



# What the Flush?

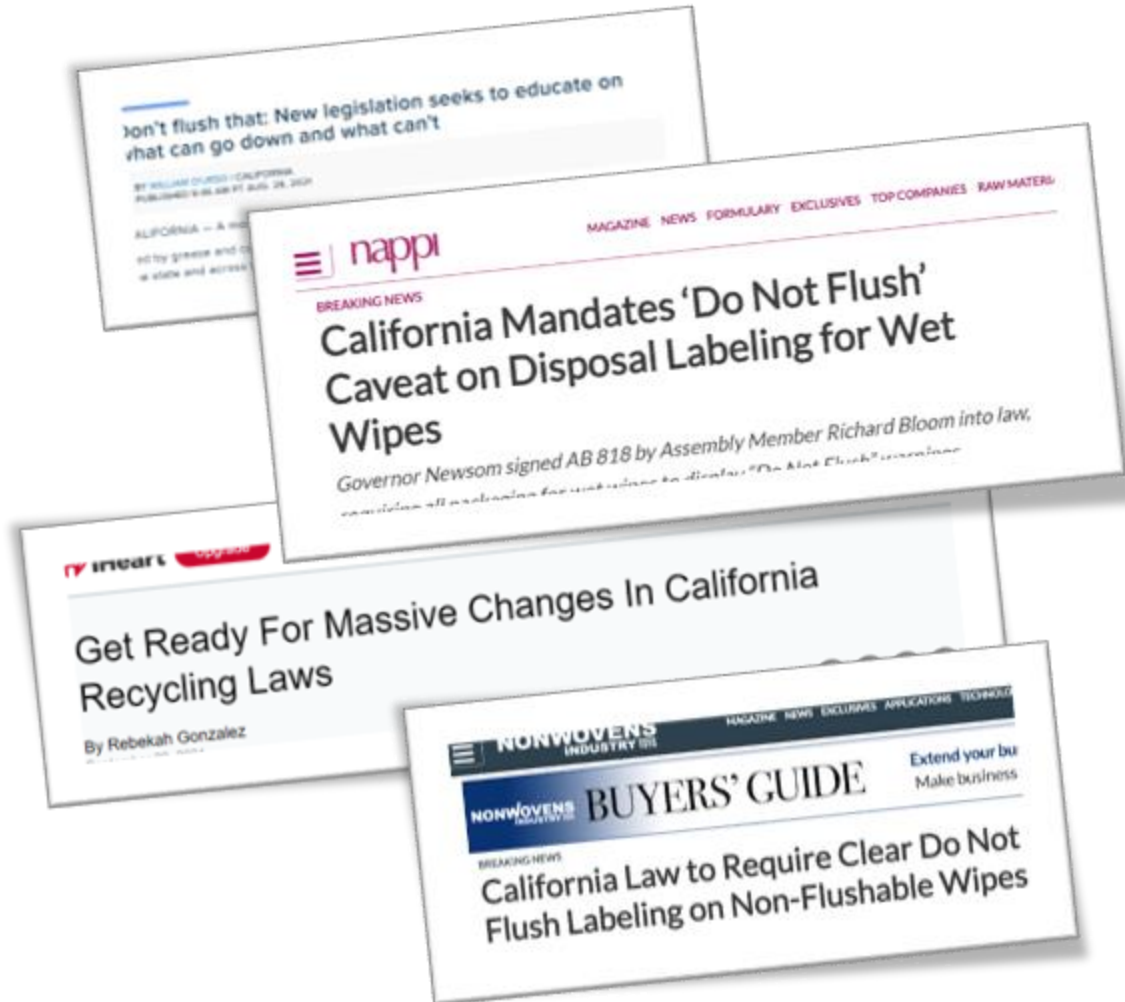
A look at what Californians are flushing & the campaign to change consumer behaviors

# Responsible Flushing Alliance

A coalition of wipes manufacturers, wastewater agencies, and other nonprofits dedicated to educating consumers about proper flushing habits.

LEADERSHIP MEMBERS		INFLUENCER MEMBERS	ASSOCIATE MEMBERS		ADVISORY MEMBERS
Clorox	Nice-Pak and PDI	3M	biom	The Hygiene Co.	California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA)
DUDE Products, Inc.	Procter & Gamble	ANDRITZ	Crocodile Cloth	Spartan Chemical	The Center for Baby & Adult Hygiene Products (BAHP)
Essity	Reckitt	Eleeo Brands	Duka!, LLC.	Papel Arlar	Cotton Inc.
GOJO	Rockline Industries	Sellars Absorbent Materials	Ecolabs	Kelheim Fibres	H2O Global News
Guy & O'Neill	Unilever	Suominen Corp.	First Quality	Nehemiah	National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA)
Kenvue	WaterWipes		Goodwipes		National Stewardship Action Council (NSAC)
Kimberly-Clark					The Toilet Board Coalition

## #FlushSmart Consumer Education Campaign



- Generating awareness for the “Do Not Flush” symbol
- #FlushSmart campaign:
  - Free educational materials
  - Social media engagement
  - Earned media coverage
  - Active engagement with wastewater agencies



# WET WIPES LABELING LAWS

## PROPER LABELING REQUIREMENTS









*States requiring the “DO NOT FLUSH” symbol include: California, Washington, Oregon, Illinois, and Colorado*

## CONSUMER EDUCATION IN CALIFORNIA



*Manufacturers must conduct a comprehensive statewide consumer education and outreach campaign to inform the public about the meaning of the label and to instruct consumers not to flush non-flushable products.*

### California Consumer Education Mandate

- Comprehensive statewide consumer education and outreach campaign. Materials must be in both English and Spanish 
- Multimedia campaign to promote consumer awareness with the DNF symbol 
- Participate in a sewage collection study. 
- Consumer opinion surveys assessing behaviors and awareness regarding disposal of non-flushable wipes (for 5 years to measure effectiveness) 
- Provide wastewater agencies with consumer education messaging for the symbol and label notice 
- Report to the Senate & Assembly Committees on an annual basis on campaign results; Submit written annual report for posting on the State Water Board website 



