

Authority Times

News and Information for Customers
of the Borough of Conshohocken Authority

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If in Doubt, Toss it Out

Wondering what's safe to flush down the toilet or wash down the drain? Waste-water treatment plants are not designed to handle anything except for human waste and toilet paper.

Many frequently flushed items belong in a trash can, not the toilet.

Disposable wipes

Many wipes claim to be "flushable," but

almost all contain rayon or viscose, which can not be effectively broken down.

While toilet paper will break down in anywhere from one to four minutes, wipes take at least six hours to disintegrate – if at all – according to experts.

In addition, pumps at collection systems that move waste to treatment plants cannot tear wipes apart, causing systems to clog.

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MEETINGS

October 23
November 27
December 25
January 22
February 26
March 26

Meetings are held in
the Authority office:
601 East Elm St.
Conshohocken

Meeting time 6:30 pm

BCA Switches Back to Municipipay for Billing

Please be advised that the Authority changed back to Municipipay for all credit card, debit card, and e-check payments. We remain committed to providing the best service in the most cost-effective manner. Thank you for your patience and understanding in the transition back to Municipipay.

When in Doubt, Just Toss it Out

Dental Floss

Dental floss, which is usually made of nylon or Teflon, should also not be flushed. The tiny string is strong and has been seen to collect other items when flushed down the toilet.



Contact Lenses

Contact lenses do not break down easily when flushed down the toilet or rinsed down the sink, resulting in contacts making their way into surface water and potentially causing environmental damage. Lenses are also immune to the bacteria that break down biological waste at treatment plants.



When researchers submerged contacts in bacteria, they discovered that lenses remained intact a week later. Contact lenses also don't readily float or sink at wastewater treatment plants, which means they are not captured and removed at the plant.

Tampons

The absorbent materials, including the string of tampons, do not break down easily. Tampons cannot be processed by

wastewater treatment centers and can damage septic systems.

Instead of flushing them, tampon manufacturers suggest that women instead place them in a waste receptacle.

Medications

Wastewater treatment plants are not designed to filter out pharmaceuticals. Drugs flushed down the toilet often enter streams, rivers and lakes.

According to the United States Geological Survey, prescription and non-prescription drugs and hormones were discovered in 139 streams across the U.S. during 1999 and 2000. One or more of these chemicals were found in 80 percent of streams tested.



The technology required to remove pharmaceuticals from the water at treatment plants is cost-prohibitive, according to experts. It is more cost effective to use take-back programs that collect unused medications before they enter the water supply.

Condoms

Condoms should never be flushed because they cannot break down and instead have been known to fill with air or gas and float to the top.

Kitty Litter

Kitty litter will not dissolve in water and can create clogs, even if the product is labeled flushable. Even after processing, cat litter remains a sandy, wet mass.



Facial Tissues, Paper Towels & Cotton Swabs

Facial tissues might seem safe to flush because they resemble toilet paper. However, facial tissues have been treated with a chemical binder that takes time to release and break apart when flushed.

Paper towels and cotton swabs are also formulated to stay intact and should never be flushed.

When in doubt, throw it out (in a garbage can)



The simplest rule to follow is: If it is not human waste or toilet paper, it should not be flushed down the toilet.

The cost of both drinking water and wastewater go into a customer's bill. When municipalities, including the Borough of Conshohocken Authority, have to send crews to unclog sewers or, in worst-case scenarios, replace them, the cost trickles down to ratepayers.

Four Tips on How to Avoid Frozen Pipes This Winter



Leaky pipes that go unnoticed can easily become broken pipes, and in freezing temperatures even healthy pipes are vulnerable. Here are ways to prevent pipes from breaking:

- Insulate exposed pipes and faucets outside and around your home, including those in unheated areas like basements, garages, attics or crawl-spaces.
- In severe cold, let cold water drip from faucets served by exposed pipes. Run-

ning a drip of water through the pipes helps prevent pipes from freezing because the temperature of the water is above freezing.

- If a pipe does break on your property, know where your water meter is and how to turn water off immediately to avoid further damage and water waste.
- If you are taking a vacation or will be away for several days, turn off your water at the meter in case damage occurs or ask someone to watch your home in your absence.