



City of Claremont Fat, Oil and Grease Education

Why is Grease a Problem for Clogged Drains?

Large amounts of oil and grease in wastewater can cause serious problems to the sewer system. These consist of meat fats, food scraps, lard, dairy products, cooking oil, sauces, butter, and margarine. Once poured down the drain, grease sticks to the insides of sewer pipes slowly causing them to close and then clogging up completely. Any type of grease, whether from businesses or residences can cause serious problems that may result in raw sewage backups and overflows in your home, street, creeks and/or streams.

What can YOU do to help?

- Do not put grease or oil into sink drains. Instead have a scrap container or simply put the grease into the trash.
- Scrape grease and food off plates and pans, into the trash, before washing.
- You could also remove food waste with “dry” methods like wiping with a paper towel over kitchen utensils and equipment to collect oil and grease.
- Put strainers in the sink to catch food scraps and other solids and empty them into the trash.
- Remember garbage disposals grind food into smaller pieces but don’t keep grease from going down the drain.

What are the benefits to the customers?

1. Sewer spills cost everyone. Sewer spills must be corrected by the dispatching of a maintenance crew with specialized equipment to remove the cause of the blockage. This is both expensive and unpleasant and the customers of this system pay for all operational expenses.
2. Sewer overflows will cause sewage to spill into streets, creeks and streams, parks and yards. These spills are unsightly and potentially have a negative impact on the environment.
3. Sewer spills can be very expensive! Backups into homes can be costly and very unpleasant to clean for both the resident and the City. If the blockage is on the customers’ side or can be tracked back to a specific customer, then it would be that customers’ responsibility to fund or directly cleanup all damages.
4. Keep sewer rates from increasing excessively by stabilizing maintenance requirements and creating predictable maintenance needs.

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Running hot water after pouring grease down the drain will not dissolve the grease. Instead, the grease will cool off and cause floating mats on the surface if settling tanks, digesters, and the interior of pipes and other surfaces which may cause a shutdown of wastewater treatment units.



What Should I do as a Food Service Establishment?

As a Food Service Establishment (FSE) you are required to install an appropriately-sized grease interceptor. To determine the size of the interceptor, the FSE should consider the volume of wastewater discharge, types of cooking appliances, number and size of dishwashing facilities, types of food being prepared, number of dining room seats, hours of operation and business location.

What is prohibited?

1. The use of hot water to 'flush' the grease interceptor is strictly prohibited.
2. The use of enzymes, chemical or biological additives is not considered an acceptable grease interceptor maintenance practice.
3. Disposal of fryer oil to the City's sewer system or storm water system is specifically prohibited.
4. Wastes removed from the grease interceptors shall not be discharged into the City's sewer system or storm water system. All removed materials shall be disposed of in accordance with Federal, State and Local statutes, policies and ordinances.
5. The practice of re-introducing wastewater pumped from grease interceptors back into an interceptor is strictly prohibited. Interceptors must be serviced and emptied of the waste content.

As a Food Service Establishment what are my responsibilities?

FSEs shall be solely responsible for operating the grease interceptor or trap within the operational capabilities for which it was designed.

1. FSEs shall develop and implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) to minimize grease discharges. FSEs shall be responsible for posting appropriate signage and educating its employees in the proper disposal of food wastes and dishwashing techniques. Written records shall be maintained by the FSE for disposal of cooking oil, grease interceptor maintenance and any repairs. Records shall be maintained for a minimum of 2 years and shall remain on the FSE premises and be available for inspection by the City's staff during normal business hours.
2. Should new sinks or dishwashing units be installed, or existing units replaced with new units of different capacities, which affect the volume of wastewater being discharged to the City's sewer system, it shall be the responsibility of the FSE to notify the City of Claremont's Public Works Department in writing a minimum of 30 days prior to installing such new facilities.
3. When settled solids in the grease interceptor's first chamber accumulate to 20% (1/5th) of the depth of the chamber or 60 days lapses between cleanouts, whichever occurs first, the FSE shall be required to clean out the chamber by contracting a pump-and-haul service. Under-the-sink grease traps shall be cleaned out weekly, or more frequently if needed, by the FSE.



4. No solids greater than ½-inch shall be discharged into the grease interceptor at any time. Grease interceptors shall be kept free from rocks, grit, gravel, sand, shells, utensils, cigarettes, rags, etc. which may reduce the effective treatment volume of the interceptor.
5. The City may randomly schedule sampling of the wastewater exiting the grease interceptor a minimum of one (1) time annually using a NC certified laboratory and report the results to the FSE. If any repairs are discovered by the City's staff during facility inspection, the FSE shall have 45 days from the time of first written notice by the City to make necessary operational adjustments or repairs. It shall be the FSE's responsibility to notify the City in writing when adjustments or repairs have been completed.

Please see City of Claremont Ordinance No. 07-11 for more details.

What are the consequences?

If a grease interceptor fails an inspection, the City inspector shall notify the FSE or Owner that maintenance must be performed in the interceptor within a specified time frame but no more than 10 calendar days. The inspector shall return to re-inspect to ensure compliance. If the interceptor fails re-inspection, a notice of violation shall be issued and maintenance shall be performed immediately.

Any grease interceptor which receives three (3) Notices of Violations within a 24 month period shall be deemed a nuisance by the City Manager and shall require corrective actions as determined by the City Manager to cure the nuisance, including, if deemed necessary termination of all discharges to the City of Claremont Collections System and termination of water services.

If any user is determined to be the source in whole or in part of a sanitary sewer blockage and or overflow, the user will be assessed a fine of not less than \$500.00, plus remediation costs for the cleanup, in addition to any fines dispensed from the State of North Carolina. The fines contained herein are not exclusive and the City Manager may use other methods to remedy the situation.