# What is the California Consumer Education Requirement?

## 1. Statewide consumer education/outreach campaign in English & Spanish

- Educational materials/activities for Pre-K to 8<sup>th</sup> Grade
- Free and downloadable from FlushSmart.org

## 2. Multimedia campaign to promote the “Do Not Flush” symbol

- Paid digital advertising on Facebook, Instagram & TikTok
- Print ads in national magazines

## 3. Participate in a sewage collection study

- RFA with CASA and INDA
- RFA collected video, photos, and on-site interviews for consumer education

## 4. Consumer opinion surveys annually

- First conducted in 11/21; second 11/22; third 11/23; Nat'l survey 2024

## 5. Provide wastewater agencies w/messaging on the “Do Not Flush” symbol

- Speaking engagements at NACWA, CASA & other wastewater conferences
- Toolkits and newsletters for wastewater agencies

## 6. Report to Senate Committees + annual report for State Water

**Board website** [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/sso/docs/responsible-flushing-alliance-2022-annual-report.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/sso/docs/responsible-flushing-alliance-2022-annual-report.pdf)



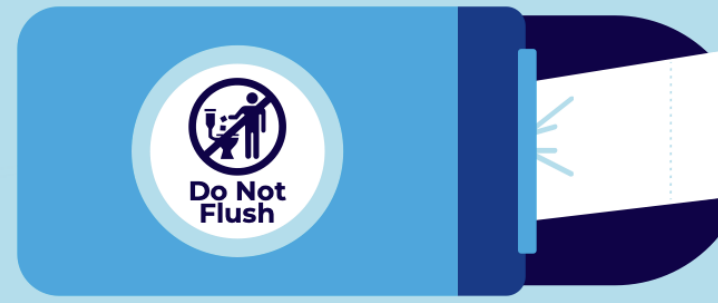
**DO NOT  
FLUSH**



# What People Say They Flush

Have You Seen

This Symbol?



The Responsible Flushing Alliance (RFA) commissioned a survey<sup>1</sup> to see how **#FlushSmart** Californians are around the “Do Not Flush” symbol and their flushing habits.

The “Do Not Flush” symbol is **gaining recognition** in California.



**A 6-point increase!**

In awareness from RFA's 2021 baseline survey.

Despite this, some people are still **not practicing responsible flushing habits...**



Regardless, California consumers **affirmed the importance of the issue.**



**93%**

consumers feel this issue is at least somewhat, if not very, **important to their local community.**



## But what are they really flushing?

- Collection study took place at IEUA and Central San in October 2023.
- 1,745 samples were collected, sorted and identified over 4 days.
- Items collected during peak flow times.





# Collecting Samples

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# Separating Items

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# Rinsing Samples

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# Sorting onto Tray

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# Identification





# Sample Book

# Photograph Each Sample



# Record on Data Sheets

Appendix A

Date: 11th October 2023

Collection Event (circle one):  
Day 1 AM, Day 1 PM, Day 2 AM

Collector # 1

Wipes Category

	BD	SCD	HND	MUF	PCBOD	PCFEM	PCHEM	MTT	OTHER	PT	AHP	PMW	FM	BMC	UFO
26									/						
27												/			
28		DP								/					
29		<del>E</del>								/					
30							/								
31	/														
32									/						
33		+								/					
34		+								/					
35	/														
36	/														
37									/						
38										21					
39										/					
40									/						
41	/										/				
42															
43	/														
44											/				
45											/				
46											/				
47	/														
48									X						/
49										/					
50									/						

Notes

Color pattern Print - Paper

Pattern

Flies

Hair

metal, lawn, pair of shoes

Recorder Initials: Dr P

Kennedy Jenks



# 3-Person ID Verification Process

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# Sorting onto Tarp

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# Surprising Results:

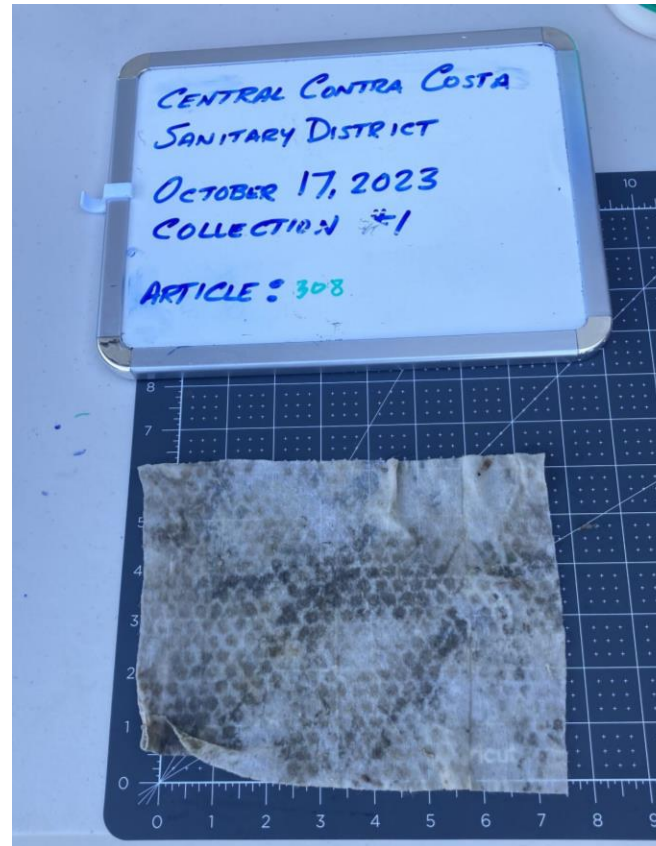
**Table 1. High-level average of total materials collected – Total California (N=1,745)**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Paper Products	52.8%
Nonwoven Labeled DNF	34.1%
Feminine Hygiene	7.2%
Trash	4.9%
Nonwoven – Labeled Flushable	0.9%

The percentage of materials collected within each category had a high degree of consistency across collection events and facilities suggesting similar behavior across California. Based on this information, implementing consumer education to discourage the flushing of the top three categories could capture over 90 percent of the recovered materials.

