

TOWN OF **BLACKFALDS**

# **STORE IT, DON'T POUR IT!**

## WASTEWATER COLLECTION GUIDE



# STORE IT, DON'T POUR IT

## WASTEWATER BLOCKAGES

Each year, the Town of Blackfalds responds to numerous calls from homeowners who are having sewer backups that are directly related to blockages resulting from fats, oils, and grease (FOG) buildup, “flushable” wipes, sanitary products, and other materials. These materials pose significant risk to residential sewer lines, sanitary main lines, and lift stations, resulting in increased operational and maintenance costs within the Town.

## YOUR WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM

The Town’s wastewater collection system collects residential waste from toilets, sinks and household appliances which is then funneled to the North Red Deer Regional Wastewater Service Commission’s system for treatment at the City of Red Deer Wastewater Treatment Plant before returning to the Red Deer River.

These wastewater discharges are regulated by *Alberta Environment*.

The wastewater treatment process is not designed to remove pharmaceuticals, hydrocarbons or complex chemicals and these hazardous substances may damage equipment and cause problems in the process.

Regular sources of wastewater contamination that are commonly washed down the drain include:

- paint
- chemicals
- cooking oil
- pharmaceuticals
- household cleaners

## What about “Flushable” items?

Toilet paper is designed to disintegrate in the sanitary sewer system, but flushable wipes, which are made with synthetic materials such as plastic or polyester, are not because they do not break down. These materials can pose serious risk to sewage professionals who must break these clogs up and can result in considerable cost to the municipality and home owner. Some cities spend millions of dollars to address damage to pipes.

Contact 403.885.9679  
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# WASTEWATER COLLECTION GUIDE

## STORE IT, DON'T POUR IT

Cooking substances like fat, oils, and grease (FOG) can cause serious blockages of sanitary main lines and cause sewer backups on private property, causing extensive property damage to the owner and can be costly to fix.

So before you dispose of food scraps, meat fats, lard, cooking oil, butter, margarine, sauces etc., proper disposal of these substances will greatly reduce the chance of sewer back up. It is imperative to **“store it, don't pour it.”**



THINGS YOU SHOULD NEVER FLUSH  
**DOWN THE TOILET**



PAPER TISSUES  
AND TOWELS



HAIR



DENTAL FLOSS



DIAPERS



FLUSHABLE WIPES



COTTON  
PRODUCTS



CIGARETTE BUTTS



CONDOMS



FEMININE HYGIENE  
PRODUCTS



MEDICATIONS  
AND BANDAGES



CAT LITTER

*Additional examples of what not to flush down the toilet*

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# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## ***Why are fats, oils and grease (FOG) bad for the sewer system.***

These materials do not break down and can result in sewer backup, property damage and cost.

## ***How do you know these problems are caused by FOG?***

During routine cleaning of sewer lines or when determining the cause of blockage, grease buildup is the number one substance detected.

## ***How do you fix a blockage?***

Lines are cleared using special equipment that blows out water under high pressure to remove the grease from the walls of the pipe. A vacuum process is used to remove any dislodged grease from a manhole.

## ***Can you get rid of FOG with hot water and soap?***

While hot water and soap may remove grease from dishes, it is not as effective for cleaning walls of sewer pipes. Sewer pipes in the ground are fairly cold so any liquid grease in the wastewater solidifies on the pipe walls. Eventually, it will build up enough to cause blockages.

## ***Can I dump FOG into the toilet?***

No. Wastewater from every toilet, shower, kitchen sink, dishwasher, or bathtub is connected to a single sewer pipe from your residence. Therefore, all grease laden wastewater ends up in the same sewer pipe.

## ***If I live in an apartment or condo, do I still need to worry about this?***

Yes. Everyone should dispose of cooking fats, oils, and grease in the proper way rather than pouring them down the drain.

## ***How can residents help?***

Residents are asked to store fats and grease in disposable containers with lids. The containers can then be placed in the garbage. Used cooking oil should be cooled and put into a covered plastic bottle, labeled and also put out for garbage collection. Residents who are disposing of more than one litre of used cooking oil can take it to the Transfer Station at no cost.

**Any questions?  
We are happy to help!**

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