



Grease and Your Sewer System

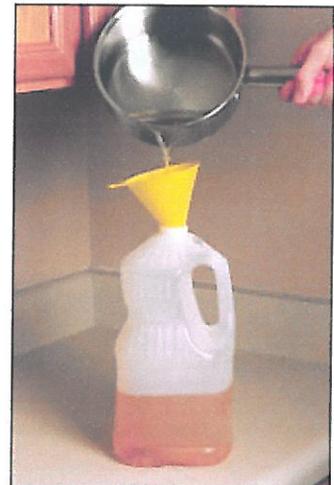
Did you know that grease from cooking is one of the major causes of residential sewer main clogs resulting in sewer spills?

Cooking oil and grease are wastes that the city's sewer system cannot handle and should not be discarded down the drain. Grease, fat and oil can clog sewer lines, causing sewage back-ups and flooding. Sewage back-ups can damage personal and public property. By following a few simple steps, you can help prevent costly sewer spills in the future.

- Small amounts of cooking oil (this includes salad oil, frying oil and bacon fat) should be poured into an old milk carton, frozen juice container, or other non-recyclable package, and disposed of in the garbage.
- Dishes and pots that are coated with greasy leftovers should be wiped clean with a paper towel prior to washing or placing in the dishwasher.
- Instead of placing fat trimmings from meat down the garbage disposal, place them in a plastic bag and discard in the garbage can.



DO NOT dump cooking oil, poultry fat and grease into the kitchen sink or the toilet bowl.



Grease Issues

Here are some tips to help you learn how to avoid grease problems.

Is Grease a problem?

In the sewage collection and treatment business, the answer is an emphatic YES! Grease is singled out for special attention because it collects in sewer lines and can completely plug a pipe. Grease in warm water or liquid may not appear harmful. But as the liquid cools, the Grease hardens and collects on sewer mains and pumps. This may cause sewer backups and/or problems at the city's wastewater treatment plant.

Residential

To help eliminate this problem, all grease or oils from cooking or automotive repairs should be put into containers for proper disposal.

Commercial Grease Issues

Large amounts of oil and grease in the wastewater cause trouble in the collection system pipes and the wastewater treatment plant. It decreases pipe capacity and, therefore requires that piping systems be cleaned more often and/ or some piping to be replaced sooner than otherwise expected.

Problems caused by wastes from restaurants, food processing facilities, and other grease producing establishments has resulted in an ordinance and regulations governing the discharge of grease materials to the sanitary sewer system. Grease producers are required to install preliminary treatment facilities, commonly known as grease traps or interceptors.

Do I need a Grease Trap?

If you use oil or grease in your establishment and they are washed into the sanitary sewer system, then you need a grease trap or interceptor.

Is the Grease Trap I have adequate?

The size is largely determined by your maintenance schedule. If you have to clean it more often than you think you should, chances are the size needs to be increased. Typically, a drive-in restaurant will require between a 70lb. to a 100lb. interceptor depending on the food being prepared.

What if I don't install a Grease Trap?

If you are a restaurant owner and use oil or grease in your food preparation and you don't have a properly maintained grease trap, you likely will have a maintenance problem with a plugged building sewer line. This blockage can create a sewer back-up situation and ultimately a health problem in your restaurant. If the problem is in your building sewer line, then you will have direct responsibility for paying for the maintenance. If the blockage or restriction is in the public sewer main and it can be proven that you are the cause of the blockage, then you may also have to pay for the public sewer to be maintained.