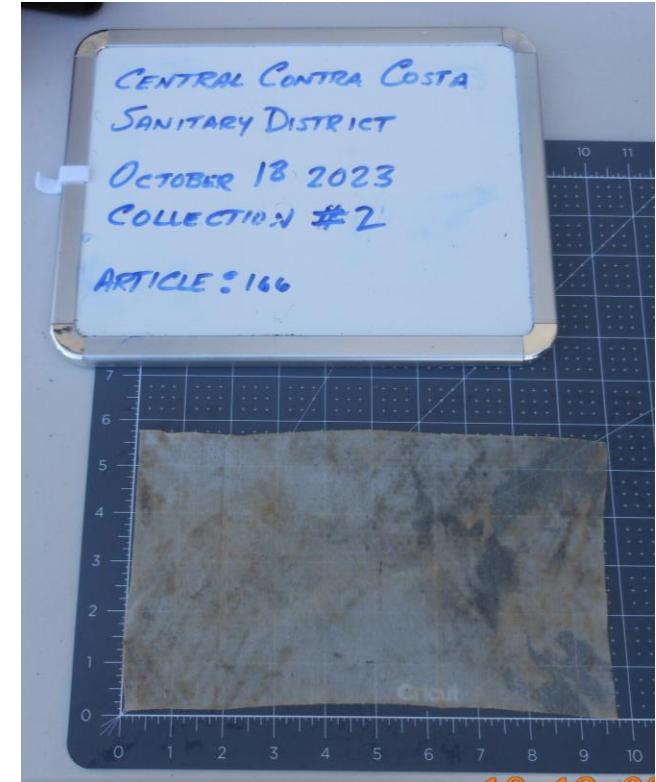


# Baby Wipes



Baby wipes fully intact

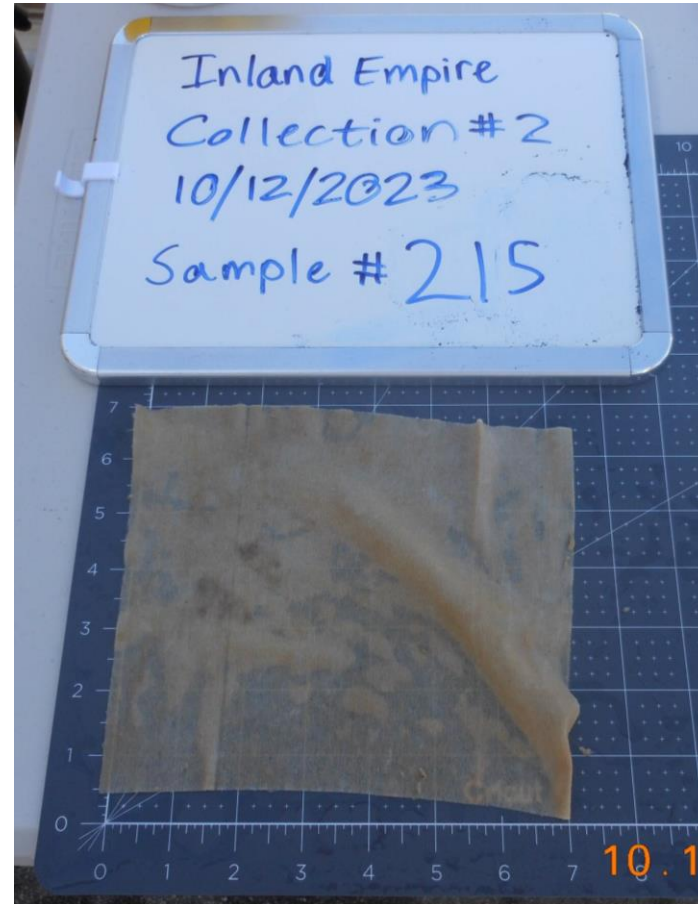
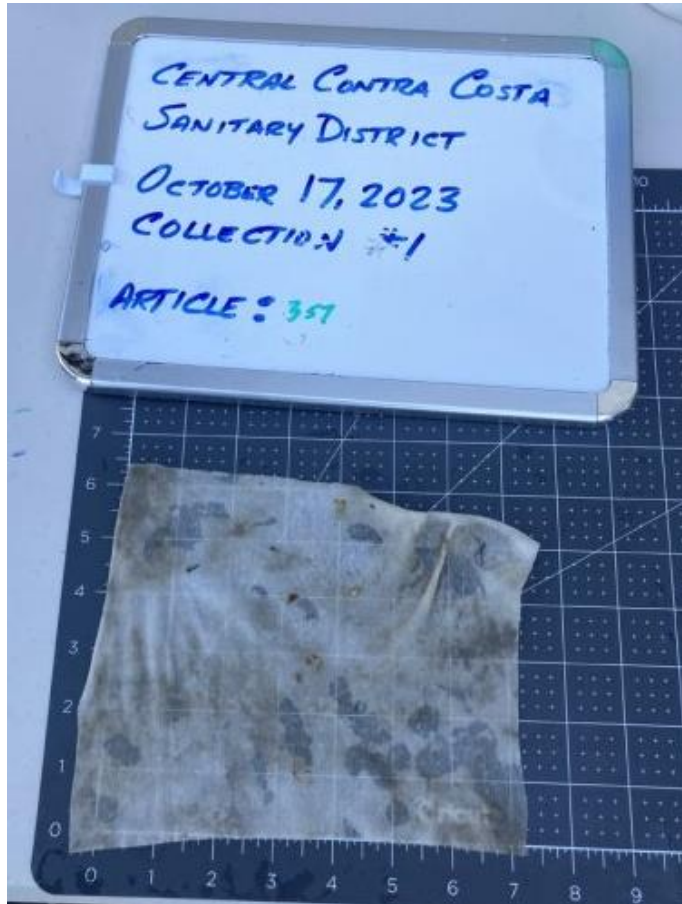
# Cleaning Wipes



