

OWEA ONLINE SURVEY

The Ohio Water Environment Association conducted an informal online survey of water quality professionals, asking for a list of the "Top Ten Things Not to Flush." Survey participants were given ten blank fields to complete so as not to predispose people to any particular answer.

107 people participated in the survey. Answers were assigned to general categories (see the top ten categories list to the right) with the #1 category receiving the most entries and #10 receiving the least in the rank of 10. Thank you to all who took the time to help OWEA with this survey.

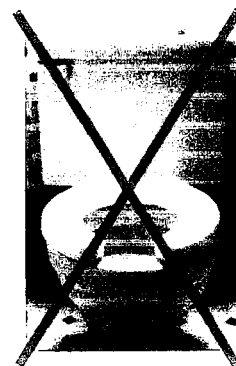
In addition to the top ten questions, comments below were received via the survey's comments field:

- ◆ As an applications engineer for a sewage pump manufacturer, the rampant use of treated and untreated cleaning cloths, which are flushed, has caused a skyrocketing occurrence of pump plugging. The 10 States Standards call for the ability to pass a 3" sphere, not a long stringy cloth. The majority of these cleaning items are not biodegradable.
- ◆ About 90% of my pumps are clogged with a conglomeration of dental floss. This stuff is very strong and difficult to cut, especially after it collects into a concentrated wad. Thank you for doing this!!!
- ◆ Hypodermic needles are a particular concern! Flammable chemicals are a particular concern!
- ◆ I hope this list doesn't get into the wrong hands . . . Some people will flush this stuff just to mess things up!
- ◆ Some items listed due to collection/pumping problems. Others listed for safety/environmental issues.
- ◆ Just because they say "flushable" doesn't mean they are.
- ◆ If you didn't eat it, don't flush it.
- ◆ The wipe and flush cleaning rags are our difficult item that has changed our business. Even though some of the pump companies are improving their de-ragging ability, we still have to check the trouble stations once every two weeks. It would be of great benefit if OWEA would approach the companies that make these rags to at least put a label on their product NOT TO FLUSH DOWN THE TOILET.
- ◆ "Disposable" wipes have become a significant problem with pumps, floats, and smaller sewers. They should be outlawed.

Here are a few of the more interesting "Not to Flush" entries:

- ◆ Your car keys
- ◆ False teeth
- ◆ Your homework
- ◆ Bowling balls
- ◆ Your spouse
- ◆ Your wallet
- ◆ That diamond ring, just wait, he'll apologize!
- ◆ Your smart phone
- ◆ O&M manuals

TOP TEN THINGS NOT TO FLUSH



1. Medications

Prescription, over-the-counter, vitamins, illegal drugs, patches, and hypodermic needles

2. Cloth

Cleaning rags, nylon stockings, underwear, shop towels, mop heads, dental floss

3. Feminine Products

Sanitary pads, tampons, applicators

4. Plastic

Plastic bags, plastic cotton swabs, disposable lighters, hotel shampoo bottles

5. Chemicals

Cleaning products, herbicides, insecticides, solvents

6. Grease

Auto, industrial

7. Wipes

Baby wipes, "disposable/flushable" wipes, personal hygiene wipes, and cleaning wipes

8. Cooking Oil/Grease

Fats, oils, cooking grease - used or unused

9. Condoms

Condoms and condom wrappers

10. Diapers

Paper or cloth, no matter how dirty, please dispose of in trash

Ohio's Water Quality People

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OWEA's "Top Ten Things Not to Flush" is available as a pdf document at http://www.ohiowea.org/keep_ohio_waters_clean.php

Contact OWEA at 614.488.5800 or info@ohiowea.org for more information