

## Residents asked to help keep sewers clog free during isolation efforts

**March 27, 2020** — With residents across St. Catharines stepping up to do their part in fighting the spread of COVID-19 by staying home, the City is reminding everyone to only flush human waste and toilet paper.

As a result of the influx of individuals staying home the City's Municipal Works department has already begun to see a spike of non-flushable items, like disinfecting wipes, making their way into the sewer system. This trend could cause blockages and other service disruptions at a time when the system is critically important.

"We are so happy to see everyone doing their part to halt the spread of COVID-19, we just want to remind them that it is really important to only flush toilet paper and human waste down the toilet," said Acting Manager of Operations Mark Peat, adding, "even so-called flushable wipes should not be sent down the toilet, there is limited oversight on that branding as flushable, and none of them break down properly, causing a host of potential problems not only for home plumbing but the City sewer system. Now is not the time anyone wants to be stuck at home without a working toilet."

Materials and items including baby wipes, paper towel, tissue, floss, diapers, condoms, feminine hygiene products, kitty litter and kitchen waste such as grease stick to the walls of pipes, eventually forming blockages in household plumbing and the sewer system. Only toilet paper is designed to break apart readily to ensure plumbing stays clear.

For items that may be soiled, such as baby wipes or other products used in place of toilet paper, residents can use dog-waste bags for disposal to reduce the smell.

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