Sanitizing & household cleaning wipes fully intact

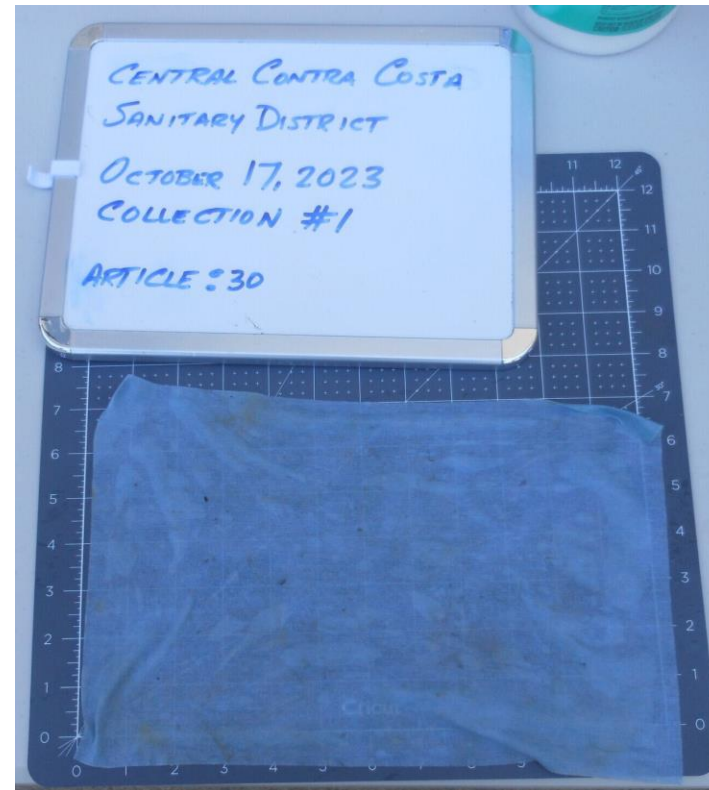
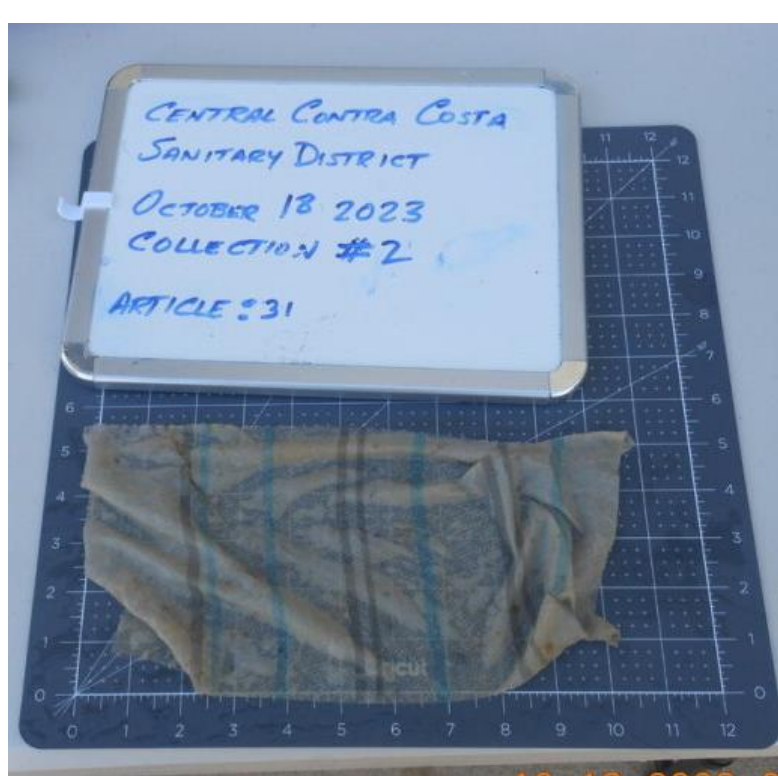


# Facial & Makeup Wipes



Facial & makeup removal wipes fully intact

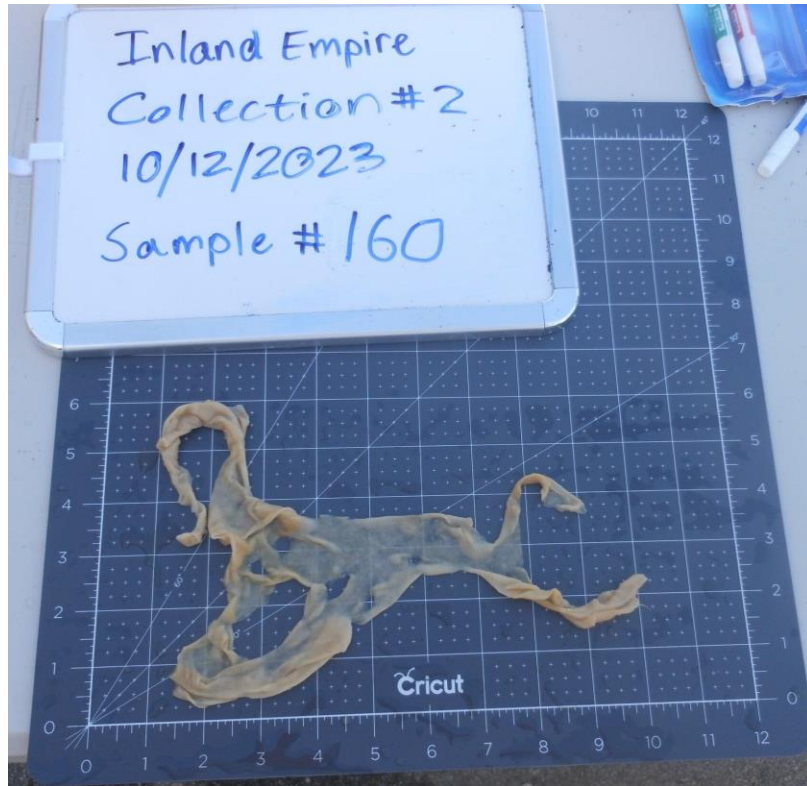
# Paper Towels were 53% of samples!



