



10844 Ellis Avenue
 Fountain Valley, CA 92708
 714.962.2411
 www.ocsan.gov

March 8, 2021

The Honorable Richard Bloom
 California State Assembly
 State Capitol, Room 2003
 Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Orange County Sanitation District Support for Assembly Bill 818 (Bloom)

Dear Assembly Member Bloom:

The Orange County Sanitation District (OC San) is pleased to support AB 818 (Bloom). OC San provides wastewater collection, treatment, and recycling for approximately 2.6 million people in central and northwest Orange County, CA. OC San’s primary mission is to protect public health and the environment through its services. AB 818 is the culmination of several years of stakeholder involvement and industry negotiations that will encourage pollution prevention through clear and consistent consumer information.

AB 818 would establish labeling requirements for wet wipes packaging so that Californians will know how to properly dispose of these popular consumer products. In recent years, wet wipes have become widely available as they’re designed for a variety of daily household purposes. Despite voluntary industry labeling guidelines, proper disposal information is inconsistent on wipes product labels, and some wipes are advertised as “flushable,” which can lead to confusion about what products can be flushed down the toilet and which are instead intended for the trashcan.

Many wet wipes are made from plastic which makes them not compatible with sewer systems and infrastructure. Improperly flushing these incredibly durable products results in their getting caught in pipes or accumulating with fats, oils, and grease and becoming larger obstructions that cause costly backups and sometimes result in raw sewage overflows. Further down the sewer line, wipes tend to weave together and create giant rags which get stuck in pump systems and motors and damage expensive public infrastructure. Additionally, environmental harm can come from flushing wipes since they shed microplastics into the wastewater system that can ultimately be discharged to the aquatic environment.

AB 818 would ensure wet wipes packaging clearly communicates the appropriate disposal method for the products not intended to be flushed, and further requires wipes manufacturers to conduct education and outreach about the “Do Not Flush” symbol and label notice. This straightforward bill has been mutually agreed to by the wipes manufacturers and wastewater and product stewardship representatives. If enacted, it will establish the strongest wet wipe labeling requirements in the country.

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- Midway City Sanitary District
- Irvine Ranch Water District
- Yorba Linda Water District



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For these reasons, the Orange County Sanitation District is pleased to support AB 818. Please do not hesitate to contact Jennifer Cabral, Administration Manager at (714) 593-7581 or via email at JCabral@ocsd.com should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

David John Shawver
Board Chairman

cc:

Jessica Gauger, California Association of Sanitation Agencies(jgauger@casaweb.org)
Orange County Legislative Delegation
Orange County Sanitation District Board of Directors