

NoMix toilets get thumbs-up in 7 European countries

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'NoMix' toilets, like the one shown here, collect urine and feces separately. They have gained wide support by consumers in Europe as a way to reduce pollution and conserve water. Credit: Yvonne Lehnhard

People in seven European countries have positive attitudes toward a new eco-friendly toilet that could substantially reduce pollution problems and conserve water and nutrients, scientists in Switzerland are reporting. Their article, which calls on authorities to give wider support for the innovative toilet technology, is in ACS' *Environmental Science & Technology*.

Judit Lienert and Tove Larsen note in the article that the so-called NoMix [toilet](#) collects [urine](#) separately instead of mixing it together with feces as in conventional toilets. Urine contains 80 percent of the nitrogen and 50 percent of the phosphorus arriving at wastewater treatment

plants. Separating it in advance could have a number of advantages.

This includes a reduction in the amount of nitrogen and phosphorous nutrients that trigger algae blooms and in pharmaceutical residues, which can enter waterways and pose a threat to fish. Separating urine also allows its use as an agricultural fertilizer, the scientists note. However, scientists have not widely explored public attitudes about using this promising technology until now.

The scientists reviewed surveys on acceptance and use of NoMix toilets among seven European countries with responses from 2700 people. Those countries were Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Sweden, and Denmark. The researchers found that the technology is well-accepted, with about 80 percent of users expressing support of the idea, with many willing to use it at work or at home. Between 75 to 85 percent of the users found that the design, hygiene, smell and seating comfort of the NoMix toilets equals that of conventional toilets. About 85 percent of users were open to the idea of using stored urine as fertilizer. "No Mix-technology deserves more support by authorities and mainstream research," the article notes.

More information: "High Acceptance of Urine Source Separation in Seven European Countries: A Review", *Environmental Science & Technology*, [pubs.acs.org/stoken/presspac/p ... 10.1021/es9028765](https://pubs.acs.org/stoken/presspac/p.../10.1021/es9028765)

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