Paper towels mostly or fully intact



# Flushable Wipes were 0.9% of samples



Flushable wipes were very soft and falling apart

# “What’s Getting Flushed” Video

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- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L-UD6KB8AVA>





# #FlushSmart in Action

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- Campaign Concepts
- Educational Resources
- Stay Connected...we are here to help!

# 2023 #FlushSmart Success

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The Clog Monster makes his Hollywood debut!



# 2023 By the Numbers

## SOCIAL MEDIA + PRINT ADVERTISING:

**f 6.6M+**

total impressions (ad views) on Facebook

**3.5M+**

total impressions (ad views) on Instagram

**7.5M+**

total impressions (ad views) on Twitter

**11.4M+**

total impressions (ad views) on TikTok

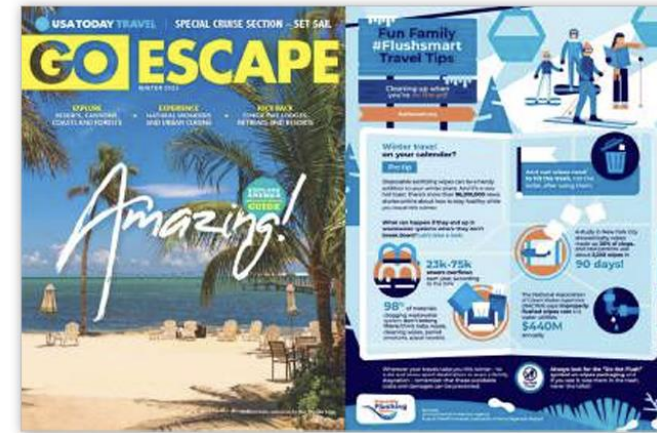
**30.7M**

total social media impressions  
across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter  
and TikTok (organic & paid)

**0.5%**

average click-through rate from  
social media to our website

USA Today  
GoEscape  
**2 million**  
print readers



Vanity Fair  
**8.1 million**  
print readers



US Weekly  
**1.95 million**  
print readers



## MEDIA ENGAGEMENT:



**11**

featured media stories RFA had successfully pitched in 2023



DO NOT  
FLUSH

**2,877**

total media mentions of "Do Not Flush symbol" in 2023



**2,918**

2,918 total media mentions of the Responsible Flushing Alliance in 2023

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT:

**19**

California municipalities' wastewater and sanitation districts partnered within 2023

**26%**

average open rate of our monthly newsletter to stakeholders

**759**

total subscribers to our monthly newsletter

**4.7%**

average click rate of our monthly newsletter to stakeholders



## Flush Smart Day By the Numbers

65% 

INCREASE IN ALIGNED MESSAGING FROM INDUSTRY  
PARTNERS ACROSS PLATFORMS (COMPARED TO 2022)

 6.4M+   
VIEWS ON TikTok TRAILER STAKEHOLDER POSTS

    
1.6M+  
SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

  
370+  
MEDIA MENTIONS



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BPtmYeWMbSQ>

# TikTok Launch

TikTok

Search



For You

Following

Friends

Explore

LIVE

Profile

Following accounts

**twinsthenewtrend**  
Twinsthenewtrend

**randyrainbowoff...** ✓  
Randy Rainbow

**josh\_and\_jase\_in...**  
Josh & Jase

**speedy4prezident**  
Speedy4prezident

**lilou\_ma\_vie6**  
lilou\_ma\_vie6

**relatableworkme...**  
Relatable Work Memes

**sylka\_f**  
Sylka

**justmandy320**  
JustMandy320

**thedailyshow** ✓  
The Daily Show

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Create effects

[About](#) [Newsroom](#) [Contact](#) [Careers](#)

[TikTok for Good](#) [Advertise](#)

[TikTok LIVE](#) [Creator Networks](#)



**flushsmart**

Responsible Flushing Alliance

Messages



16 Following 876 Followers 14.1K Likes

Do your wipes clog pipes? Stay #FlushSmart.

Look for the Do Not Flush symbol.

[Flushsmart.org](https://flushsmart.org)

Videos

Liked



Are you hoping to be on...



You may not think abou...



Flushing Discipline is th...



Remember, when every...



Have you seen the "Do ...



#Fatbergs are avoidabl...



Coming to a clogged toi...



Sending the wrong wip...



