

# Metropolitan Wastewater MANAGEMENT COMMISSION



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## We Clean Water

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### MWMC Commission

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Peter Ruffier  
Eugene Citizen

### Administration

Matt Stouder  
MWMC Executive Officer  
City of Springfield  
225 Fifth Street  
Springfield, Oregon 97477  
(541) 726-3694  
FAX (541) 726-2309

### Operations

Dave Breitenstein  
Wastewater Director  
City of Eugene  
410 River Avenue  
Eugene, Oregon 97404  
(541) 682-8600  
FAX (541) 682-8601

May 11, 2021

Senator Lee Beyer, Chair  
Senate Energy & Environment Committee  
900 Court St. NE, HR B  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 2344-A Relating to labelling requirements for wipes

Dear Senator Beyer and Members of the Committee,

The Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission (MWMC) strongly supports and urges you to vote yes on HB 2344-A. The MWMC is the regional wastewater service provider to approximately 250,000 community members in Eugene, Springfield and portions of Lane County.

We urge you to support HB 2344-A because wastewater system clogs and damaged equipment throughout the U.S. have surged due to ever-increasing quantities of inappropriate materials, including wet wipes, being flushed in household and public toilets. While wastewater networks can convey solids such as human waste and small food scraps, the removal of wipes is uniquely challenging because they combine into "rag mats" and "ropes" and are impossible to untangle. Accumulation of these materials can cause sanitary sewer overflows, creating a public health hazard. Wastewater operators must use cutting tools and other heavy industrial tools to manually remove blockages and clogs from pumps, screens and other equipment. These efforts increase hazardous conditions for workers and add labor and equipment costs to municipalities.

HB 2344-A would require manufacturers or retailers to place "Do Not Flush" labels and warning statements in visible locations on packages containing most types of wet wipes. This will effectively inform consumers of appropriate disposal of wet wipes after use. HB 2344-A is consistent with the INDA/EDANA Code of Practice 2nd edition (published 2018), which was agreed upon by both product manufacturers and wastewater services sector trade organizations.

Wastewater agencies across the state have worked hard to educate the public about the problems created when disposable wipes are flushed. COVID-19 has increased the use and disposal of wipes, which has made the situation worse. Local governments have invested significant resources to change the public's behaviors, encouraging people to dispose of wipes in the trash. Billing inserts, social media

posts, radio and television outreach are all elements of a major outreach effort undertaken over the past year. Unfortunately, these efforts have not been successful in noticeably reducing volumes of flushed wipes in the wastewater system. Clear information on wipes packaging informing consumers to "Do Not Flush" is needed now.

The MWMC urges you to support HB 2344-A. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Stouder". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Matt" and last name "Stouder" clearly distinguishable.

Matt Stouder, PE  
MWMC Executive Officer