

Edgemont Ranch Metro District

Wastewater Treatment - What Not To Flush

The toilet is a magical trash can. Simply toss, flush and your garbage is whooshed away to some watery netherworld, never to be seen again.

Or so we like to think. In fact, such practices, clog toilets, damage the wastewater treatment facilities, necessitate expensive cleanups, create raw sewage overflows, harm marine animals and create toxic environmental issues.

With that in mind, here are the things that often end up in the sewer system, none of which have any business being there.

- **Baby Wipes:** Although these may be used to wipe your baby's bottom, they are not toilet paper. Baby wipes are thicker, sturdier, and do not break down easily, resulting in clogged systems.
- **Band-Aids:** Made of non-biodegradable materials, they easily tangle up with hair and fat to create blockages.
- **Chewing Gum:** Flushing what is basically an adhesive down the toilet is not a sound practice, for obvious reasons
- **Cigarette Butts:** Although they seem flushable, cigarette filters don't easily biodegrade and they are filled with chemicals, which leach into the wastewater.
- **Condoms:** Easy to flush, but not so easy on the sewer system. Condoms can inflate like balloons and cause fairly destructive obstructions.
- **Cosmetics:** Your old moisturizer and other beauty care products can be potentially toxic and disruptive to wastewater treatment plants.
- **Cotton Balls and Swabs:** Cotton doesn't break down easily, and although it may take a while for cotton products to accumulate into a clog, they are difficult to dislodge once they do.
- **Dental floss:** Seemingly innocent, dental floss is non-biodegradable and wraps around small clogs and tangles them into bigger masses.
- **Feminine Supplies:** The padding and absorbent nature of these products make them too thick for plumbing.
- **Disposable Diapers:** It's hard to believe that one could even get a diaper to flush down the toilet, yet that hasn't stopped sewage workers from finding systems clogged with disposable diapers.
- **Dryer Sheets:** They retain synthetic chemicals that can get into the water system, and they are made from non-biodegradable materials.
- **Food Fat:** Grease and fat congeal once they cool down, turning into solid masses that block pipes and causes serious sewage problems
- **Food:** Although food is biodegradable, it can still lump together and cause clogs
- **Hair:** After cleaning your hairbrush, deposit the clump in the garbage not the toilet. It tangles, catches things, and clogs like crazy.
- **Paper Towels and Napkins:** Too sturdy for the pipes
- **Pets:** Yes, pets. Goldfish are commonly flushed, but small rodents (hamsters and gerbils) are also found in sewer systems. They're sturdy and they create clogs; consider a proper burial.
- **Prescription Medicines:** No, no, no. Marine life does not need to digest your old drugs, not to mention that flushed meds can work their way back into our drinking water. See the food and drug administration for disposing of unwanted medications.
<http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/BuyingUsingMedicineSafely/EnsuringSafeUseofMedicine/SafeDisposalofMedicines/default.htm>

This information was found on the Internet by simply searching, **what not to flush down the toilet**. Edgemont Ranch Metro District appreciates you taking the time to read through the list, and simply be aware of what we are flushing down the toilet.