



# PROTECT YOUR SEWER

## Know what NOT to flush!

Did you know that all the “used” water in your home goes through your wastewater (sewer) pipes? Whatever you “flush” down the **toilet, sink, garbage disposal, or dishwasher** all combines together.

**Flushing the *wrong* things**—things not designed to break down or be handled through the wastewater

system—can cause debris to build up in pipes and eventually create a sewer backup—an expensive health hazard for you, and possibly your neighbors!

**You can protect your home’s sewer pipes and the public system by being careful about what you flush.**

### WHAT SHOULD YOU FLUSH?

Basically, 2 things (besides water):

- ▶ Toilet paper, and
- ▶ Human waste

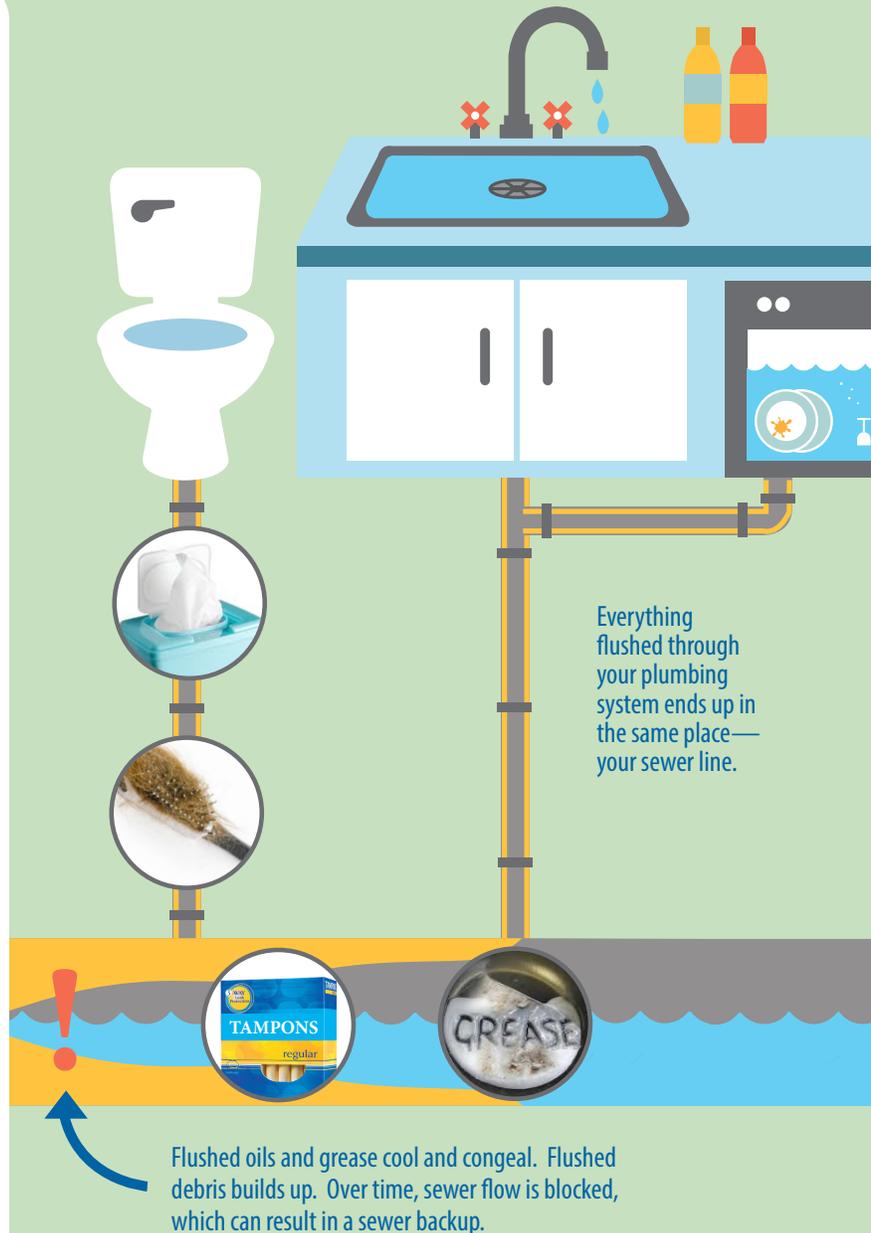
Flushing anything else tempts trouble—not just for your home, but for the public system and the environment as well.

