

## **Wastewater Infrastructure Pollution Prevention and Environmental Safety Act (WIPPES)**

Senator Jeff Merkley and Senator Susan M. Collins

The WIPPES Act addresses the pervasive, but ultimately preventable problem of the flushing of non-flushable wet wipes. Many of these products are composed of manufactured plastic fibers or other strong fibers, and while these products are not marketed as flushable, consumers frequently flush them into sewer systems as a means of disposal. **These types of wipes do not break down as they travel through the sewer systems. Instead, the wipes become magnets attracting fats, oils, and grease and become obstructions in sewerage systems pipes that clog pumps, block sewer collection systems, and jam motors that lead to sewage backups and treatment equipment failures.**

The WIPPES Act:

- Directs the Federal Trade Commission, in consultation with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to issue regulations on “Do Not Flush” labeling requirements for the covered products defined in the bill, which includes baby wipes, household wipes, disinfecting wipes or personal care wipes.
- Authorizes a grant program at EPA (\$5 M annually) to support and expand education and outreach activities by states, local governments and non-profit organizations to ratepayers. These grants will increase awareness of the label and proper disposal methods for these wipes.

The WIPPES Act is supported by:

- Association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Industry (INDA)
- California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA)
- City of John Day, Oregon
- Clackamas Water Environment Services (Oregon)
- Kimberly-Clark
- Maine Rural Water Association
- Maine Water Environment Association
- Maine Water Utilities Association
- National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA)
- National Stewardship Action Council
- Oak Lodge Water Services District (Oak Grove, Oregon)
- Oregon Association of Clean Water Agencies
- Portland Water District (Maine)
- Procter & Gamble
- Water Environment Federation (WEF)