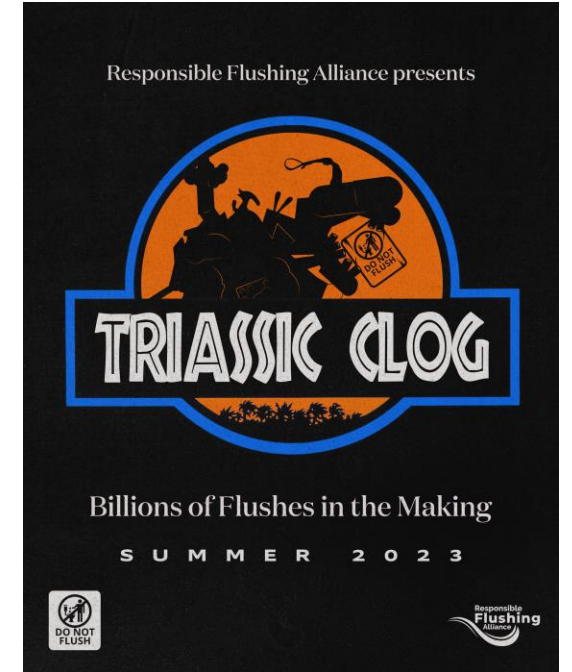
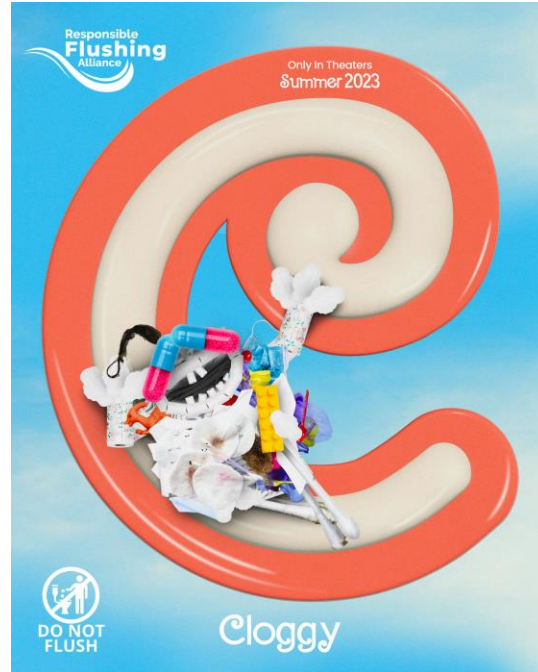
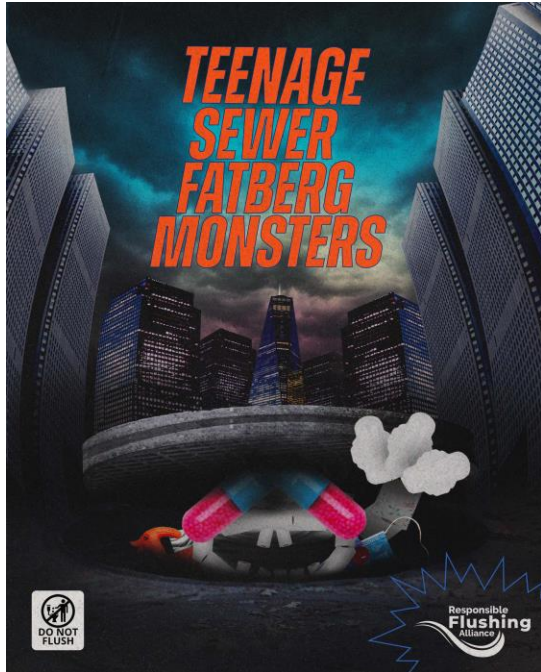
Something is lurking in t...



Coming to a clogged toi...



# Movie Poster PSAs








# OUR GROWTH OVER THE YEARS

	2021	2022	2023
<b>Impressions</b>	1500	8.4M	30.7M
<b>Clicks</b>	NA	127.0K	167.1K
<b>Video Views</b>	NA	N/A	12.4M
<b>Media Mentions</b>	NA	1630	2918

Link to 2023 Annual Report:

[https://www.flushsmart.org/wp-content/uploads/RFA\\_CA\\_AnnualReport2023-compressed.pdf](https://www.flushsmart.org/wp-content/uploads/RFA_CA_AnnualReport2023-compressed.pdf)



# 2024 #FlushSmart Campaign

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- Youth Cinema Project
- Toilet Crimes
- Potty Training for Grownups

## RFA and LACSD Partnership

# Youth Cinema Project

- 3 LA County school districts participating
- Grades 4-12 participating in 25 schools
- 4-weeks for groups to complete :30-:90 PSAs
- Awards ceremony in April





The Clog Monster has caused enough problems and now our "Toilet Detective" is coming to help solve our greatest mystery: *"the toilet crimes we are committing."* When our "toilet" realizes just how many crimes are being committed, he knows we must provide a solution to help educate Californians (and beyond) and potty train our adults so they can stop committing these crimes!

## The Problem



## The Solver



## The Solution



# Activation Flow

Toilet Crimes will be launched at VidCon in Anaheim on **June 26–27 (Wed–Thurs)**. The activation is a two-day experience that will lead with media invitations/ engagements and be followed by passer-by content-capture engagement opportunities:

## Day One

- Toilet will be stationary at an outside location (open area on cement in main walkway area)
- Two-wall backdrop that will visually set the stage for the toilet to be stationed against
- Toilet will be interacting with a host and passers-by/media

## Day Two

- Toilet will move around to 2-3 locations outside of VidCon/Anaheim and be accessible to passers-by to engage with (no backdrop)



## Additional Staging

- Bathroom walls
- Non-flushables
- Crime scene cards

# FlushSmart In Action

2024 Toilet  
Crimes



**Vox**  
"California's Restrooms Speak Out:  
The Toilet Tell-All Reveals Our Dirty  
Secrets"



# Creative Concept – Setting up the problem

Work-in-Progress

## Phase 1: Bathroom Crimes Are On The Rise

*Bring flushing-related bathroom crimes into the cultural conversations through radio and social.*

- Begin DNF symbol messaging
- Introduce the clog monster as symbolic of bad flushing behaviors

## Phase 2: The Victims Speak

*Give a surprisingly literal voice to the infrastructural and ecological elements hurt when clog monsters flush unflushable things.*

