

# S.259/H897- An Act protecting water systems through the labeling of flushable wipes

Senate Sponsor: State Senator Jamie Eldridge

## SUMMARY

This bill would establish standards for classifying wipes and require those that do not meet dispersible standards to be labeled accordingly. A provider would need to submit a form to the Department of Environmental Protections verifying that the flushable wipe meets the performance standards and/or comply with the labeling 76 requirements.

## BILL HIGHLIGHTS

- Wipes will be required to be labeled as "flushable" or "non-flushable".
- "Flushable" wipes must meet certain performance standards to be labeled as such.
- Violators could face civil penalties via enforcement by the DEP.

## WHY THIS BILL MATTERS

Since the early 2000s, wipes have been marketed as a replacement for toilet paper, mops, cleaning brushes and rags. Unlike toilet paper, wipes are not “dispersible” in normal sewer conditions. This industry has had disastrous impacts on local sewer systems as clogs and fouled pumps increase– **clogs and fouling from flushed wipes costs sewer operations in Massachusetts nearly \$10 million annually.** These clogs can lead to sanitary sewer overflows, which cost utilities and communities in cleanup and permit violation fees. They also pollute local waterways.

Please email [James.Eldridge@masenate.gov](mailto:James.Eldridge@masenate.gov) if you have any questions.