

Blocked drains and sewers can cause flooding



This leaflet gives advice on how to help prevent this happening to you



Important information - how you can help prevent blockages in the sewers in your neighbourhood.

Every day, unsuitable items are flushed down toilets and washed down sinks, causing blockages in the sewer system. This may result in flooding to homes and can damage the environment.

Did you know that most blockages are caused by a build up of items that should never have been put down toilets and sinks?

Items such as fat and cooking oil, sanitary products, nappies, cotton buds and wipes must always be disposed of in your rubbish bin.

The sewer system is only designed to take away water used for washing, toilet tissue and human waste.

Did you know

75% of
sewer flooding is
due to blockages
in sewers?





A build up of fat and grease set hard, along with other unsuitable materials, caused a barrier in the sewer network

What causes blockages?

Over half of blockages are caused by fat and cooking oil. In liquid form they are easily poured down the sink, but as this mixture cools it sticks to the side of the pipe and sets hard to form a solid obstruction. Rinsing the fat with hot water or washing up liquid does not stop blockages from occurring.

Fat and cooking oil are not the only causes of blockages. They also happen when items like nappies, sanitary products, cotton buds and wipes are flushed down the toilet. These items do not break down in the sewer in the same way as toilet tissue, and often build up to form a blockage.

Even when the sewer pipe is not totally blocked, its ability to drain away is severely affected. During heavy rain, this often leads to water backing up and forcing its way out of the sewer pipe. Imagine your kitchen or living room knee-deep in sewage!

How do blockages affect you?

Blockages in drains and sewers can cause sewer flooding. Flooding has a devastating impact on home and family life. People often have to move out while the damage is being repaired, and it can take months for life to return to normal.

You may even have to claim on your home insurance to cover damage costs, which could affect your future premium costs.

How do blockages affect the environment?

As well as affecting your home, blockages can also be harmful to the environment. If sewage gets into rivers or streams, it could kill fish and other wildlife.

You can help to keep your home and the environment safe by not disposing of unsuitable materials down your toilet or sink.

Please see overleaf for more details on how to safely dispose of household items.

Wastewater escaping from manhole



What can you do to help?

We all have a responsibility to help protect our homes and environment from flooding and pollution.

To help reduce the risk of flooding to your home and your neighbours' only dispose of toilet tissue and human waste down your toilet.

It's easy to help prevent fat, oil and grease blockages. When you've finished cooking, just pour the hot liquid into a container and allow it to set, then dispose of it in your rubbish bin.



Alternatively, in the winter, mix the liquid fat with seeds, leave to cool & hang in your garden to provide a nutritious meal for local birds.

Visit our website for further details.

Getting in touch with us

Online www.thameswater.co.uk

By telephone

0845 9200 800

Minicom service if you are deaf or hard of hearing:
0845 7200 898

By post

Thames Water PO Box 286 Swindon SN38 2RA

You can help by not flushing or pouring away the following*:

Wrap well and dispose in your bin!

Nappies

Incontinence products

Condoms

Razor Blades

Tights

Plasters & Bandages

Wipes

Sanitary items

Cotton buds/wool

Dental floss

Food waste

Cigarette butts

Animal faeces

Colostomy bags

Fat and oil (once hardened)



Contact your local GP, hospital or health authority for safe disposal

Tablets/Medicines

Syringes/Needles



Contact your Local Authority for safe disposal

Solvents

Paint

Chemicals

Engine Oil



* This list is not exhaustive.