

Managing Your Grease

When grease is poured into a drain, it can cost restaurant owners/managers money. Restaurants are responsible for properly managing used cooking grease. Grease collects in drains and hardens into a plug. Pouring grease down the drain and flushing with hot water is not the solution, as grease is simply moved down the collection system and can cause sewer backups further down the collection line. Improperly managed oil and grease from restaurants has become a significant problem for wastewater collection and treatment systems. Fats, oils and greases (FOG) coat, congeal and accumulate in pipes, pumps and equipment, leading to the costly and environmentally damaging flows of waste grease into drain lines, sewer lines, lift stations, and treatment plants. Improper disposal can clog sewer lines resulting in overflows out of sewer systems.

Restaurants and other commercial establishments may have grease traps or interceptors that keep grease out of the sewer system. For a grease trap to work correctly, it must be properly designed (sized and manufactured to handle the amount that is expected), installed (level, vented, etc.), and maintained (cleaned and serviced on a frequent basis).



City of Independence

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Where Does Your Grease Go?



City of Independence
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What is grease?

Most of us know grease as the byproduct of cooking. Grease is found in such things as:

Meat fats	Lard
Cooking oil	Shortening
Butter/margarine	Food scraps
Baking goods	Sauces/gravies
Dairy products	Nuts
Soups/chili	Condiments
Pastas	Poultry

Why is grease a problem?

Fats are among the more stable of the organic compounds and are not easily decomposed by bacteria. Fats coat, congeal and accumulate on pipes, pumps and equipment and sometimes obstruct sewer lines.

As a restaurant owner/manager, and a taxpayer, you should be concerned about sewer backups. Sewer backups can cause extensive damage to streets, parking lots, and other structures. Clean-up can cost thousands of dollars. There is the potential for contact with disease causing organisms. An increase in operation and maintenance costs at the treatment plant causes higher sewer bills for customers. Besides, maintaining your grease trap is the law.

How should grease be handled?

Residual fats, oils and grease (FOG) are byproducts that food service establishments must constantly manage. Typically, FOG enter a facility's plumbing system from dishwashing, floor cleaning and equipment sanitation. Sanitary sewer systems are neither designed nor equipped to handle the FOG that accumulates on the interior of the municipal sewer collection system pipes. The best way to manage FOG is to keep the material out of the plumbing systems. The following are suggestions for proper FOG management:

▶ Spill prevention

Empty containers before they are full to avoid spills.

Use a cover when transporting grease trap contents to rendering barrel or grease dumpster.

Provide employees with the proper tools (ladles, adequate containers, etc.) to transport materials without spilling.

▶ Dry clean-up

Use rubber scrapers or paper towels to remove fats, oils and grease from cookware, utensils, chafing dishes, and serving ware.

Use food grade paper to soak oil and grease under fryer baskets. Clean spills up immediately to prevent grease from being discharged to floor drains. Use paper towels to wipe down work areas. Grease trapped in cloth towels will end up in your drains from towel washing/rinsing.

▶ Maintenance

Contract with a professional to clean large hood filters. Collect fryer oil in an oil rendering tank for disposal or transport it to a bulk oil rendering tank instead of discharging it into a grease trap or waste drain.

▶ Grease Traps

A grease trap captures grease and holds it until a rendering company can remove it for proper disposal. Grease traps must be cleaned on a regular basis if they are to be effective. Once every 3 months is a recommended minimum, some businesses may have to perform monthly service.

Backups, odors and drainage problems are signs that the grease trap is not functioning as it should. Sweep before mopping or spraying floor to prevent unnecessary food buildup in the trap.

Solids should never be put into grease traps.