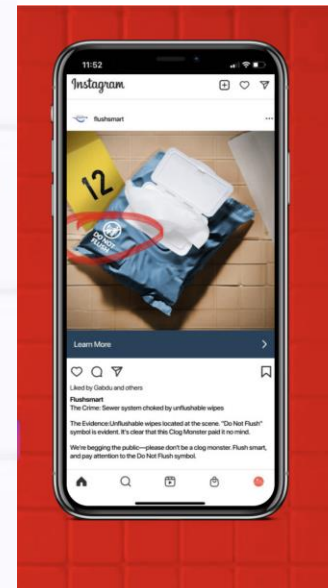
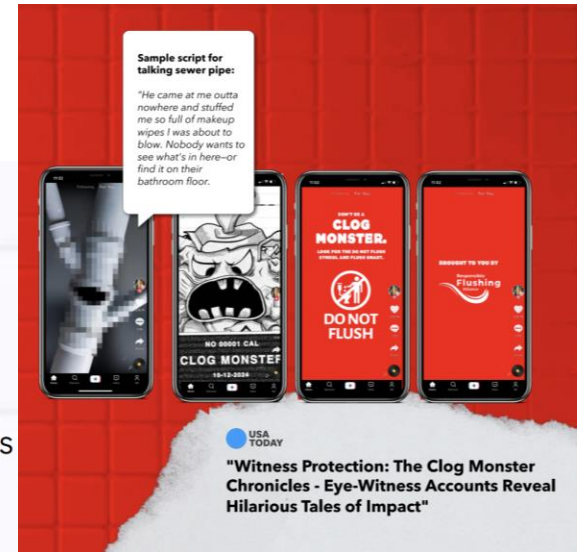
- Blend DNF symbol messaging with a personification of the impact
- Directly message specific “bad flushing behaviors” in memorable ways
- CTA: *Don’t be a clog monster\**

*\* We want to test “Don’t be a Clog Monster” and “Don’t feed the Clog Monster” to determine better performance.*

## Phase 3: The Confession

*Create a ridiculous moment for Californians to anonymously admit their bathroom crimes and pledge to stop feeding Clog Monster behavior*

- Drive DNF adoption
- Create a digital moment for Californians to confess times they've witnessed or participated in feeding the Clog Monster





# FlushSmart In Action

The  
Solution  
to Toilet  
Crimes



idea 2

## CREATIVE SPARK:

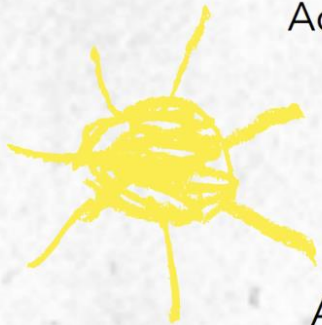
With non-flushable waste building up and clogging our sewage infrastructure, adults - not kids - are the ones needing potty training.

## IDEA:

Adults in California are falling for the clog monster's tricks, and they're about to flush it all away—their money, the environment, everything.

They need potty training.

And who better to give it to them than those who will feel the impact of not flushing smart the most—kids.







# Educational Materials

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- Free and downloadable from [www.flushsmart.org](http://www.flushsmart.org)

# Educational + Enrichment Materials

- 25 activity sheets (each in English and Spanish)
- Dogs Against Clogs Coloring Books + Storybooks

<b>All Ages</b> English   Spanish	<b>Coloring Pages</b> English   Spanish
<b>Pre-K</b> English   Spanish	<b>Grades K–2</b> English   Spanish
<b>Grades 3–5</b> English   Spanish	<b>Grades 6–8</b> English   Spanish

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Sea Creatures or School-of-Fish Mobile

AGE RANGE: Grades 3–5

**PREPARATION:**  
Recycle empty cardboard tubes from toilet paper and paper towel rolls. Collect them in advance and encourage children to bring them in from home.

**MATERIALS:**

- Cardboard toilet paper tubes (or paper towel tubes, cut down to size)
- Paper plates (recyclable or compostable if possible)
- Do Not Flush symbol (printable sheet attached)
- Acrylic paints and paint brushes
- Colored construction paper, cardboard scraps or foam sheets
- Gift-wrapping paper scraps
- Sequins (optional)
- Tissue paper or party streamers
- Pencil, black marker, glitter pens
- Scissors, single-hole punch and glue
- String, yarn and paperclips
- Wire hangers, recycled paper towel tubes, or sticks for mobile base
- Ruler (for Octopus extension)

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Flatten your toilet roll tube.
2. Cut the corners on one end to make a rounded shape for the fish's head.
3. On the other end, cut out a triangle to make the tail.
4. Use the triangle cut-out to make fins and tape them in place.
5. Paint your fish and let it dry.
6. Decorate it with colorful scraps of wrapping paper, tissue and/or party streamers.
7. Make fish scales with tissue or wrapping paper scraps (optional). Make a pattern and glue them on, overlapping as you go.
8. Make "goopy eyes" with white paper and a marker. (No plastic required!) Glue them onto each side of the face. Draw a mouth and gills.
9. Add some crazy shark or piranha teeth — or whatever you like!
10. Cut out the two Do Not Flush symbols. Glue one onto a paper plate and cut it out. Now glue the second copy onto the back side. Punch out a hole at the top and thread it with yarn or string.

Look for the DO NOT FLUSH symbol and never flush disposable wipes or trash down the toilet.





DO NOT POUR Fat, Oils and Grease down the drain.

Responsibly Flushing

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Trace the dotted letters.

The dog says do not clog!

When you see  on a  it means do not flush it down the  —put it in the  instead.

Look for the DO NOT FLUSH symbol and never flush disposable wipes or trash down the toilet.

Responsibly Flushing

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

## ¡No alimentos al Monstruo Obstructor!

Dibuja una línea para "tirar" los objetos donde pertenecen.

tiro adhesiva  
papel higiénico  
pañal sucio  
cotonetes  
esponja  
botella de agua  
barquitos de juguete  
vaso y popote  
toallita de bebé  
toallas de papel  
jabón

Busque el símbolo de NO LO TIRES y nunca tire las toallas no desechables o la basura por el inodoro.

