

MEDIA RELEASE

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Criteria and clearer labelling part of new Standard to help with fatberg mess

WSAA welcomes the release of the final standard, *DR AS/NZS 5328:2022 Flushable Products*, by Standards Australia.

'It is exciting to see the release of this Australian and New Zealand Standard which has been many years in the making. One of the first of its kind internationally, it is the result of ground-breaking collaboration between manufacturers, water utilities, peak bodies and consumer groups', said Mr Adam Lovell, Executive Director WSAA.

'We know others internationally have been watching the development of this Standard. There is already interest in adopting the Standard, with Israel advising it intends to adopt the Standard with no changes.

'While the Standard is voluntary, it provides manufacturers with clear pass/fail criteria for products suitable for toilet flushing. Importantly it includes requirements for clearer labelling so customers know for certain whether a product is safe for flushing', said Mr Lovell.

'The message from the water industry has always been - only flush the 3P's. Now we can also check for the flushable symbol. If there is no flushable symbol on the packet then don't flush it, bin it!

'Wipes and other items that shouldn't be flushed are an issue for water utilities around the globe, disrupting customer services, creating extra costs for utilities and customers, and impacting the environment through overflows. In Australia and New Zealand it costs water utilities tens of millions of dollars each year', said Mr Lovell.

WSAA and the urban water industry in Australia and New Zealand have been concerned about the contribution of wet wipes products to pipe blockages for some time. The issue became even more serious during the COVID-19 pandemic, with our members reporting increases in blockages with people flushing materials never intended to go down the toilet like paper towel.

Manufacturers are expected to start using the flushable symbol in the coming months for products that pass the testing criteria, including six tests and an attestation that there is no plastic in the product. WSAA and our members will continue to monitor the impact of items that shouldn't be flushed on wastewater systems and engage with customers and stakeholders to increase awareness.

Media inquiries

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WATER SERVICES
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

WSAA is the peak body representing the urban water industry in Australia. Its members provide water and wastewater services to over 24 million customers in Australia and New Zealand, including many of Australia's largest industrial and commercial enterprises.

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