### WHAT NOT TO FLUSH:

These are some of the **WORST** sewer culprits:

- ▶ **Disposable wipes**—any kind, even if labeled “flushable.” Wipes don’t break down in the sewer line. These have become one of the #1 causes of sewer backups.
- ▶ **F.O.G. (fats, oils and grease)**—cooking oil and grease flushed through the sink or dishwasher, or greasy scraps sent through the garbage disposal. F.O.G. cools and congeals down the line, sticking to pipes.
- ▶ **Feminine sanitary products**—tampons, applicators or pads
- ▶ **Diapers** or nursing pads
- ▶ **Dental floss**
- ▶ **Paper towels or tissues**
- ▶ **Hair**
- ▶ **Cotton balls or Q-tips**
- ▶ **Condoms**

**Do your sewer a favor:** always put these (and any other waste items) in the trash—not down your toilet or drain!



# SEWER CARE FAQs: WHAT SHOULD I DO WITH...

## F.O.G. WASTE:

Common sources of F.O.G. waste include:

- ← Oil from cooked meats and fish
- ← Gravies, sauces and soups
- ← Cooking oil, butter, shortening, lard and margarine
- ← Milk, cream, sour cream and mayonnaise
- ← Oily or greasy food scraps



### Did you know?

50% of sewage overflows are caused by improper disposal of F.O.G.

You can avoid a situation like this by using these safe disposal tips.

## DISPOSING OF F.O.G. PROPERLY:



### 1 Scrape & wipe before washing

Keep F.O.G. out of pipes by pre-wiping dishes with your napkin—you can compost scraps and food-soiled paper.



### 2 Avoid garbage disposals—use a strainer

Catch oily, greasy and starchy food waste before it enters your pipes—you can compost scraps.



### 3 For heavy grease: COOL IT—CAN IT—TRASH IT

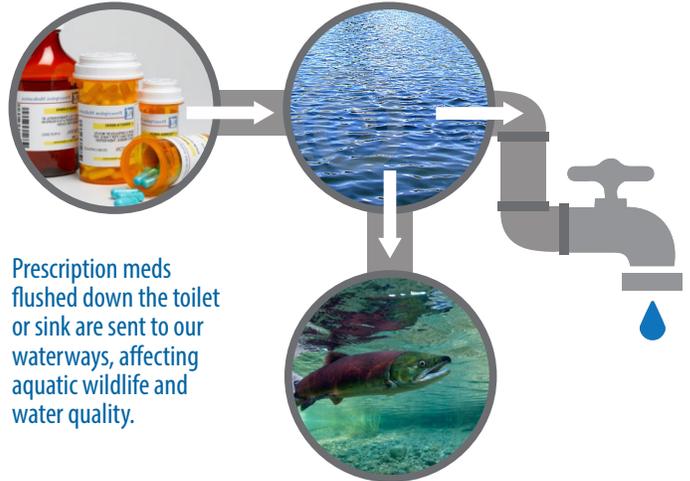
Pour cooled fats, oils, and grease into a container with a lid and place in the trash or compost.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFO...

In the City of Watervliet, the property owner is responsible for the entire water and sewer lateral from inside the house to the connection to the city main, which is typically in the street or alley.

## PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS:

Wastewater treatment plants are not designed to remove medications. Flushed medications can affect our region's aquatic life—and our water and food quality.



Prescription meds flushed down the toilet or sink are sent to our waterways, affecting aquatic wildlife and water quality.

### To flush meds properly, use a designated disposal site.



Instead of flushing medications down your toilet or drain, use a safe medicine disposal box. Many local police stations and health care centers make these available.

Visit [www.health.ny.gov/professionals/narcotic/medication\\_drop\\_boxes/](http://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/narcotic/medication_drop_boxes/) to find the location nearest you.

## CLEANING PRODUCTS, CHEMICALS & OTHER HOUSEHOLD WASTES:



### Whatever you pour down the drain enters our waterways and water environment.

Don't flush liquid chemicals like bleach, cleaning fluids or paint thinners down the sink or toilet. To learn more about household waste go to [www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8485.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8485.html)

## NEED MORE INFO?

If you have any questions, you can contact city officials at city hall at 518-270-3800 or the water & sewer department at 518-785-7082.