

[FOR USE IN CITY NEWSLETTERS]

## Your toilet is not a trashcan

Tossing so-called “flushable” wipes, paper towels, tissues, tampons, and other dense paper materials into the toilet could end up costing you quite a bundle.

These items do not biodegrade easily or quickly. Wipes, feminine hygiene products, and other paper materials can get stuck in the narrow sanitary sewer service lateral that connects homes and businesses to the city’s wastewater collection system. And if grease or other congealing products are poured down the kitchen sink, these attach to the wipes, causing “fatbergs” to form.

## You end up paying the price

The result can be clogged pipes, sewage back-ups into homes, and potentially expensive repairs.

Even if these materials make it through your property’s private sewer service lateral, they can cause problems down the line. Cities and the Metropolitan Council use pumps to keep sewage moving through elevation changes. Anything other than toilet paper, which dissolves quickly, can get caught on screens that guard pumps or worse, get through the screens and clog or break the pumps.

City and regional sewer workers are spending an increasing amount of time repairing pumps and clearing screens of debris that ends up getting hauled to a landfill.

Either way, it costs you money. If your property is connected to a city wastewater collection system, as 90% of the seven-county metro area population is, then you are footing the bill for this problem.

## If you can throw it in the trash, don’t put it in the toilet or drain

**The answer:** if you **can** throw it in the trash, **do** throw it in the trash. Tissue paper, wipes, cotton swabs, paper towels, dental floss, condoms, any kind of cloth, cosmetics, and any kind of feminine hygiene product all belong in the trash. The only things that belong in the toilet are the two “P”s and the TP: poop, pee and toilet paper.

For more information about materials that shouldn’t go down the toilet or drain, visit the [Metropolitan Council’s What Not to Flush website](#).