

# The Toilet is Not a Trash Can

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Frederick County operates several wastewater collection systems, which in total, consist of over 360 miles of sewer main. Many collection systems also include pumping stations which send the wastewater to a facility for treatment.

Sewer systems can encounter problems when trash and debris accumulate in piping or pumping stations because they were never designed to handle this material. This can lead to sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs), which are in violation of Frederick County's various discharge permits and are harmful to the environment. As a result, we are spending additional time with maintenance and installation of new equipment to reduce or prevent the problem – all of it at additional expense, which in the long term, is passed along to our customers.

The toilet is the most common way in which trash and debris enter the sewer system. Some of the most common items found in the sewer system that DO NOT belong include, but not limited to:



- 'Flushable' Bathroom Wipes
- Toilet Brushes and Pads
- Feminine Hygiene Products
- Dental Floss
- Plastic Bags
- Diapers
- Disinfecting or Cleaning Wipes



The list of materials that CAN be disposed of in a toilet is much shorter:

- Human Waste
- Toilet Paper
- Nothing Else



Here is something to consider: This is an image from a clogged pump in a Frederick County sewage pumping station caused by 'flushable' wipes. If they are able to completely block a pump in a high capacity sewage pumping station, just imagine what could happen inside of your own home or business that has much smaller sewer lines?

The toilet is not a trash can. Save yourself the hassle of clogged pipes in your home by putting these materials where they belong – in the trash can. It can save you from expensive plumbing bills, saves the County from increased maintenance costs, and it saves the environment from SSOs resulting from sewer clogs.

Should you have any questions, please contact the Division of Utilities and Solid Waste Management at (301) 600-1825.

## Additional Information:

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments: [Protect Your Pipes Campaign](#)

National Association of Clean Water Agencies: [Flushable Wipes and other Non-Dispersible Products](#)