



Project Instructions

To flush, or not to flush?

Summary

With so many families making sure their homes are germ-free right now, antibacterial wipes are becoming a popular item. It is important to throw these wipes in the trash after use and not to flush them down the toilet.

In fact, the only thing (other than human waste) that should ever be flushed down the toilet is toilet paper. All other paper products, even wipes claiming to be flushable, can clog the sewer pipes and end up costing your city lots of money to unclog and repair. Students can conduct a simple test at home using only water and glass jars to see if flushable wipes live up to their name. Once they learn that flushable wipes, or any wipes, are harmful to the city infrastructure, students can help spread the word to their family and their community.



Conduct a Test

1. Gather materials: Three jars with secure lids, permanent marker, tape, a few squares of toilet paper, one tissue (Kleenex), and an anti-bacterial wipe (or a “flushable” wipe).
2. Print out the data sheet at the end of this document.
3. Place a sample of each type of paper product you wish to test in a jar.
4. Label each jar with the name of the product inside the jar (toilet paper, wipes, etc....)
5. Fill each jar with water and close the lid tightly.
6. Fill out the first two questions on the data sheet.
7. Shake each jar for approximately 20 seconds and then let the jars sit.
8. After 20 minutes, observe each jar and record any differences between the jars on the data sheet.
9. After one hour, observe each jar and record any differences on the activity data sheet.





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Help With Outreach

How can you let other people in your house know not to flush any kind of wipes (or tissues) down the toilet? How can you get the word out In your community?

- Make a PSA
- Create a Tik Tok - Click the link to see a [Sample Tik Tok](#)
- Make posters



Poster Examples

Other Resources About Flushing Wipes

News stories:

[Disinfecting wipes are being flushed down toilets and causing major pipe problems](#)

[Don't flush disinfecting wipes: Even 'flushable' wipes can clog pipes, officials warn](#)



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Activity Data Sheet

Which paper product do you think will dissolve the most in water?

Which one do you think will dissolve the least in water?

Record how well each product dissolved after 20 minutes:

Toilet Paper	Flushable Wipe	Tissue

Record your observations after one day:

Toilet Paper	Flushable Wipe	Tissue

What do you think will happen if non-dissolved paper products from every house on your block clogged the City's sewer pipes?
