

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT



I Don't Flush Campaign Urges Ontarians To Trash Their Bad Habits, Not Their Drains



Image 1: A mound of wipes pulled out of a sewage pumping station after a blockage was discovered.

Image 2: A build-up of fats, oils and grease (FOG) in a pipe at a wastewater facility.

TORONTO – October 16, 2019 – Are you ready to break up with your bad habits? The Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA) and the Clean Water Foundation (CWF) – in partnership with the Regional Municipality of York, Region of Peel, Town of LaSalle, Niagara Region, City of Barrie and Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury – have teamed up once again to deliver the *I Don't Flush* message.

Ontarians are guilty of using their toilets and drains like garbage cans, resulting in costly damage to their homes, the environment, and even municipal infrastructure. This year's campaign educates the public on how to properly dispose of some of the biggest offenders – personal hygiene products, fats, oils and grease, pharmaceuticals, and household hazardous waste.

"The only things meant to be flushed are No.1, No.2 and toilet paper," says Christopher Hilken, President, Clean Water Foundation. "Anything else, whether it's pharmaceuticals, wipes, fats, oils and grease, or household hazardous waste, can directly and indirectly end up polluting our rivers and lakes."

Many people who are improperly disposing of items down their drains are doing so unaware of the potentially catastrophic consequences. The following are some of the damages that can be caused:

Pharmaceuticals

Throwing pharmaceuticals in the garbage or down the drain contributes to the contamination of our environment, including water sources and soil. Examples: Expired pharmaceuticals, over-the-counter medications, and vitamins

Personal Hygiene products

Flushing personal hygiene products, even items labelled as flushable, can clog pipes and lead to sewer backups, flooded basements and raw sewage discharge into our lakes and rivers. Examples: wipes, feminine hygiene products, dental floss and cotton swabs

Fats, Oils and Grease

When fats, oils and grease (FOG) are put down the drain they cool and form blockages, leading to basement flooding and sewage overflows onto streets and surrounding areas. These clogs can also damage your local wastewater facility, and your water rates may go up to cover costly repairs. According to the Municipal Enforcement Sewer Use Group, Canadian municipalities spend more than \$250 million a year removing garbage from sewer systems. Examples: Meat fats, cooking oils, dairy products (butter, yogurt, etc.), salad dressings and gravies

Household Hazardous Waste

Household Hazardous Waste can become dangerous when poured down drains, potentially entering source waters and harming underwater vegetation and aquatic life. Examples: Cleaning, gardening and automobile care products

“Treating your sinks and toilets like trash cans can have major consequences,” says Amy Lane, Manager of Marketing and Communications, OCWA. “Can you imagine coming home to sewage backup in your basement because your pipes are clogged with grease, wipes or feminine hygiene products? This doesn’t have to happen. The *I Don’t Flush* campaign makes it clear how easy it is to protect your pipes and avoid costly repairs and environmental damage.”

The newest campaign includes a PSA on coming to terms with the mistreatment of your toilet (and sink!) and how to improve your relationship going forward.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/idontflushnews>



To view the full PSA, learn proper disposal techniques and for more information about the Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA), The Clean Water Foundation and participating supporters, visit www.idontflush.ca.

In addition to the website, more information can be found on [Facebook](#) and you can join the conversation on [Twitter](#) at #idontflush2019.



For more information and to arrange interviews please contact:
Brittany Ballentine | 647-725-9731 | brittany@punchcanada.com