

Charleston Water System and Kimberly-Clark Reach First Ever Agreement for Cottonelle® Flushable Wipes to Meet National Municipal Flushability Standard and Industry-Leading Labeling for Flushable and Non-Flushable Wipes

In a legally binding agreement with NACWA member Charleston Water System, and building on groundbreaking technical work by NACWA and others who developed an international municipal wastewater industry wipe flushability standard, Kimberly-Clark Corporation (KC) has made the following unprecedented and industry-leading commitments regarding its Cottonelle Flushable Wipes as well as its non-flushable wipe products:

Commitments

Enhanced Cottonelle Flushable Wipe Performance. KC will implement manufacturing improvements to ensure that by May 1, 2022, its Cottonelle Flushable Wipes will meet the municipal wastewater industry's current wipe flushability performance standard.

The resulting Cottonelle Flushable Wipe will strike an optimal balance between having the strength and comfort to perform for consumers while dissolving safely upon disposal within plumbing/sewer systems. Every wipe manufacturer should embrace – and expedite achieving - similar product performance.

Confirmation Performance Testing. KC has agreed to two years of confirmatory testing to verify that its Cottonelle Flushable Wipes will continue to meet the municipal flushability performance standard after May 1, 2022.

Product Labeling Improvements. Equally important to the enhanced performance of its Cottonelle Flushable Wipes is KC's commitment to revise the packaging of all its wipe products to allow consumers to distinguish between Cottonelle Flushable Wipes and the rest of KC's wipes line up more easily – which are not flushable.

This enhanced product labeling approach is expected to become the industry standard beginning in 2022. These labeling improvements are crucial for the public to better understand which wipes are flushable in contrast to those that must only be disposed of in a waste receptacle.

Cooperative Public Outreach About Flushable and Non-Flushable Wipes. Finally, beyond product labeling enhancements, KC has committed to working with CWS and the national municipal wastewater industry to conduct outreach to help educate consumers about which wipes are truly flushable and the serious consequences when non-flushable wipes are disposed of down the toilet.

Current Status

A [settlement agreement](#) embodying these commitments has been filed with the Federal District Court for the District of South Carolina (Charleston). Soon notice will be provided to public sewer systems nationwide about their opportunity to support or object to the settlement before the Court gives it final approval.

Kimberly-Clark should be commended for making these unprecedented and important commitments to further improve its Cottonelle Flushable Wipes, educate consumers, and protect residential and municipal sewer systems. All wipes manufacturers who label their products as being “flushable” should follow Kimberly-Clark's lead for the good of their customers and the public sewer systems serving them. The national municipal wastewater community should support this groundbreaking agreement and lend a hand with the critical public outreach that will follow its approval by the Court.