

SOLID MATERIALS

Your private or municipal system can process only toilet paper, which is designed to fall apart rapidly.

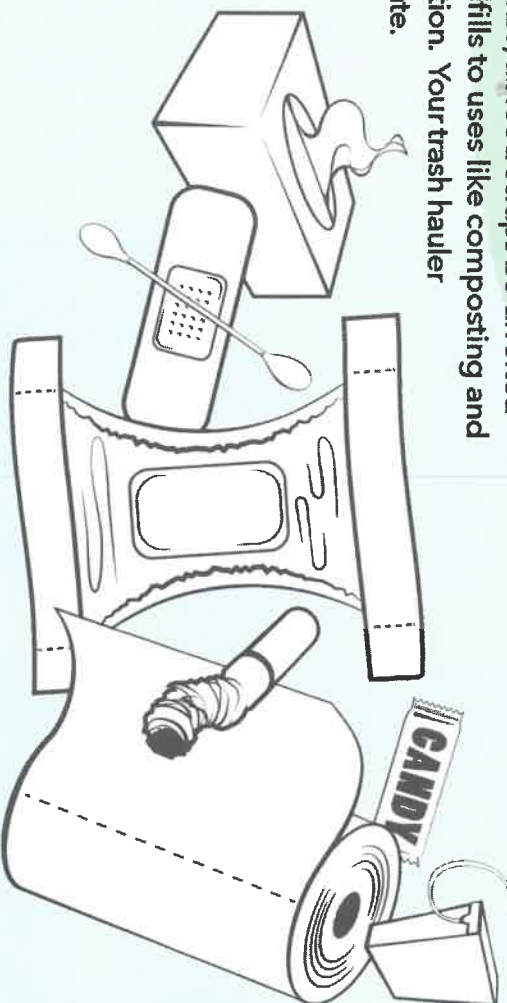
Never flush household solid waste such as paper, cloth, or plastic film, even if the package says it's "flushable." Those "flushable" wipes are a leading cause of serious clogs - never flush them!

These items don't dissolve. They mix with fats, oils, and greases, creating clogs that require costly repairs. They can also cause sewage overflows into rivers and lakes.

SOLID MATERIALS DISPOSAL

Toss household solid waste materials into the trash for pickup, or take them to your municipal drop-off. Don't try to burn or compost them (except food scraps)!

Food scraps also cause clogs -- and in-sink disposals don't help! Compost them if you can. Vermont law requires that by July, 2020, all food scraps be diverted from landfills to uses like composting and bio-digestion. Your trash hauler will facilitate.



NEVER FLUSH

The following common household items should never be flushed:

- Paper towels
- Disposable diapers
- Tampons & applicators
- Sanitary napkins
- Hair
- Rags
- Dryer lint
- Cleaning/disinfectant wipes
- Cigarette butts
- Q-Tips
- Dental floss
- Bandages
- Condoms
- Cotton balls
- Facial tissues
- Flushable wipes
- Candy wrappers

DON'T FLUSH IT!



VOLUME 1: CLOGGERS!

How to save money and hassle - and protect the environment - by knowing what NOT to flush or pour into your septic tank or municipal sewer system.

RULE #1: Sewage treatment systems, big or small, are designed to handle pee, poo, and toilet paper. That's it! Everything else causes problems.

FATS, OILS, & GREASES

Never pour fats, oils, or greases (a.k.a. FOGs) into sink, toilet, or storm drain!

When they solidify, FOGs impair performance and require pumping or replacement of small septic systems. FOG clogs in public sewer pipes and pumps cause breakdowns that result in sewer overflows and costly repairs. Either way, you pay.

FOGs combine with solid materials - see opposite side - and create "fatbergs." These horror-story clogs cost New York City taxpayers \$20 million a year. Some towns in Vermont pay up to \$40,000 in avoidable clog repairs.

- In-sink disposals do not dissolve FOGs!
- **Don't put FOGs into compost.** They can attract pests and slow the composting process.

For more information on damage caused by clogs, do a web search for "fatbergs" - lots of wonderfully gross videos!



FOG SOLUTIONS

Bacon Grease & Deep-Fry Oil:

- Save in a jar and re-use. Do a web search for "what to do with bacon grease" for great food recipes and advice on how to make soap, candles, lip balm, bird food, and more.
- Let cool until solidified, then wrap and dispose of in your trash.
- When warm, pour into a sealable jar or directly into your trash bag among absorbent materials.
- Wipe warm pans with a paper towel before washing; toss towels in trash.

Regular Frying & Salad Oil:

- Wipe all frying pans when butter, fat, or oil is still warm, then wash.
- Wipe salad bowls before washing. Use paper towels and dispose of them in the trash.

This is the first of four brochures produced by Green Mountain Water Environment Association (GMWEA), thanks to a grant from the Lake Champlain Basin Program, with project support from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and your municipality. Future editions will cover other pollutants typical households flush, pour, or spill into their wastewater stream.

GMWEA sincerely thanks the Castleton Content Lab, Castleton University, for brochure design & illustration!



**Green Mountain
Water Environment
Association**

89 Main Street, Ste. 4
Montpelier, VT 05602
(802) 229-9111 • www.gmwea.org

© 2019. Publication free for public, nonprofit use.



This project was funded by agreement LC00A00394, awarded by the Environmental Protection Agency to the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission in partnership with the Lake Champlain Basin Program. NEIWPCC manages LCBP's personnel, contract, grant, and budget tasks and provides input on the program's activities through a partnership with the LCBP Steering Committee. Although the information in this document has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under agreement LC00A00394 to NEIWPCC, it has not undergone the Agency's publications review process and therefore viewpoints expressed here may not necessarily reflect the views of the Agency and no official endorsement should be inferred. The viewpoints expressed here do not necessarily represent those of NEIWPCC, the LCBP Steering Committee, or EPA, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or causes constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.