



# PROTECT OUR WATER

## Keep fats, oils and grease out of the septic system

Although liquid when poured down the drain, fats later cool and solidify, and then build up in the sewer pipe reducing the space available for sewerage flow.

- Save the fat, oils, and greases for reuse. Smell the grease before each use. When the odor becomes pungent, you should dispose of the grease properly.
- Pour liquid grease and oil into containers such as cans, bottles, and milk cartons. Absorb liquids and solids with old newspaper or paper towels, then put in the trash can.
- Scrape plates, pots and pans over the garbage to reduce garbage disposal use. Many foods, such as vegetables contain significant amounts of fats which is then released when the food goes into the disposal.

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## Sewer safe

The toilet is meant to flush human waste and toilet paper, nothing else. Flushing medications and sanitary products, deceased pet fish, and cigarette butts clogs pipes, wastes water and damages sewers and oceans.

**Sanitary products, paper towels, diapers, baby wipes and facial tissues**—are made of materials that don't break down and can cause all pipes to clog. Put them in the trash.

**Prescription drugs, and over-the-counter medications**—contain chemicals we don't want in the wastewater supply. The best way to dispose of unused meds are to crush and mix with coffee grounds, kitty litter or dirt before sealing them in a plastic bag and disposing in the trash. You can also take meds to the Police Department drop-off box.

**Kitty litter**— (especially clay litter) will sooner or later clog your pipes, even the ones that claim to be flushable. More problematic is toxoplasmosis, a parasite found in cat waste that is harmful to marine biology. Put cat waste in the trash.

**Condoms and dental floss**— don't biodegrade and can clog pipes.

## Kitchen sinks

Don't use your kitchen sink as a trash can. Here is a list of the most common things that people dump into their sinks instead of disposing of them properly.

**Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG)**—should never be poured down the sink or garbage disposal. FOG sticks to the interior surface of the sewer pipes, hardens over time

and eventually may cause sewage to backup and lead to a sewage spill in your home or on our streets. Running hot water as you pour the grease down the drain does not help; pouring hot water and detergent down the drain only breaks up grease temporarily. To get rid of fats, oils and grease, let them cool/harden, then mix with other absorbent materials and place in a bag or container and throw it in the trash. Wipe away liquid or soft oils with a paper towel, then put in the trash.

**Food**— should not be flushed down the sink. The best way to get rid of food is to compost what you can and wipe or scrape the remnants in the trash. Use a drain screen in your sink to catch small bits of food as you wash the dishes. Use your garbage disposal sparingly.

**Coffee grounds and eggshells**— put them in the trash, not the garbage disposal. Crushed eggshells and coffee grounds can be used for making garden compost.

**Hair**— will catch and stick to other items and is very difficult to get out of pipes once it gets in. Use a fine drain screen to catch hair in your bathtub and shower, then put it in the trash.

**Household hazardous materials**—such as motor oil, pesticides, paint and solvents should never be poured down the drain. These compounds are toxic and will cause long term damage to the environment. Dispose of them at household hazardous waste collection events or at county or city drop-off sites. If there is just a little latex paint left in the can, place the can in a site inaccessible to children, pets or ignition sources and remove the lid so the contents can dry out. Once dry, replace the lid and dispose of the can in the trash.