed, thus leading to the potential for pipe blockages or sewer backups.

Common Flushable Wipes Uses

- Toilet Paper
- Baby Wipes
- Makeup Removal
- Surface Cleaning



Why are “Flushable” Wipes not Flushable?

- The term “flushable” means the wipe may break down after being submerged in water; however, this process takes a long time, thus the wipes should not be flushed.
- Toilet plumbing is usually 3-4 inches in diameter and can easily be blocked by wipes that do not disintegrate. This can lead to a buildup of solids in the pipe causing a blockage or backup. Wipes can also cling to fats, greases, and oil buildup within the pipe to create a blockage.
- Flushable wipes take a long time to break down and will not disintegrate before reaching the wastewater treatment plant where the wipes can damage equipment.



Consequences of Flushing “Flushable” Wipes

- Flushable wipes can cause a blockage in the household plumbing or sanitary service lead, resulting in a costly repair for the homeowner. The blockage could also result in an overflowing toilet or a sanitary sewer backup into the basement depending on where the blockage is located.
- Flushable wipes can cause blockages in the public sanitary sewers resulting in sewer backups and overflows. Sanitary sewer overflows cause waterway contamination that could pose a threat to public health as overflows can affect public swimming and boating areas as well as animal and aquatic habitats.
- Flushable wipes can get stuck in and damage pumps and other equipment at the wastewater treatment facility requiring a removal and repair process that is time-consuming and expensive. The funds spent to repair and unclog equipment are ultimately billed back to the residents through increased sewer rates.
- Homeowners will ultimately bear the cost for repairs required due to damage from flushable wipes, either through the costs for their household plumbing repairs and/or through their increased sewer rates.



Proper Disposal and Alternative Options

Dispose of “flushable” wipes in the trash or compost biodegradable wipes.

Only human waste and toilet paper should be flushed down the toilet. The 4 Ps can go down the drain... paper, poop, pee and puke.



Consider the following alternative options to using “flushable” wipes:

- Toilet paper spray
- Reusable/washable wipes
- A bidet

