



Items that should NEVER be put down the Drain

We rarely think twice about some of the items we put down the drain, we may not realize the gamble we take every time we deposit certain items down the drain. Gamble you ask? Yes the gamble. When we deposit such things as oils, fats & greases, baby wipes/personal wipes and feminine hygiene products just to mention a few, we run the risk of causing possible expensive sewer backups either in our own homes or on the municipal side, in either case these could be prevented by simply not putting these items down the drain. In addition to sewer backups there are other troubles that can come of improper disposal of items down the drain, such as excessive wear on pumps, additional costs in cleaning of reservoirs and lagoons and additional man power to deal with backups/ pump failures. Then there are the environmental effects, because everything we put down our drains here in the Onoway service area ends up at our lagoon which ends up being discharged into the Sturgeon River on an annual basis in accordance with Alberta Environment guidelines. So all the chemicals, detergents, medications, paints and cleaning products that get put down the drain end up back in the environment.

Please help us protect and preserve the environment and our sewer system by not flushing such items as:

- Coffee grounds- these settle out and create a place for other items to catch on and stick to
- Eggshells, cigarette butts, q tips- again create places for other waste to get hung up on
- Grease, fats & oils (from cooking, uncooked poultry fats, gravies, cheese, shortenings, lard, butter, salad dressings and condiments) - can create "fatbergs" build ups of grease that harden like rocks which reduce flow and cause backups. It is said to account for about 45% of sewer backups.
- Flushable cat litter- clogs drains and is harmful to marine species because the parasites in the feces are not destroyed in the treatment process
- Paper towels, baby wipes, personal wipes, cotton balls, dental floss and feminine hygiene products- are all made to be absorbent and strong thus reducing the breakdown of them which can cause costly backups
- Condoms- they are not biodegradable and can clog pipes and pumps, fill lagoon cells and have an adverse effect on the environment if ingested by marine life and birds
- Paint, cleaning products, chemicals, detergents and medications- are all disruptive to ecosystems and can create chemical reactions with piping/pumping equipment causing unnecessary wear and tear that usually ends up being costly.

Please dispose of these and similar items responsibly to help us maintain an effective sewer system.

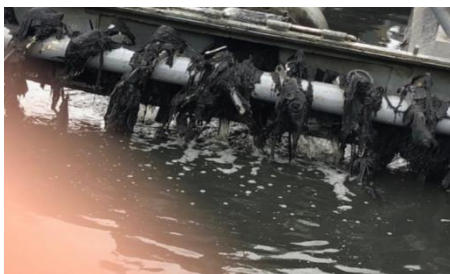
In Onoway like in many other Jurisdictions, the costs associated with the maintenance and repair of the wastewater (sewer) system are calculated in to our utility rate which is then paid by you the users. When the cost of maintenance and repair goes up the utility rate goes up. For example, we plan to desludge our lagoon approximately every five years. Due to high levels of sludge containing items in the above mentioned list our cost for desludging this year has increased, and we will have to modify our desludging program from approximately every five years to approximately every three years to ensure our system is working to treat the effluent as designed. Ensuring that we are operating as designed helps to ensure we are compliant with Federal and Provincial regulators.



Pipe clogged with grease



Pump clogged with wipes and feminine hygiene



Dredge tangled with wipes, etc. during desludging

