



## Public Education Committee

This municipal water quality educational material was sponsored by the **Public Education Committee** of the **Pennsylvania Water Environment Association (PWEA)**. PWEA is a Member Association of the **Water Environment Federation (WEF)**.

Please visit our **Public Education Toolbox** on PWEA's website for other public educational material for the municipal water quality industry.



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*Disposable vs.  
Flushable...  
To Flush or Not to Flush?*

*Municipal Water Quality  
Public Educational Information*



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## EXAMPLES OF *DO NOT FLUSH* ITEMS

Baby Wipes

Adult Wipes

Paper Towels

Disposable and Cloth Diapers

Feminine Products

Q-tips

Bandages

Dental Floss

Socks

Sanitary Towels and Incontinence Pads

Underwear

Rags

Kitty Litter

Cigarette Butts

Panty Hose

Razors and Blades

*Put these into a rigid container before placing in the trash bin.*

Medicines

*Any unwanted or unused medicines should be returned to your local pharmacy for safe disposal.*



Clean water is critical to sustaining life and health, yet people often take for granted the flow of water into and out of their homes and businesses. Where does it go after we flush the toilet, empty the sink, take a shower or do laundry? Wastewater drains into the community's sanitary sewer system, an underground network of pipes that leads to the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). Sewers are designed to take away used dirty water from sinks, baths, showers, laundries, and toilets. Flushing away "unflushables" adds to the cost of operating and maintaining your sewers and the wastewater treatment plant. Putting trash down the toilet does cause blockages in sewers and possible damage to the environment.

**"Disposable" doesn't mean flushable.** Disposable means you should bag it and trash it... **don't flush it!** Most baby wipes and adult wipes are not flushable. This information is usually written in tiny letters somewhere on the package. Even if the phrase "flushable" or "safe to flush" is on the package, it may not be flushable. These "unflushable" and many "flushable" wipes do not fall apart in water like toilet paper. The wipes get tangled in the sewage with other wipes and debris, resulting in sewer clogs and expensive problems for your collection system/WWTP. These additional maintenance issues take time away from the operators and maintenance staff's daily activities and can impact you or your neighbor's sewer service.