Responsibly Flushing

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

## "Flush Smart" Sopa de Letras

Busque y encierre en un círculo todas las palabras de la lista siguiente. ¡Piensa antes de tirarlo al inodoro!

Estas cosas NO pertenecen en el inodoro:

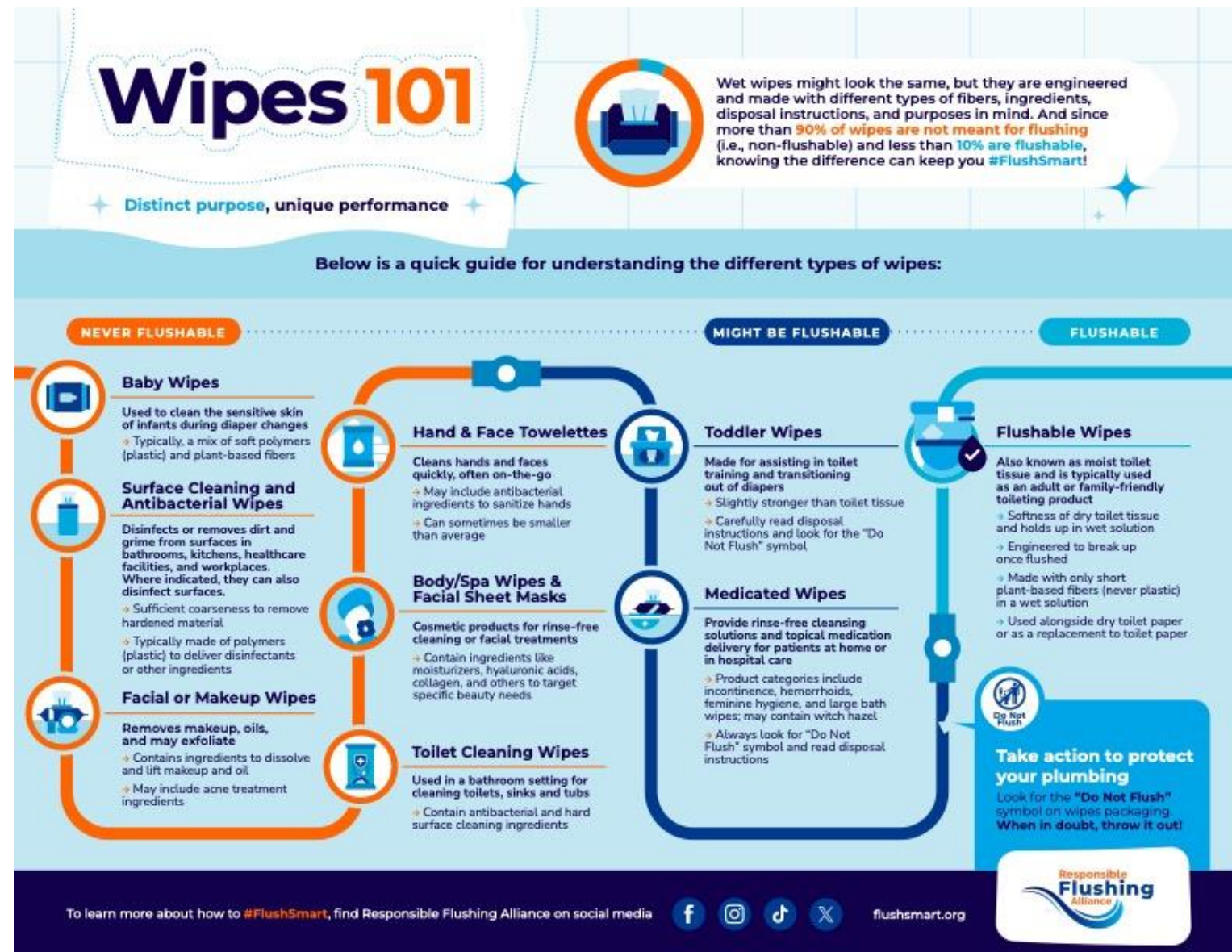
juguete	máscara	comida	basura
popote	pañal	rana	pato
		ropa interior	

c o c h e p l á t a n o  
r o p a i n t e r i o r  
f a a e r d f p l b p a  
p p z b h v k v a e p  
p a c o m i d a s r r a  
a x t o á d p x u a r ñ  
t a o q s e o r a n a a  
o t p s c o r f a a d l  
b o o k a m q b m z e g  
b a s u r a p o p o t e  
d r a n a d i m o c o c  
z d j u g u e t e s w x

Busque el símbolo de NO LO TIRES y nunca tire las toallas no desechables o la basura por el inodoro.

Responsibly Flushing

# Infographics & PSAs



“Resources” on Education Tab of website





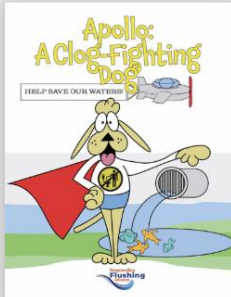
Search

### Explore ProShop

- Posters & Signage
- Marketing Materials
- #FlushSmart Materials
- Wipes Education
- Coloring & Activity Books
- Other

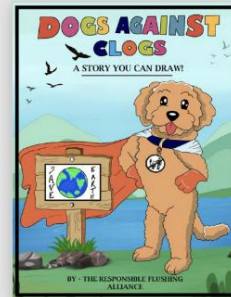
## Coloring & Activity Books

(4 Items)



Apollo Coloring Book

[Order](#)



Dog Against Clog Coloring Book

[Order](#)



FOG Activity Book

[Order](#)



Booklet

[Order](#)



## Stay Connected!

- Newsletter sign up at bottom of homepage



**Sign up for our monthly newsletter!**  
**Stay up to date on the Responsible Flushing Alliance**



**SUBMIT**

# Thank You

Lara Wyss  
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