



*(The blockage [partially shown in the picture above] was made up of about 80% flushable wipes combined with twigs, sticks, a plastic soda bottle, feminine hygiene products, and even a pair of underwear. PHOTO CREDIT Rockland County)*

## Don't Flush This

Right now we've all seen the lines at grocery stores. Fears over the new coronavirus has resulted in a shopping frenzy and caused a temporary toilet paper shortage. Now that shortage has caused a ripple effect — going all the way to Village sewer systems.

With the insufficient supply of bathroom paper products more people are buying flushable wipes, baby wipes and other self-care paper products. The problem is the so-called flushable wipes and other products are causing problems in sanitary sewer systems!

Many materials frequently flushed or poured down the drain can harm the pipes that connect to our sewers. Every property owner connected to the sewer system can be a potential contributor to sewer problems, and a potential victim of those problems. Putting the wrong things down the drain can damage the sewer system, cause sewer backups in your home, and sewer releases to the environment. EVERYONE is responsible for what they flush or pour down drains.

## Don't Flush This

Basically, the only things you should ever flush down a toilet are human waste (urine and feces) and toilet paper. Even though some products such as wipes and baby diapers claim to be flushable, they aren't. Here is a list of some things to keep out of the toilet.

- disposable diapers
- tampons and tampon applicators
- sanitary napkins
- cotton balls and swabs

- mini or maxi pads
- condoms
- cleaning wipes of any kind
- bandages and bandage wrappings
- automotive fluids
- paint, solvents, sealants, and thinners
- poisons and hazardous waste

## Unused Medications

Do not flush unused medications down the toilet. You can safely dispose of medications in the garbage, or take medications to an approved prescription drug take-back site or event.

[Get Food and Drug Administration guidance](#) on disposing of unwanted medications.

### **Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG)**

Grease in Sewer pipes causes sewer maintenance problems for property owners and the city. Never pour grease in your sink drain and try to use your garbage disposal less.

If you have any questions don't hesitate to reach out to Chief Wastewater Operator John Reynolds at [jreynolds@villageofnewark.com](mailto:jreynolds@villageofnewark.com)