

## **CRRUA Customer Message**

**Date: 06-26-2024**

### **Protect Your Pipes: Don't Flush Wipes**

[“Please, don't flush wipes.”](#) That's an appeal to customers from Juan Crosby, executive director of the Camino Real Regional Utility Authority that operates the wastewater system for Sunland Park and Santa Teresa, NM.

“I strongly encourage CRRUA customers not to flush anything down the toilet except toilet paper. That includes disposable wipes.”

Crosby said flushing wipes, even if the product label says it's ok, can cause clogged pipes, costly damage to the wastewater treatment system, and could result in homeowners having to pay a plumber to clear blocked pipes.

“Taking care of the CRRUA utility system is a responsibility we all share,” Crosby said. “And it's simple to do. Just avoid flushing anything that isn't toilet paper. By helping the utility system run smoothly, customers can prevent expensive repairs that could cost them more through higher rates.”

Eric Lopez, New Mexico certified Level 4 Water/Wastewater Operator for CRRUA said while convenient, wipes are made of woven fibers that do not break down in water the same way toilet paper does. “Once they enter the sewer lines, wipes can accumulate and cause backups and spills, and can greatly reduce the treatment system's effectiveness,” Lopez said.

Lopez and Crosby advise customers to only use toilet paper in the toilet. They said for all other materials, including hygiene and diaper wipes, disinfecting wipes and paper towels, sanitary products, syringes and fats, oils, and grease, put them in a plastic bag and dispose of them in the trash bin.

CRRUA serves a population of 21,752 in 36 square miles. It operates three wastewater treatment plants and 37 lift stations that pump into the three plants.