

Paul Turner
Thu 16/02/2012, 16:15
Sainsburys Customer Service
□

Dear Mr Rooney,

I cannot quite believe your, what I can only politely describe as 'superficial' response. Have you actually read my emails? You say 'Depending on your cistern, this might be the reason for the lack of flushability!' This is not a question of the wipes flushing away! You can get just about anything down the bowl if you try hard enough. The point is, as stated by Thames Water and just about every other water company, that these wipes do not degrade (as evidenced by ours still being in our pipes after three months or so) and should not be flushed into the sewage system. What evidence do you have of this product 'degrading over a period of time in a normal sewage system'?

I am talking here of a significant environmental problem and you are talking about trying to flush more of thesewipes into our sewage systems!

Sincerely

Paul Turner

Date: Wed, 8 Feb 2012 12:48:20 +0000
From: customerservice@sainsburys.co.uk
Subject: RE: RE: Moist Toilet Tissue [SR 1-262731892] [SR 1-263588344]
To: wirepuller@hotmail.com

Dear Mr Turner

Thanks for your reply. I'm sorry about the issue with the tissues and for the delay in responding. The delay was due to contacting our product knowledge department for further information on the supersoft moist toilet tissues.

There have been 2 main tests carried out on this product.

1. 1 to 5 crumpled wipes put in a bowl of a 3L cistern;
2. 1 to 5 crumpled wipes put in a bowl of a 6L cistern.

For test one, no amount of wipes passed the flushability test. Test 2 passed with flying colours with all tissues flushing away. The conclusion was that the wipes are not suitable for flushing when using a 3L cistern. Depending on your cistern, this might be the reason for the lack of flushability.

My colleague also checked this particular product packaging regarding the degradability of the tissues. He has confirmed that the degradability is not mentioned on the pack, although the tissues will degrade over a period of time in a normal sewage system.

I hope this information explains more about the testing of our tissues and again we appreciate your patience in this matter.

Kind regards

Andrew Rooney | Customer Manager
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[THREAD ID:1-4CBPIJ]

-----Original Message-----
From: wirepuller@hotmail.com
Sent: 31.01.2012 07:33:13 PM

To: "Customer.Service" <Customer.Service@sainsburys.co.uk>
Subject: RE: Moist Toilet Tissue [SR 1-262731892]

Dear Lee,

Thanks for the response but I'm rather disappointed with it.

Follow the instructions? Homer Simpson could follow them and yes only one is used at a time. That is why I said that the accumulation would represent many months usage.

Regarding degradation; all wipes that were fished out of the well had not degraded one iota and as I said, there were hundreds.

The fact that you have not had any other complaints is not evidence that these wipes are flushable. You say that the wipes are **totally** flushable - could you please provide scientific evidence (from the provider's research) that this is the case. How have these wipes been tested for degradation both in the laboratory and in the field? Anecdotal evidence certainly indicates that these are not degraded in sewage systems - see just two 'hits' from the first page of a Google search below - the second paragraph from the second 'hit' perhaps hits the nail on the head:

1. From: <http://www.netmums.com/coffeehouse/children-parenting-190/nappies-potty-training-toilet-issues-549/263254-warning-flushable-wipes-dont-flush-them.html>

Warning for 'flushable' wipes - don't flush them !!!

Hi - I have just had to have a drainage firm round to clear my blocked drains. He said that it was blocked with "baby wipes". We don't flush our baby wipes, however we do flush our toilet wipes (Kandoo etc). Apparently these are NOT flushable and there was a massive backlog of them. He said it's very common to get blocked drains with these things !!

2. From: http://kreate.hubpages.com/hub/flushable_wipes_may_clog_drain_lines

My neighbor recently had her drain clogged and anyone who walked in front her house knew it by the odor. When the drain cleaning guys cleared her drain, they informed her that it was caused by baby wipes. I informed her that I never trusted in flushable baby wipes or any type of flushable wipes. They just don't seem biodegradable to me and I didn't feel safe flushing them down the toilet.

When it says flushable on the package, it means the toilet can flush it

down into the drain line. It does not mean that it will not get stuck or not cause a clog in your drain system.

(Whilst the above two 'hits' are still rather anecdotal, the following from Thames Water is certainly professional scientific/pragmatic evidence/advice):

3. To flush, or not to flush?

The drains connected to your home were not designed to cope with anything other than wastewater, toilet tissue and human waste.

Even the products labelled 'flushable' do not break down in the sewer. Flushing them could block your internal plumbing or the main sewer, causing sewage to back-up.

From: (<http://www.thameswater.co.uk/cps/rde/xchg/corp/hs.xsl/9137.htm#>)

So, if a major water company (presumably others advise the same) states that flushable wipes are NOT flushable, why are you saying that they are totally flushable?

Sincerely

Paul Turner

Date: Tue, 31 Jan 2012 16:46:01 +0000
From: customerservice@sainsburys.co.uk
Subject: RE: Moist Toilet Tissue [SR 1-262731892]
To: wirepuller@hotmail.com

Dear Mr Turner

Thanks for your email. I'm sorry to hear about the issue you've experienced recently with your drainage at your house. I can understand your frustration as there was a buildup of our super soft moist toilet tissue.

I've contacted our buying department to find out if the item is flushable. My colleague has explained that as long as the instructions on the product are followed, there shouldn't be a problem. Only one or two wipes should be flushed at a time. We haven't had any complaints of the same nature from customers using the wipes.

My colleague went on to say if there was a blockage, caused by debris or because an unacceptable amount were flushed at the same time then this could affect the degrading of the wipes. If the wipes accumulate, then they will not break down as well as their supposed to.

However, by using the wipes as they were intended then they are totally flushable. We would be happy to assist you if you have any more queries regarding the wipes.

We appreciate you taking the time to contact us.

Kind regards

Lee Armour | Customer Manager
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[THREAD ID:1-4CBPIJ]

-----Original Message-----

From: wirepuller@hotmail.com

Sent: 17.01.2012 02:10:24 PM

To: "Customer.Service" <Customer.Service@sainsburys.co.uk>

Subject: Moist Toilet Tissue

Dear Sainsbury's,

Regarding your product 'Super Soft moist toilet tissue', we have a problem (Houston!).

The product packaging (along with all other such products from other supermarkets and elsewhere I guess) says 'flushable'.

In the past few days, we have experienced a drain blockage (in the pipe under our garden before reaching the main drainage system in the road). In trying to access the drain 'pipe' (which is about 3 or 4 feet below ground level) we had to go through the 'well' (below the manhole cover) where the household drainage drains into/meets the drain 'pipe'. This well was almost full of waste (water etc). The 'etc' included hundreds of the 'flushable' toilet wipes. None had degraded - hundreds must represent many months of wiping! We are unsure as to whether the wipes were responsible for the blockage but that seems to be the most likely explanation.

Why then are these wipes designated as 'flushable'?

Sincerely

Paul Turner