



Background on California AB 818

On March 17, 2020, the California Water Boards sent out a notice advising Californians that wet wipes and paper towels can clog sewer systems and shouldn't be flushed. In the public notification, the Board mentions that wastewater treatment facilities around the state were reporting issues with their sewer management collection systems due to wipes being flushed. In order to prevent sewer spills they are urged Californians to not flush disinfectant wipes or paper towels down the toilet. U.S. EPA followed suit, issuing a similar public notification just weeks later.



**If you see this symbol on wipes,
Do Not Flush!**

FAST FACTS

01

Wipes that are not intended by the manufacturer to be flushable, which are mostly made with plastic materials, should be clearly and conspicuously labeled as "Do Not Flush."

02

Consumers frequently use the wastewater system as a means of disposal, flushing wet wipes like diaper wipes, cosmetic wipes, and surface cleaning and disinfectant wipes, even when they are not intended to be flushed.

03

The sale of both flushable and non-flushable wipes and inconsistency in labeling leads to consumer confusion about proper disposal. While consumer behavior cannot be legislated, legislation can require clear labeling to improve consumer understanding of what is flushable and what is not.

04

The Responsible Flushing Alliance is a nonprofit 501(c)(6) organization created as a public education association to inform Californians about the "Do Not Flush" symbol, proper flushing habits, as well as other #FlushSmart tips.

California Consumer Education Mandate

- Comprehensive statewide consumer education and outreach campaign. Materials must be in both English and Spanish



- Multimedia campaign to promote consumer awareness with the DNF symbol



- Participate in a sewage collection study.



- Consumer opinion surveys assessing behaviors and awareness regarding disposal of non-flushable wipes (for 5 years to measure effectiveness)



- Provide wastewater agencies with consumer education messaging for the symbol and label notice



- Report to the Senate Committees on an annual basis on campaign results; Submit written annual report for posting on the state website





KEY TERMS



01

"Covered Entity"

- Manufacturers of non-flushable wipes
- Includes a wholesaler, supplier, or retailer that is responsible for the labeling or packaging



02

"Covered Product"

- Non-Flushable wipes sold in stores or offered for sale online in California
- Wipe types: bathroom/toilet/general purpose cleaning, hard surface cleaning, disinfecting, hand sanitizing, anti bacterial, facial & makeup, personal care (body), feminine/adult hygiene, adult incontinence, and body cleansing wipes.



03

"High Contrast" and "Label Notice"

- "Do Not Flush" phrase must be at least 2% of surface area of display panel
- The DNF symbol must have a 70% contrast w/packaging
- The DNF can be light on a dark background or vice versa



04

"Principal Display Panel"

- Most prominent side of packaging for retail display is where the DNF symbol will be placed.
- For cylindrical packaging, use 40% of the package height multiplied the container circumference to calculate
- For Film packaging, multiply the length by the width of the side of the most prominently displayed



05

"Violations"

- Any manufacturer out of compliance with the law may be liable for civil penalties of \$2,500 per day (maximum), up to \$100,000 for each violation
- A person who violates the labeling law may be enjoined in any court of competent jurisdiction