



Municipality of the County of Kings

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Land of Orchards, Vineyards and Tides

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NSFM
FCM

Good day.

Today, we write seeking your assistance as our representative organizations and out of concern about a matter that is needlessly costing individual municipalities millions of dollars. When one accumulates that amount over the multitude of municipalities in Nova Scotia and Canada generally, the sums are astronomical. These are costs that are unnecessary and impair our ability to initiate and fund progressive asset development.

“Flushable wipes” infiltrate, clog and disable wastewater systems. They are not, in fact, ‘flushable’. One can argue semantics, but the term implies to the public that it is OK to flush wipes down into our sewer systems without harm to the system itself, because they are designed to biodegrade. They never degrade in sufficient time to avoid entanglement in the mechanical parts of our systems, resulting in system failures, lagoons turning septic, odours driving residents (and operators) to distraction, hundreds of thousands of dollars in repairs and resets and millions in equipment replacement upgrades.

The issue is not ‘sexy’, but it is national in scope.

All of us in the wastewater sector understand the harmful impact that so-called flushable products have on our municipal wastewater systems. From additional maintenance, to equipment damage, to clogs and system failures to contamination of sludge, this issue is costing Canadian municipalities over \$250 million each year.

Canadian Water and Wastewater Association

Public education does not work. The marketers’ messages conflict with that of the municipalities.

We must find a solution. This is an example of false labelling and/or false advertising for which the manufacturers should be held to account. Surely, if we can have a successful Extended Producer Responsibility program for plastics and packaging, we can find a solution to this issue as well.

Letters to governments for appropriate legislation – or the adequate enforcement of existing labelling and truth in advertising legislation - is in order. If that avenue does not provide a remedy, perhaps legal action may be the alternative.

We are attaching materials that illustrate the realities of the issue and attach a link that may help to inform.

At the end of the day, we need solutions and – the problem being common to all of us – we look to the FCM and our provincial body to become advocates/initiators of that solution.

Yours truly,

Peter Muttart

Peter Muttart
Mayor
RPM/slf

<https://www.nacwa.org/news-publications/news-detail/2019/12/02/are-flushable-wipes-really-flushable>

<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/wipes>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/flushable-wipes-ryerson-report-1.5083455>

https://cwwa.ca/advocacy/?et_fb=1&PageSpeed=off#flushable

<https://www.eenews.net/stories/1063736383>