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DEEP Urges Residents to Think Before You Flush

Flushing wipes causes toilet, sewer backups

In line with federal Environmental Protection Agency guidance, the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) is urging all Connecticut residents not to flush disinfecting wipes or other non-flushable items that should be disposed of in the trash. Flushing only human waste and toilet paper helps ensure that the toilets, plumbing, sewer systems and septic systems will continue working properly to safely manage our state's wastewater.

While DEEP encourages disinfecting your environment to prevent the spread of COVID-19, never flush disinfecting wipes or other non-flushable items. Following this guidance will keep surfaces disinfected and wastewater management systems working for all Connecticut residents.

Preventable toilet and sewer backups can pose a threat to human health and present an extra challenge to our wastewater utilities and their workforce. Flushing anything other than human waste and toilet paper, including disinfecting wipes and wipes labeled flushable, can damage internal plumbing, local sewer systems and septic systems. Fixing these backups is costly, puts our wastewater operators and staff at increased risk, and takes time and resources away from ensuring that wastewater management systems are otherwise working properly.

DEEP thanks wastewater utilities and their workforce for their efforts at a time when resources may be stretched thin. Having fully operational wastewater services is critical to our efforts to respond to COVID-19 and to protecting Connecticut residents from other public health risks. Our state's wastewater employees are on the frontline of protecting human health and the environment every single day.

For more information, see <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus>.

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