

“Stop Internal Flooding” Competition Guidelines

Instructions for Teachers:

1. Competition is open to all KS2 pupils with a category for Special Needs Schools.
2. Prizes for each year group P5, P6 and P7:
 - a) First prize- £400 donation for the winning school in each category/ with a “joint stakeholder goody bag” for winning pupil.
 - b) Second prize-£200 donation for the winning school in each category/ with a “joint stakeholder goody bag” for winning pupil.
 - c) Third prize-£100 donation for the winning school in each category/ with a “joint stakeholder goody bag” for winning pupil.
3. The pupils are asked to design a poster to advise how to “Stop Internal Flooding”.
4. In addition each entrant **must** complete a questionnaire consisting of 5 multiple choice questions, pupils poster will be considered regardless of the answers. This information will be used to inform the “Long Term Water Strategy” being developed by the Department for Regional Development (DRD).
5. Entries must reach NI Water by 5pm Friday 28th March 2014.
6. Entries must be sent to NI Water, Education Office, Westland House (Rm16), Old Westland Road, Belfast, BT14 6TE.
7. NI Water is not responsible for any entries lost in transit.
8. Winning schools will be notified of the results in May 2014 and prizes will be distributed by NI Water’s Education Team.
9. Winners will be required to participate in publicity surrounding the competition.
10. We may wish to reproduce the winning submissions for promotional materials or publicity purposes.

Inspiration for Teachers

Background information

- Marine litter consists of items arising from human activity, deliberately discarded or unintentionally lost, which end up in the sea, on beaches and coastlines.
- Marine litter is a global problem which poses a threat to eco-systems in terms of entanglement, entrapment and ingestion.
- Marine litter can destroy coastal habitats and interfere with biological production.
- Marine litter has socio-economic impacts and costs to local communities in terms of clean-up expenses, while the presence of medical and sanitary waste and broken glass constitute a potential risk to human health.
- Cleaning beaches and waterways can be expensive. Northern Ireland’s coast is a major environmental and economic asset.
- Marine Litter Strategy has two strategic goals, 1) reducing the levels of litter entering the marine environment; and 2) the removal of litter which is currently present on the coast.
- Responsibility for implementing the Strategy is shared between a community of interests including DOE, councils, NI Water, voluntary and community sector groups, schools and private individuals.
- Explore the Marine Conservation Society website and learn how to enjoy our beaches and protect our environment.

Internal flooding caused by blocked pipes

- Many people genuinely don't realise the damage they are doing, not only to their own internal pipes, but also to the sewerage system they share with their neighbours when they flush the wrong things down the drain.
- It is only when faced with blocked drains and out of sewer flooding that they realise those 'harmless baby wipes' are in fact creating chaos!
- We find some of the strangest things down the sewer, anything from money to a roll of carpet!
- These items should never be in the sewerage system as they can cause serious damage to the infrastructure and blockages which often result in out of sewer flooding, affecting people's homes.
- Sewage Related Debris (SRD) domestic waste carried by run-off from heavy rains, can include a number of inappropriately disposed of items, most noticeably cotton buds, wipes and other sanitary products.
- To help the system work properly, we need to use it responsibly. Whilst NI Water has a responsibility for the sewerage system, everyone in Northern Ireland has a duty to dispose of their waste appropriately.
- NI Water spends approximately £1.7 million every year clearing blocked sewers – this is money which could be better spent improving services to the local community.
- 20,779 sewer blockages were dealt with, throughout 1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013, approximately 65% of these blockages were due to inappropriate materials being put down the sewer.

Bathrooms

- Anything other than toilet roll should be put in the bin.
- Sewers and drains are only designed to deal with three things- the 3P's: poo, pee and paper (toilet).
- Anything else could be a real hazard and cause blockages in the drains and the sewer pipes, causing internal blockages and flooding to our homes.
- Flushing the wrong materials can cause blockages near your property, leading to raw sewage flooding into, or around your home.
- Even if items claim to be flushable, they should be disposed of either by recycling or in your bin.
- The advice is simple, bag it & bin it, don't flush it.

Kitchen

- Fat, oil and grease (FOG) cause major problems to drains and sewers.
- In liquid form FOG may not appear to be harmful, but if you pour it down the sink it cools, congeals and hardens.
- Even if you use detergent and hot water the fat will solidify when it hits the cold sewer walls. This will eventually block the sewer, resulting in flooding and increasing the risk of rat infestations to homes.
- Plates and pots should be scraped into the bin before washing in the sink, and strainers used in sink plugholes.
- Fats/oils used in cooking should be allowed to cool and either put in the bin or used to make a bird feeder.
- Fats can build up in a sewer to such an extent that the sewer blocks, causing raw sewage to escape into our homes.

Frozen Pipes

- Pipework within your home is your responsibility; frost protection **now** could help avoid trouble and expense in cold weather.
- Burst pipes can cause serious damage to people's property.
- Know where to turn off your water supply at the internal stop tap/valve- usually under the kitchen sink.
- Avoid frozen pipes by:
 - a) Insulating water tanks and pipes by wrapping them up.
 - b) Fixing dripping taps; a gentle trickle can freeze and block a pipe; don't leave taps running.
 - c) Keeping the boiler serviced.
 - d) Opening the roof space door to allow heat to circulate.
 - e) Leaving the heating on low even when you are away.
 - f) Getting someone to check your house for frozen pipes when you're on holiday.
 - g) Having the name of a registered plumber handy.