



# SEWERS, BLOCKAGES AND FLOODING!

Every year in the North West, there are 28,000 avoidable sewer blockages. This is mainly due to incorrect flushing of unsuitable objects such as, wet wipes, and the disposal of oils and fats down the kitchen sink. The build up of these items results in a rock-hard, growing blockage, sometimes known as a 'fatberg', that will eventually fully restrict the flow of sewage water through the pipes and could lead to flooding.

The following items are examples of items that should not be disposed of down the sink or toilet, but are often found in sewers:

- Cooking oil
- Margarine, butter or lard
- Cooking sauces
- Food
- Wet wipes
- Sanitary products
- Nappies
- Cotton buds
- Bandages and plasters



Image: "A dried section of a "fatberg"" by Lord Belbury, is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0

## HOW YOU CAN HELP REDUCE SEWER BLOCKAGES AND FLOODING

The 3 P's are the only things that should go down the toilet...paper, pee and poo!

- Place a bin in your bathroom for items such as wet wipes, cotton buds and sanitary products, etc.
- Collect leftover cooking fats and oils in a heat resistant 'fat trap' and dispose with your household waste.
- Before washing up, wipe grease and leftovers from pans and crumbs on plates with kitchen roll and dispose of in the bin.
- Use a sink strainer to capture food scraps and dispose with your household waste.
- Wrap coffee grounds in newspaper and place them in the bin.

## FLOODING FROM DRAINS - RESPONSIBILITIES AS A PROPERTY OWNER

Property owners are responsible for the maintenance and repair of 'private drains' (those that take waste water away from only their property), up to the point where it connects to a public sewer or a pipe from another property. If a blockage occurs in a private drain, the property owner is responsible for it.

Water companies are responsible for maintenance and repairs of public sewers, and drains that lie outside the boundary of a property and connect to public sewers. If a blockage or flooding happens in these drains, report it to your water company as they are responsible.

Did you know that more than 3000 homes are flooded in the UK every year because of fats, oils and greases (FOGs) and fatbergs?