

# Even if it says 'flushable,' **DON'T FLUSH IT!**

By Stephen Nelson

It seems these days there are wipes for every purpose. There are disinfecting wipes. Baby wipes, kitty wipes, doggy wipes, personal care wipes, furniture polish wipes, janitorial wipes, action wipes, facial cleanser wipes, tooth cleaning wipes, even wipes with sunscreen and bug spray.

Part of their appeal is the disposable nature of the wipes - flush that wipe and down it goes. But it never really goes away. Flushable wipes do not break down in a sewer pipe or septic system. For instance, London sewer workers found a 15-ton mass of wipes and grease that had congealed in the London sewer system! They called it a "fatberg" and it clogged pipes and pumps and caused serious sewage backups.

Imagine, if you will, the trouble you could have in a septic system. Flushable wipes are not biodegradable, and even a mini-fatberg can cause clogged drains and toilets. If your home has a septic system, you should be wary of flushing wipes or anything else that claims to be "septic safe."

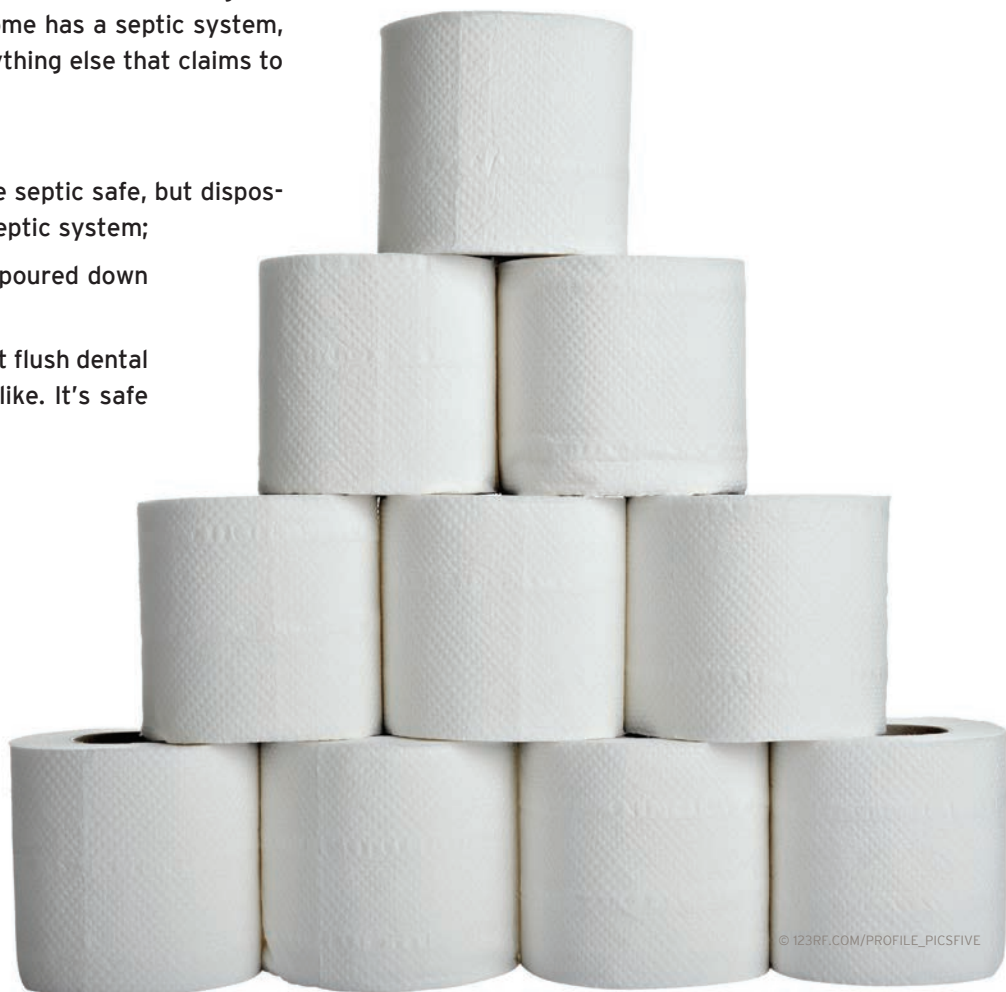
A few more points to consider:

- ▶ Garbage disposals often are claimed to be septic safe, but disposals place an extreme solids overload on a septic system;
- ▶ Cooking oils and grease should never be poured down the drain;
- ▶ The toilet is not a trash receptacle - do not flush dental floss, wrappers, hygiene products and the like. It's safe to flush no. 1 and no. 2 and toilet paper - that's all.
- ▶ If you read the label and can't pronounce the ingredients, don't flush it into your septic tank.

Simple regular maintenance and proper disposal practices will ensure a long life for your septic system. **\$**

## How to care for your septic system:

- Divert rainwater from the septic drainfield
- Don't overload the septic tank and drainfield
- Keep trees away from the septic system
- The toilet isn't a garbage disposal
- Use garbage disposals wisely
- Minimize heavy duty cleaners
- Do not pour grease down the drain
- Avoid hazardous chemicals
- Protect the system from damage
- Perform regular maintenance



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