

Board of Water Commissioners

David Bogdala, Chairman
Bill Siel, Vice Chairman
Anthony Kennedy
Dave Mau
Jack Rose
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“Providing and Protecting Kenosha’s Greatest Natural Resource...Water”

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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As an owner of a wastewater treatment plant and conveyance system, the Kenosha Water Utility (KWU) was recently included in a class action lawsuit related to the manufacturing, design, marketing and sale of “flushable” wipes by six different manufacturers. The settlement required these manufacturers to implement certain modifications to their business practices with respect to the flushable wipes products they manufacture, market and sell. Inclusion in this settlement provides an excellent opportunity for KWU to educate its customers on best practices to prevent sewer blockages.

Disposable wipes have been causing problems in communities around the country and Kenosha is no different. Wipes (used for changing diapers, personal hygiene, housecleaning, and more) cause major problems when flushed down toilets. Though many of these products are labeled “flushable” or “septic safe,” they are anything but. The same goes for facial tissues, baby wipes, paper towels and other products.

Because they don’t break down the way toilet paper does, disposable wipes clog homeowner and municipal sewer pipes, put stress on community wastewater collection and treatment equipment, and cause cities to spend thousands on premature equipment maintenance, repair and replacement. Wipes snag on any imperfection in sewer pipes, catch passing debris and grease, and create a “ball” that will grow to plug the pipe. They also get drawn into wastewater treatment plant pumps and equipment causing them to become clogged and damaged.

In Kenosha, the increased use of disposable wipes has been causing headaches for KWU employees and increasing costs to our customers. Increased use has resulted in more frequent house lateral and sewer main blockages in the collection system, clogging of pumps and check valves at pumping stations and additional maintenance and premature failure of equipment at our treatment plant.

The Kenosha regional wastewater treatment plant receives an average flow of 22 million gallons per day from a population of approximately 125,000 people. The wastewater is conveyed to the treatment plant through a sanitary sewer collection system comprised of 345 miles of pipes and 13 pumping stations.



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KWU maintains the sanitary sewer collection system and wastewater treatment plant to ensure continued, reliable operation. Despite our dedicated efforts, sewer system backups may occur when items are flushed or disposed down the drain which could block the flow in the sewer pipes.

Three best practices to follow to keep our sewer free flowing are as follows:

- Only Flush the 3 P’s - Pee, Poo and (toilet) Paper
- Toilets and Sinks are not Trash Cans - Do not dispose of wipes, towels, hygiene products or grease in the toilet or sink.
- No Clearwater - Disconnect downspouts, foundation drains and sump pumps from the sanitary sewer.

We all play a part in ensuring unobstructed flow in the sanitary sewer. Not following these best practices can cause costly blockages and equipment failures which could affect each of us or our neighbors.

If you do experience a sanitary sewer emergency please contact the Kenosha Water Utility at (262)653-4300 during normal business hours or (262)653-4335 for after hours emergencies.