



THE FLOW N' GO

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KEEP YOUR TOILET HAPPY—FEED IT ONLY 'DIGESTIBLE' MATERIALS

In the very first issue of *The Flow N' Go* back in July, 2013, we asked readers to 'Help Us to Flush Out Non-Degradable Debris' from our sanitary sewer system.

We implored residents to not flush those so-called "disposable" wipes down the toilet because they don't dissolve and can get caught in and damage the pumping stations' impellers.

Even worse—for *you*—is that these baby wipes, cleaning wipes and other similar products can clog *your* home's service line—for which you are personally responsible. This can result in expensive repairs and possible sewer backups into your residence (also expensive—for *you*).

Apparently the article requesting your cooperation has been flushed from many peoples memory because there has been an upsurge in incidents recently that have caused problems for both the sewer department and for several residents.

It's time for a reminder!

There have been numerous occasions in the past few months when sewer crews have had to manually

remove diapers, dinner napkins, heavy-weight paper towels, dental floss (this really does a job on the impellers!) and, of course, those poorly-named 'disposable wipes' that had wrapped themselves around the impeller's blades. Not only can this damage the pump equipment, it can also prevent the sewerage from being pumped out to the treatment facility.

What happens to materials that don't even make it as far as the pump? It gets stuck in the service line going to your residence.

Nearly a dozen residents have learned their lesson the hard way recently when they discovered first-hand that what couldn't flow out ended up flowing in—as into their home. A costly call to a drain cleaning company would reveal the cause: *their* service line was clogged with 'disposables.'

(Residents are responsible for maintaining the service line from their home to where it meets the town's sewer main, usually in the middle of the street. All costs for cleaning and repairing service lines are borne entirely by the



homeowner.)

For a visual presentation of how toilet paper dissolves and wipes don't, visit www.consumerreports.org and search for "flushable wipes." There you will find a video demonstrating how the toilet paper "melts" into the water and the wipes remain virtually unchanged.

It will also show how to test the dissolvability of your wipes by putting a wipe in your electric mixer with water and giving it a spin.

Remember, even Roloids won't prevent the indigestion caused by feeding your toilet non-disposable disposables. The only way to spell 'relief' for your sewer service line is to dispose of those so-called disposables properly—in the trash.

TIP OF THE QUARTER

Spending Pennies Can Save Hundreds

Fixing leaky faucets and shower heads can save hundreds of gallons of water a week.

The cause of leaky faucets and showerheads can often be attributed to worn-out washers. New washers cost pennies, are easy to install and will save water and money.

What a deal.

CONTACT INFORMATION

781 631-0102
781 631-2694
781 631-2670 (FAX)

**Marblehead.org/
waterandsewer**

Superintendent
Amy McHugh

Assistant Superintendent
Bradley Perron

Office Manager
Paul Jalbert

Office Location
100 Tower Way
Building #11

Mailing Address
P.O. Box 1108
Marblehead, MA 01945

FLOWERS ARE BLOOMING; IRRIGATION LEAKS ARE LOOMING

We did it! We survived the snowiest winter since records have been kept. We have rightfully celebrated this milestone but it's time to move on.

Now, there is a feeling of warmth in the air and soon your annuals will bring a multitude of colors to your landscape where not too long ago piles of white overstayd their welcome.

To keep those flowers blooming thru Fall will require water—and a lot of it. When it comes to a home's

irrigation system, a little maintenance goes a long way.

When maintaining your irrigation system, you should remember four simple steps—*inspect*, *connect*, *direct* and *select*.

Inspect: Check your system for clogged, broken or missing sprinkler heads. Repair or replace any that require attention.



Connect: Examine points where the sprinkler heads connect to pipes or

hoses. If water pools in your landscape or you have large wet areas, you could have a leak in your system.

A leak the size of the tip of a ballpoint pen (1/32nd of an inch) can waste nearly 6,300 gallons of water a month.

Direct: Are you watering

the driveway or sidewalk instead of your lawn and garden? Redirect sprinklers to water only the landscape.

Select: An improperly scheduled irrigation timer can waste water and money. Update your system's watering schedule with the seasons.

By following these four steps each Spring, as well as periodically during Summer and Fall, you can mitigate or avoid costly leaks and conserve our water resources.

(Some material for this article was provided by the EPA Water Sense Program.)

ATTEMPTS TO 'BEAUTIFY' HYDRANTS CAN CREATE A DANGEROUS SITUATION

There they sit, usually on the edge of a sidewalk, waiting. They are squat little fellows, barely four feet in height, with two stubby arms and a four-inch wide mouth protruding from their bodies. They are bright yellow and some are starting to show their age.



To hide them from view some people surround them with bushes or flowers or with anything that will disguise their appearance.

They may not be the most beautiful things on your street but they are certainly one of the most useful when needed.

The "they" that we are referring to are fire hydrants.

Well-meaning residents have attempted to "beautify" their neighborhood by planting flowers and shrubs and erecting small fences around the hydrants. While this may look nice, it presents a major problem.

If the shrub or fence is blocking the hydrant nozzles, firefighters can't connect their hoses. And without hoses, there is no water to put out a fire.

If you have planted shrubs or flowers or put anything else within a three-foot radius of a hydrant, it **must** be removed.

The sight of a squatty hydrant, even one with a little age on it, is better than the site of a burned-out house any day.

PAINTING THE TOWN YELLOW

We realize that some of the fire hydrants around town won't win any beauty contests—that's why some residents try to disguise them with flowers and bushes.

But this can pose a danger if there is something in the way preventing fire fighters from connecting their hoses to the hydrant. (Please see article to the left.)

The water department has implemented an on-going program for repainting hydrants. Of course, things like meter reading, new service installations and water breaks sometimes get in the way and take precedence. Over the past two years, the crew has repainted 225 hydrants.

It may take a few years but eventually every fire hydrant in town will receive a new yellow coat. In the meantime, just consider the aging hydrants as part of Marblehead's unique antiquity—with a little patina.

PLEASE: SKIP THE CLIP

When remitting you water and sewer payment, please do not paper clip your check to the bill. The envelopes are opened with an electric zip-opener and the clip jams the machine and dulls the blade.



The office staff, especially the person who opens the envelopes, thanks you for your cooperation.

(Just thinking: Have you ever wondered how far a paper clip travels in its lifetime? Wouldn't it be fun to attach a GPS tracker to one to trace where it goes?)