



## WASTEWATER DIVISION

### PSA From the Middlesex County Utilities Authority Wipes Clog Pipes!

Many do not think what happens after they flush the toilet. Wipes labeled flushable are used for numerous purposes such as changing diapers, personal hygiene, house cleaning and especially disinfecting during the COVID-19 pandemic, however these wipes cause major problems to wastewater treatment facilities, particularly to the Middlesex County Utilities Authority located in Sayreville, NJ.

Wipes do not break down in the wastewater collection system, as toilet paper does, leading to clogged wastewater pipes and equipment. Contrary to flushable labels on packaging, wipes are not dispersible within the collection system and associated appurtenances. According to the National Association of Clean Water Agencies, flushable wipes cost United States utilities up to \$1 billion annually. Wastewater treatment plants suffer when blockages occur and eventually cost utilities major operation and maintenance expenses.

Recently, Charleston Water System filed a federal lawsuit against Kimberly-Clark, Costco, CVS, Proctor & Gamble, Target, Walgreens, and Walmart preventing these companies from continuing to manufacture, market, or sell flushable wipes that are not in-fact flushable. Charleston Water System and other wastewater utility agencies are calling on manufacturers to produce personal care wipes that meet or exceed the International Water Services Flushability Group (IWSFG) standards. The IWSFG is an international coalition of national and regional wastewater professionals who developed specifications for items that can be flushed down the toilet. Based on IWSFG's criteria, in order for wipes to be flushable, wipes must break into small pieces quickly, must not be buoyant, and does not contain plastic. As part of the settlement starting May 2022, the maker of Cottonelle flushable wipes, Kimberly-Clark must meet the current International Water Services Flushability Group (IWSEG) Pub-



**Before  
Butterfly  
valve  
clogged**

**After  
Butterfly  
valve  
cleaned**

licly Available Specifications (PAS) 3 Standard. In addition, Kimberly-Clark will be subject to independent testing, educational content, label changes, and product endorsement. Michael Saia, public information administrator with the Charleston Water System commented on the settlement stating, "wastewater professionals nationally have been fighting wipes manufacturers and retailers since day one without success. This settlement sets a critical benchmark for flushable wipe dissolvability and product labeling standards."

Our message is clear, only the 3 P's should go down the toilet... pee, poop, and (toilet) paper. Users of flushable wipes share the responsibility of making the right choice of what to put in their toilet. Other products like paper towels, baby wipes, facial tissues, and disposable wipes (even if labeled flushable) are made with stronger fibers that can include plastics, nylon, and other materials that resist breaking down. These products must be disposed of in the trash.

On behalf of the Middlesex County Utilities Authority which provides wastewater services to more than 880,000 residents in Middlesex County and portions of Union and Somerset Counties, we are asking for the public's cooperation to avoid flushing any paper products except for toilet paper. Wipes clog pipes and toilets are not trashcans.

#### Wastewater Division

#### August 2021 Statistics

- Average Influent flow – 101.75 mgd
- Average Effluent TSS – 11 mg/l
- Average Effluent BOD – 9 mg/l
- Biosolids production – During July, MCUA produced 11,543 wet tons of filter cake, all of which was processed through the dryers resulting in 5,221 wet tons of class A product.

*\*Rainfall for the month was 7.42 inches as measured at the Treatment Plant.*

## Swift Response from CTP Employees: Hurricane Ida Cleanup Efforts Ongoing

The MCUA Central Treatment Plant (CTP) processed record flows as a result of Hurricane Ida which were in excess of 400mgd. Portions of MCUA's Green Brook Pump Station, which is only operated during high flow events, was impacted. Service is partially restored to the pumping station via two temporary bypass pumps. Emergency restoration efforts are still ongoing with major equipment items being removed for repairs. The MCUA greatly appreciates the immeasurable swift response by all CTP employees concerning Hurricane Ida cleanup efforts. We cannot thank them enough for their great diligence, expertise, and dedication.

## SOLID WASTE DIVISION

### MCUA Renews Customer Agreements for Landfill

#### Five Year Plan Provides Stability

With the MCUA's current Solid Waste Disposal Agreements expiring at the end of 2021, the Solid Waste Division has begun the process of renewing disposal agreements with Middlesex County Landfill customers. The new contracts, which are five years in length, will offer two annual tip fees based on the amount of waste customers agree to bring to the Landfill. Both of these new rate levels will be lower than the 2022 Gate Rate.

The first-rate level (Tier One) is for haulers and municipalities that commit to bringing all of their Middlesex County-generated waste to the Landfill. It guarantees a per-ton tip fee of \$70.00 in 2022, \$71.25 in 2023, \$72.50 in 2024, \$73.75 per ton in 2025 and \$75.00 in 2026. The second-rate level (Tier Two) is for customers that commit to a specific annual amount of waste which may not be all of their Middlesex County-generated waste. The Tier 2 rate per ton is \$73.00 for 2022, \$74.25 for 2023, \$75.50 for 2024, \$76.75 for 2025 and \$78.00 for 2026.

Approximately 37% of the Solid Waste Division budget goes to pay state taxes, host community benefits and to support the Middlesex County Health Department and County recycling programs.

The new Agreements are effective January 1, 2022, through December 31, 2026. With these five-year contracts, the MCUA will be better able to predict waste levels, guarantee revenues to cover expenditures and make informed budgetary decisions. Likewise, this program allows for private and government customers to make more informed budget and planning decisions for future years.

### Landfill Extends Operating Hours to Assist With Hurricane Ida Cleanup

The Landfill staff worked extended hours for 17 days during the month of September to process the extra waste generated from the cleanup activities of its municipal and private customers due to the damage from Hurricane Ida. The number of daily trucks at the Landfill was up 60% over the average amount or 400 trucks per day. Increased traffic and long hours made waste disposal very challenging. In addition, like the rest of Middlesex County, the staff had to keep the facility in operating condition through 13 inches of rain during the past 25 days. The dedication of the Landfill staff is greatly appreciated and we wish the best to those residents who lost so much from this storm.



#### Solid Waste Division

#### August 2021 Tonnage Figures

	Monthly Tons	Cumulative Tons
2021	53,046	349,111
2020	49,207	348,969

An average of 253 trucks hauled an average of 2,040 tons of waste to the Landfill facility each day.