

# FOG Program

## Fats, Oils, & Grease

Proper disposal of fats, oils, and grease protects your business, public health and the environment.  
It's the law, and it's the right thing to do.



**City of Tracy**  
Utilities  
Environmental Compliance

# It's cheaper and easier to prevent than clean up



Grease from first dishwasher cycle.

FOG buildup can clog sewer and drainage pipes, resulting in messy, costly overflows. It's bad for business, the environment and public health. Costs of a raw sewage backup may include:

- **Loss of business** while you're closed to clean up and get the kitchen back into service
- **Cleanup** of the premises by staff and a cleaning or restoration service
- **Hiring** a service to clean the sewer lines
- **Repairs or replacement** of the building, fixtures and equipment
- **Reimbursement** for damages to neighbors and the public sewer system
- **Higher** insurance premiums
- **Fines and penalties**

## Common sources of FOG

- Fried foods
- Cooking meats
- Butter, ice cream, other dairy products
- Gravy and sauces
- Mayonnaise and salad dressings

## FOG myths

**Myth:** Restaurant workers know how to prevent FOG problems.

**Fact:** Few employees have been properly trained to handle and dispose of cooking fats, oils and grease. The owner and management are responsible to train staff in best management practices (BMPs) and oversee the work of contractors hired to clean, remove and recycle FOG.

**Myth:** Pour hot water and detergent or degreasers into the drain to dissolve oil or grease.

**Fact:** That just pushes oil or grease deep into the building sewer pipe where it cools and coats the inside of the pipe. Eventually, the pipe will clog and cause raw sewage to back up into the building.

**Myth:** Storm drains and catch basins are for disposal of dirty water, debris, etc.

**Fact:** Outside drains are built to direct stormwater runoff to the nearest creek or wetland. Using them for any other purpose is a violation of the federal Clean Water Act.

**Myth:** If the sewers back up, the sewer utility will fix it.

**Fact:** Owners are responsible for the sewers on their property. If they damage or back up the public sanitary sewer or drainage systems, they must pay for cleanup and repair and may be subject to fines and penalties.

# Grease interceptors

All food/beverage establishments that are connected to the public sewer system must have an approved grease interceptor. It must be effectively sized, installed and maintained to keep FOG and food debris out of the public sewer system. If your business does not have an adequate grease interceptor, you will be required to install one.



Kitchens generate a lot of FOG.

A grease interceptor is designed to capture FOG before it discharges to the public sewer. All fixtures and drains in food/beverage service areas must connect to a grease interceptor. Grease interceptors need effective inspection and pump out service. They are inspected by the local authority that enforces the federal Clean Water Act and related state and local laws, in partnership with the public works department.

## Types of grease interceptors

**Hydromechanical grease interceptors (HGI)** manage FOG using flow control. They can be installed indoors and have relatively small FOG storage capacity.

**Gravity grease interceptors (GGI)** manage FOG using gravity separation. They are installed outdoors and have larger FOG storage capacity than HGIs.

## General care for grease interceptors

Grease interceptors lose efficiency as they fill with FOG. The recommended cleaning frequency varies by the type of grease interceptor, types of food served and kitchen cleaning practices.

- Effectively size, install, and maintain a pump out interval.
- Set an effective pump out interval just prior to unacceptable levels of FOG leaving the grease interceptor.
- Train staff to inspect the work of contractors to ensure they used proper cleaning procedures before allowing contractors to leave the site.
- Reminder: Kitchen clean-up practices impact the grease interceptor (pump out interval).
- A Preferred Pumper knows industry approved standards for grease interceptor cleaning and maintenance (see page 5 for more on Preferred Pumpers).
- Keep documentation of maintenance service done and where the waste was deposited.

# Food service establishment inspection

An inspector from the public utility will visit a food service establishment to ensure that it is effectively managing FOG in order to keep it out of the public sewer system. The inspector will assess the condition of the facility's grease interceptor(s). He or she will also assess FOG management practices and help teach kitchen staff about best practices for controlling FOG at the source.



Train staff to prepare for the inspection.

Following inspection, the inspector will issue a report that indicates any required corrective actions. Establishments that need to be inspected again will pay a minimum fee of \$207. Failure to comply with the local sewer use ordinance could result in monetary penalties, or the business could be ordered to cease all discharges to the public sewer system.

