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## **Fats, Oil and Grease (or FOG) Facts**

### **What is FOG?**

Residual fats, oils, and grease (FOG) are by-products that food service and industrial establishments must constantly manage. Typically, FOG enters a facility's plumbing system from ware or equipment washing, floor cleaning, and sanitation. Sanitary sewer systems are neither designed nor equipped to handle the FOG that accumulates on the interior of the sewer collection system pipes. The best way to manage FOG is to keep the material out of the plumbing systems.

### **Purpose of the FOG Program**

The Olivenhain Municipal Water District (OMWD) has developed a FOG Program details of which are outlined in Section 3.7 of OMWD's Rules and Regulations of District Sewerage Facilities. The FOG Program helps prevent sewer line blockages and spills. Wastewater sewer blocks or spills can cause harm to the environment and the community, resulting in costly cleanups and repairs. Any wastewater that enters a storm drain potentially flows untreated into creeks, rivers and ocean, which can result in polluted water and closed beaches.

The intent of the FOG program is to eliminate the discharge of excess grease and oil into the wastewater collection system, minimize the potential formation of blockages to the flow of wastewater as a result of grease accumulations, and eliminate sewage spills that may result from such blockages. The following is a list of general prevention techniques for proper FOG management.

### **FOG General Prevention**

- Never pour grease or oil down sink drains or toilets.
- Scrape grease material and food scraps from all cookware and dishware into a can or the trash for disposal.
- Use strainers in sink drains to catch food scraps and other solids, and empty the drain strainers into the trash for disposal.

- Don't put grease or greasy food in your home garbage disposal. These units only shred solid material into smaller pieces and do not prevent grease from going down the drain.
- Wipe cookware and dishware prior to washing. Don't rely on commercial additives in detergents to dissolve grease: They may just pass it down the line and cause problems in other areas.
- Clean kitchen exhaust system filters routinely.
- Talk with your friends and neighbors about the grease problem so that the community is aware of the risk.

### **Restaurant FOG Procedures**

Restaurants are required to properly train employees, maintain equipment and keep maintenance records. The following is a list of procedures that restaurants need to follow:

- Train all employees to properly handle used fat, oil and grease.
- Post "No Grease" signs over sink and floor drains.
- Dispose of all fat, oil and grease in an appropriate recycling bin.
- Keep drains clean by using vinegar and warm water or commercial products to dissolve grease. Be cautious of chemicals and additives that claim to dissolve grease. Some additives simply push the grease farther down the pipe.
- Install a grease interceptor, grease trap, or oil/water separator that is sized to handle the grease or oil produced at your business.
- Have an approved grease and oil removal company regularly maintain your grease interceptor or oil/water separator. Keep equipment cleaning records for five (5) years.

### **Grease Interceptor**

A grease interceptor is designed to prevent grease, oil, solids and other debris from entering the waste stream, where it becomes a problem by clogging sewers and disrupting the water flow in the system. The grease interceptor captures those wastes and contains them until a waste hauler or pumper service can properly remove them. The following are procedures for grease interceptor maintenance:

- A grease interceptor will be checked monthly and maintained to ensure it is properly working.
- Backups, odors and drainage problems are all signs that a grease trap is not functioning as it should.
- Train all staff on the location, purpose, function, and proper maintenance of grease interceptor on an annual basis or more frequently, dependent upon staff/personnel changes.

- The most important management procedure for grease interceptor is that a company representative be present during any cleaning, pumping or skimming performed by a vendor.
- Copies of records and manifests of grease interceptor waste hauling need to be kept. This would include the name of hauling company, documentation of pumpout water and FOG volume and identification of the waste facility location.

### **Dry Clean-Up**

Practice dry cleanup. Remove food waste with “dry” methods such as scraping, wiping, or sweeping before using “wet” methods that use water. Wet methods typically wash the water and waste materials into the drains where it eventually collects on the interior walls of the drainage pipes. Do not pour grease, fats or oils from cooking down the drain and do not use the sinks to dispose of food scraps. Likewise it is important to educate kitchen staff not to remove drain screens as this may allow paper or plastic cups, straws, and other utensils to enter the plumbing system during clean up. The success of dry clean up is dependent upon the behavior of the employee and availability of the tools for removal of food waste before washing. To practice dry clean up:

- Use rubber scrapers to remove fats, oils and grease from cookware, utensils, chafing dishes, and serving ware.
- Use food grade paper to soak up oil and grease under fryer baskets.
- Use paper towels to wipe down work areas. Cloth towels will accumulate grease that will eventually end up in your drains from towel washing/rinsing.

### **Spill Prevention**

Preventing spills reduces the amounts of waste on food preparation and serving areas that will require clean up. A dry workplace is safer for employees in avoiding slips, trips, and falls. For spill prevention:

- Empty containers before they are full to avoid spills.
- Use a cover to transport interceptor contents to rendering barrel.
- Provide employees with the proper tools (ladles, ample container, etc.) to transport materials without spilling.
- If a spill occurs, copies of spill and clean-up records must be kept. This would include estimated spill volume, time, date and how it occurred and clean-up methodology.