

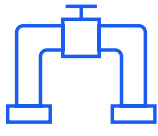
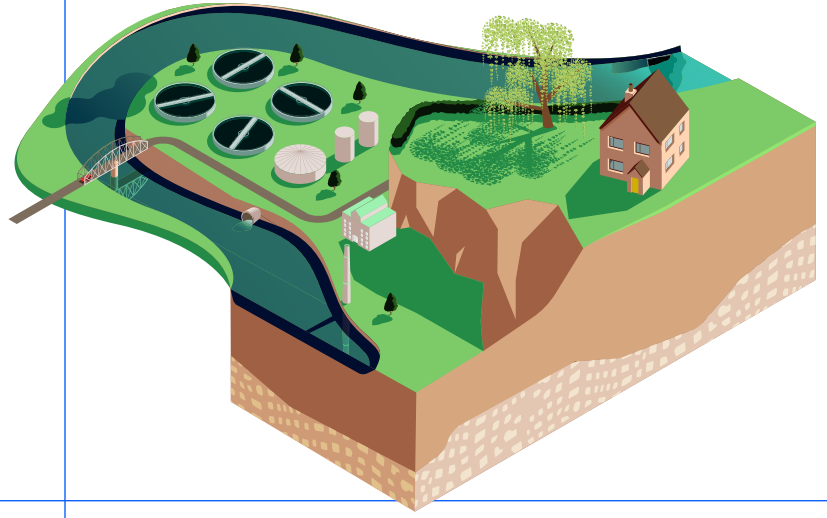
FACTSHEET

CUTTING THROUGH  
CONFUSION ON:

# BLOCKAGES

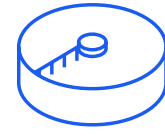
Wet wipes are a leading cause of fatbergs and sewer blockages which have a major impact on the environment and contribute to pollution in our rivers and water courses.

Thousands of properties suffer sewer flooding every year in the UK, creating misery for homeowners and businesses, and leading to costly clean-up bills and increased insurance costs.



## 300,000

amount of sewer blockages every year <sup>(1)</sup>



## £100 M

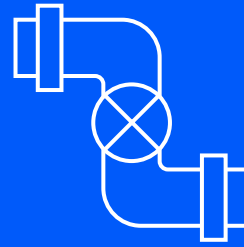
cost to the country to clear sewer blockages <sup>(2)</sup>

## BACKGROUND

### RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

Blockages are most often caused by items such as wet wipes and sanitary products that are flushed down the toilet, or by leftover cooking fats and oils poured down the kitchen sink.

These items stick together and over time they build up and block pipes and drains. Drains and sewers were only ever designed to carry human waste, wastewater and loo roll from toilets and the used water from sinks, baths, and showers.



## 93%

OF SEWER BLOCKAGE MATERIAL IS MADE UP OF WIPES <sup>(3)</sup>

#### MISCONCEPTION

*A lack of maintenance is the cause of blockages.*

#### REALITY

Sewers often block because items are flushed – such as wet wipes – that shouldn't be flushed.

## CHALLENGES

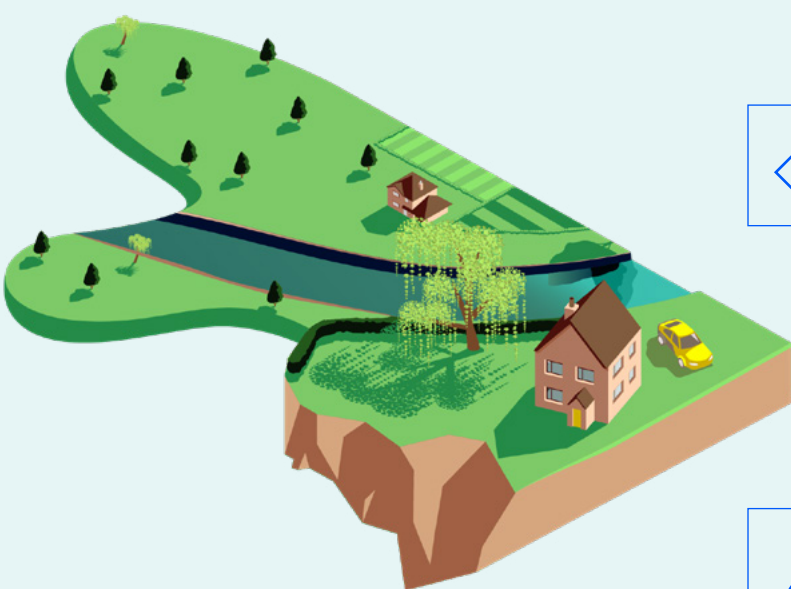
### BREAKING THE HABIT

Many consumers dispose of wipes without being aware of the problems that are caused by flushing them down the toilet. The challenge is to raise awareness of the issue and change ingrained habits.



## SOLUTIONS

### RISING TO THE CHALLENGE



#### EDUCATION

Water companies are improving the information and publicity they offer so more people are aware of what materials should and shouldn't be flushed.



#### LABELLING

The water industry has developed a standard to help consumers identify products that can be safely flushed compared with those that should be disposed of in a bin. Over 100 products now meet the 'Fine to Flush' standard. Only products that carry the 'Fine to Flush' logo can be safely flushed. Other products labelled as 'flushable' do not break down in UK sewer conditions and can contribute to blockages.



#### INDIVIDUAL ACTION

At home, more people are realising that it's their personal responsibility to dispose of unflushables such as wipes and sanitary products in the right way.