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### **What happens to wastewater?**

Water is one of the most important things in the world. We use it for drinking, cleaning, washing, and even flushing the toilet. But have you ever thought about what happens to the water after you flush? That used up water is called wastewater, and it has to be cleaned before it can go back into nature.

What is wastewater? Wastewater is any water that has been used up and gotten dirty. It comes from sinks, showers, washing machines, and toilets. When water goes down the drain, it picks up soap, food, dirt, and germs. That's why it needs to be cleaned before we can use it again, or before it goes into rivers or lakes.

What to flush and what not to flush: toilets are only made for human waste and toilet paper. You should not flush things like wipes, paper towels, cotton balls, or diapers. Even if something says "Flushable," it can still clog the pipes and mess up the Sewer System. All of these things should go in the trash, not the toilet. Flushing the right things helps keep our Pipes working.

Where does wastewater go? After you flush, the wastewater goes through pipes underground to a place called a Wastewater Treatment Plant. At the plant, the water gets cleaned in a few steps. First, big trash and solids are taken out. Then smaller dirt and germs are removed with special tanks and tiny organisms that eat the waste. Finally, the water is disinfected with chemicals or light so it's safe to go back into rivers or the ocean.

Why is water Important? Water is super important because all people, animals, and plants need it to live. There's only a small amount of fresh water on Earth, so we have to take care of it. When we don't waste water, and only flush the right things, we help protect our planet and keep the water clean for everyone.

Wastewater doesn't just disappear when we flush it goes on a big journey to get cleaned. By doing simple things like saving water and not flushing trash, we can make a big difference. Clean water keeps the earth healthy, and it's our job to help keep it that way.