

# "To Flush or Not to Flush, That is the question"

Recycling and treating used water is just one way in which we can be good stewards of this precious natural resource.

Many cities use wastewater collection and treatment systems to filter out debris and push the water through the plant.

Wastewater collection and treatment systems around the world, including right here in Kyle, are dealing more and more with debris that the systems were never designed to convey or treat.

Some of these concerning debris items include:

1. "Flushable" wipes
2. Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG)
3. Medications and general pharmaceuticals
4. Disposable diapers
5. Feminine products and contraceptive devices
6. Toxic chemicals and substances
7. Garbage and general refuse
8. Cat litter



In a video demonstration, we showed how wipes (in bucket on the left) don't dissolve in water while regular toilet paper (in bucket on the right) does.

The single largest contributing factor to failures in any wastewater treatment facility are related to damage caused by flushable wipes that bind together to form huge "rag" masses, which can weigh several hundred pounds. That's each, mind you. While manufacturers make claims that such wipes are "septic" safe and "flushable", the issue isn't flushing. It's when they all meet up at the treatment facility that the problems begin.



The second most common cause of problems in the treatment system or collection system are related to fats, oils or greases, commonly called FOG. These substances coagulate into large gooey masses, which can negatively impact water treatment plant operations. They can also clog the sewage line leading out of your home.

Finally, rounding out the highest concerns are medications and pharmaceuticals that aren't readily treated in most wastewater treatment plants. Such medications should be disposed of in the garbage or returned to a pharmacy for disposal. Some local law enforcement agencies will also accept unused or outdated prescription medicine.

We urge customers to never dispose of any of the above listed items in the toilet or down any drain in your home. These items can create serious and long-term consequences in our wastewater collection and treatment system. Disposing of restricted items in the sewer system increases operational costs, which can affect customer rates. Those items can also lead to costly emergency failures in the system and serious environmental consequences.

Learn more at [www.kylewaterwiseandsewersavvy.com](http://www.kylewaterwiseandsewersavvy.com).

