

**Clean Coasts and Irish Water select Waterford City and Tramore
as 'Think Before You Flush' communities
as Irish Water reveals 4,600 sewer blockages across the country this year**

October 18th, 2018 - **Waterford City and Tramore** have been chosen along with 13 other cities and towns as a Think Before You Flush Community. Clean Coasts together with Irish Water are launching the third year of the Think Before You Flush campaign as the utility reveals that there has been an estimated 4,600 sewer blockages this year due to inappropriate items being flushed down toilets.

When the 3 Ps (pee, poo and paper) are flushed down the toilet they travel along the sewer network to wastewater treatment plants. However, every day people flush thousands of items such as wet wipes, cotton bud sticks, nappies and cotton wool pads down the toilet instead of putting them in a bin. Flushing these items can have a negative impact on internal plumbing in homes and businesses, the wastewater network and our marine environment.

Think Before You Flush Communities

Waterford City and Tramore have been selected to become Think Before You Flush Communities. Clean Coasts together with Irish Water will be delivering educational workshops in schools, promoting the campaign at festivals and community events and working with businesses to help raise awareness and provide advice.

The 13 other Think Before You Flush Communities are; Blackrock, Co. Louth, Navan, Co. Meath, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Tullamore, Co. Offaly, Cork City, Dunmanway, Co. Cork, Bantry, Co. Cork, Dublin City, Galway city, Ahascraugh, Co. Galway, Srandhill, Co. Sligo, Bellmullet, Co. Mayo, and Bundoran, Co. Donegal.

Speaking about the campaign, Niall O'Riordan, Irish Water said, *"Irish Water is delighted to partner with Clean Coasts on this important educational campaign. We estimate that there have been over 4,600 sewer blockages this year already nationwide. Illegal disposal of material down the sewers is also a major concern for us. For example in Waterford City and Tramore there are a number of large sewage pumping stations. It is noticeable that there has been an increase in the number of pump failures and sewer blockages in both Waterford City and Tramore. On investigation, it was found there was a large volume of non-biodegradable material being flushed into the public sewers, for example wet wipes, baby wipes, sanitary products, etc.*

When blockages happen, the contents of our sewer network can end up in rivers and on beaches. This causes pollution that kills fish and other wildlife. Within the pumping stations the wipes and sanitary products causes motors to burn out, leading to costly repairs."

He added: *"through education and awareness we can change people's flushing behaviour so that together we can protect the environment and our wastewater infrastructure. It is very important that we do not flush baby wipes, wet wipes and sanitary products down our toilets."*

Speaking about the campaign; Sinead Mc Coy, Clean Coasts Manager added, “Sewage related litter is one of the categories of waste we find on our beaches. However its presence is preventable through some simple measures. Through this campaign we are working with Irish Water to change the nation’s flushing behaviour which will make a difference to our coastal environment.”

For more information about ‘Think Before You Flush’ please visit www.thinkbeforyouflush.org

Ends

For media queries

Irish Water please contact press@water.ie 0871458896

Clean Coasts please contact 01 4002200

There are a number of educational animations relating to the Think Before You Flush campaign available on the Clean Coasts YouTube channel

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=8uzdo-8foRs>

https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=ZawTJ_zdj_Q

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=SuNIFGJAhcl#>