Change the **text in red** to reflect your community’s situation. Make sure all text is black before the news release is sent.

For release: [Month, XX, 2020]

Contact: [Your name, email, and phone number]

**A plea from [city name]’s wastewater staff: Don’t flush your disposable wipes!**

Your city, Minn.— Disposable wipes have been causing problems in communities around the country and [city name] is no different. Wipes — used for changing diapers, personal hygiene, housecleaning, and more — cause major problems when flushed down toilets. Though many of these products are labeled “flushable” or “septic safe,” they are anything but. The same goes for facial tissues, baby wipes, paper towels and other products.

Because they don’t break down the way toilet paper does, disposable wipes clog homeowner and municipal sewer pipes, put stress on community wastewater collection and treatment equipment, and cause cities to spend thousands on premature equipment repair and replacement. Wipes snag on any imperfection in sewer pipes, catch passing debris and grease, and create a “ball” that will grow to plug the pipe. They also get drawn into sewer-line and wastewater treatment plant pumps and clog and damage them.

In [city name], the increased use of disposable wipes has been causing headaches for public works employees. [You could add a quote here from a wastewater leader in your community about the wipes problem and add “We are asking that if residents do use wipes, please put them in the trash. Don’t flush them!]

[Add a paragraph here about what specific problems wipes are causing you. It might look something like this:

Avon’s utilities team checks pumps in the town’s sewer system every day. When there is a wipes clog, they often have to use a crane to pull the pumps from 15 or 20 feet underground in order to clear them. In the past

few years, the city has spent about $73,000 to upgrade lift station pumps. Avon’s utilities supervisor Jon Forsell says the older pumps were still functional, but not designed to handle wipes. In addition, the city spends almost $4,000 a year on labor to clear wipes out of pumps.

Or this:

Lewiston was spending about $15,000 a year for a company to clear wipes clogs in its lift station pumps. Then the city bought a “Muffin Monster” — a machine that grinds up wipes before they get to pumps —for $70,000. “We wouldn’t have had to put it in if not for wipes,” says public works director Curt Benter. The average monthly sewer charge in Lewiston is $75.66, in part because of these wipes-related maintenance costs.]

For more information about disposable wipes and the problems they are causing in [city name], please contact [contact person name, email, and phone number].

**Broadcast version:**

Disposable wipes have been causing problems in communities around the country and [city name] is no different. Wipes — used for changing diapers, personal hygiene, housecleaning, and more — cause major problems when flushed down toilets. In [city name], the increased use of disposable wipes has been causing headaches for public works employees. The same guidance applies to facial tissues, baby wipes, paper towels and other products. [Add a shortened version of your 4th paragraph above with details about wipes problems in your city.] [City name] wastewater staff are asking that if residents do use wipes, put them in the trash. Don’t flush them!