

And You Wonder Why.....!



by Steve Grimm,
Wastewater Technician

So, I'm sitting in my apartment one night watching the tele when this commercial comes on. All you can hear is the sound of a toilet flushing, again, and again, and again. So the lady of the house goes to the bathroom to find her husband throwing all kinds of stuff in the toilet and flushing! All kinds of stuff. Paper, books, construction debris, you name it, and standing there in amazement as it magically disappears. Now I understand the basic message of the commercial. The manufacturer was demonstrating the power of their water efficient toilets, and you wonder why we spend so much time cleaning stuff off the bar screen that shouldn't be there in the first place!

I'm traveling around one day listening to the radio in an area of the state that has some issues with water quality in a major watercourse. Now that narrows it down. Anyway, another commercial comes on. See a pattern here? This guy has invited his lady over for dinner. He's cooking fish. He is bragging about how he caught it earlier in the day. She asks where he caught it. He tells her in the river down by whatever the local hot spot is. She replies, down by the sewer plant? By that pipe that comes from the sewer

plant? He says yes, and after a few seconds they decide to go out for dinner instead. And you wonder why we have to deal with ever tighter effluent limits and defend ourselves, our plants and our profession, from baseless accusations!

Again, I'm watching the tele one night when, you guessed it, a commercial comes on. (I'm going to stop watching the tube). There's this cut away drawing of a house. A lady is on the top floor doing dishes. She loses her ring in the sink. We follow the ring as it takes its journey down the drain, into the basement and out into.....no, not the collection system, but the river! A direct shot from sink to river! How insulting! All the progress we've made over the years is diminished in one 30 second commercial showing a direct discharge from house to river. And you wonder why we don't get the respect we deserve!

One more thing, before I go watch some more tele. We can begin to help ourselves here. When you are out talking to people, remember, you work in a "wastewater" plant not a sewer plant. When you answer the phone, say "wastewater plant" not sewer plant. Marketing baby. It's all in how you present it. ♠



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PHONE: 607-772-9757

FAX: 607-724-1609

EMAIL: jwatersupply@stny.rr.com