



>> Baby wipes, adult hygiene cloths and household cleansing cloths are among the top culprits when it comes to clogged pipes and backed up sewers. Cities worldwide have done battle with wipes clogging sewers and destroying treatment plant equipment.

## HERE'S WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:

- **"FLUSHABLE" DOES NOT REALLY MEAN FLUSHABLE OR TREATABLE**  
Packaging may say these wipes are "flushable," but they are extremely slow to biodegrade and do not disintegrate as they pass through the pipes in your home or through the pipes in municipal sewer systems, unlike toilet paper which is designed to dissolve in water and breaks apart when it is wet.
- **WIPING OUT SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE**  
If they pass through pipes without causing a clog or blockage, wipes arrive at treatment plants in tact where they become tangled in screens and pumps, oftentimes resulting in costly repairs.
- **WHY NOW? BABY WIPES ARE NOTHING NEW**  
A common theory about why wipes clogging pipes is such a big problem now is that traditionally, baby wipes used during diaper changes get tossed into the trash or a diaper pail along with the soiled diaper. However, adults don't keep diaper pails in their bathrooms and many people don't consider throwing used adult wipes in the trash to be sanitary.
- **GROWING PROBLEM AS INDUSTRY BOOMS**  
The Non-Wovens Industry (makers of wipes of all sorts) took off in the mid-2000s when companies began repackaging traditional baby wipes as a luxurious alternative to toilet paper for adults. By 2015, personal wet wipe sales reached about \$2.2 billion.
- **15-TON 'FATBURG'**  
In 2015, a 15-ton lump of wet wipes cluttered with improperly disposed of grease was removed from London's sewer system. Officials termed the lump a "fatberg." It was the size of a bus.
- **"PUBLIC ENEMY" BEING BATTLED**  
U.S. cities and states have filed lawsuits against some wet wipe manufacturers in an effort to get the industry to stop promoting their products as "flushable." Several cities and states have also taken similar legal measures, including proposing legislation against non-flushable "flushable" wipes.

# WIPES CLOG PIPES