UK study on wipes in sewer blockages released

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Further consumer information on disposal of non-uushable material advised



Far greater consumer awareness on what can and cannot be µushed is required, according to a Water UK report released today that explores the impact of wipes and personal care items on UK sewer systems.

The analysis of over 50 sewer blockages conλrmed that the "majority of the sewer blockage material recovered comprised of non-θushable wipes that are not designed to be θushed." Baby wipes (that are never marketed as μushable) were the biggest non-μushable culprit, accounting for 78% (by weight) of identiλable products. Surface wipes, cosmetic wipes and feminine hygiene products (none of which are designed to be μushed) accounted for approximately 20%. Less than 1% was identiλed as products designed to be μushed.

The study, the biggest in-depth study of sewer blockages in the UK, was conducted throughout the summer of 2017 by Water UK, a membership organisation representing the major water and wastewater services, with further support and funding from the UK Government Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and EDANA, a trade association representing the wet-wipes, absorbent hygiene and nonwoven industries.

The report recommended a renewed and concerted effort to raise awareness among consumers on the correct disposal of wipes. EDANA has long promoted the use of a distinct