The chart below indicates the rankings and required response.

Inspection Rank	Establishment Response
Excellent or Good	Continue effective cleaning and maintenance.
Fair	Increase the frequency of cleaning and maintenance. The inspector may reinspect.
Poor  Inspector issues Notice of Non-Compliance  Reinspection required	The establishment is issued a notice of Non-Compliance that lists required corrective actions, the due date to complete the corrective actions and to notify the inspector for reinspection.  Failure to comply could lead to monetary penalties (minimum \$1,000 per day/per violation) or ordered to cease discharge.

## Preparing for the inspection

When the inspector comes to inspect your grease interceptor and food service establishment's FOG management practices, please be prepared. Your preparation and assistance with the inspection will help the process run smoothly.

- Train staff to assist with opening and closing the grease interceptor (HGI).
- Keep a screwdriver or Allen wrench handy to open and close the grease interceptor.
- Keep maintenance records, training logs and FOG reports nearby.

*Inspectors prefer to coach and counsel rather than issue penalties. Ask for their advice.*



# Preferred Pumper Program

The Preferred Pumper Program is a registry of grease interceptor pump-out companies that have agreed to train staff on approved cleaning procedures and submit reports to the local public utility. *Currently, not available in our region.*

A well maintained grease interceptor will reduce or eliminate building sewer issues and expenses related to food service operation. An effective pump out interval is specific to an individual kitchen's menu and clean-up practices. For advice on an effective pump out interval or more training materials, contact your local sewer agency.



Oversee contractors for complete, correct service.

*You must ensure that your contractor(s) properly handle your establishment's FOG.*

## Exhaust hoods, vents and filters

This booklet does not fully address grease removal from exhaust hood systems (vents, filters) or fire prevention systems because these are regulated by other agencies. These systems must be cleaned and maintained to prevent fires and greasy buildup on roofs. Build up will cause degradation of roofing materials, which will wash into storm drains when it rains. Discharge of any contaminated rainwater to the public stormwater system is an illicit discharge by federal, state and local codes.

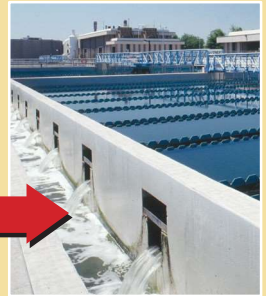
- Clean vent hoods and filters as needed.
- Inspect the exhaust system often enough to prevent grease buildup.
- Maintain the grease collection unit on the roof to protect your business and avoid penalties.
- Hire a service to clean and maintain the exhaust hoods, vents and filters frequently.
- Ensure proper disposal of waste and retain documentation of the disposal.



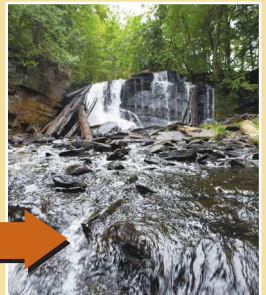
Exhaust systems must be FOG free.

## About inside and outside drains

It's important to keep FOG out of inside and outside drains to prevent sanitary sewer overflows, drainage backups and pollution of local waterways. Many people don't know that inside drains take wastewater *to the sanitary sewer system and a wastewater treatment facility*. Outside drains take stormwater runoff to pipes or ditches that lead *to the nearest wetland or creek*.



Inside drain ➡ sanitary sewer ➡ wastewater treatment facility



Outside storm drain/catch basin ➡ pipe/ditch ➡ creek or wetland

## Storm drains, catch basins and sumps

The public drainage system is designed to carry stormwater runoff and protect local creeks and wetlands from water pollution. It is the food service establishment and property owner's responsibility to maintain the storm drains and catch basins on or near the business premises. The catch basin under the storm drain or grate has a compartment or sump that is designed to capture debris, not chemicals.



## Storm drains are for rainwater. What goes in the storm drain goes straight to the nearest creek or wetland.



- Inspect and clean storm drains, catch basins and sumps that serve the establishment.
- Increase the frequency of inspections and cleanings if necessary to prevent problems.
- Properly dispose of material from the catch basin and sump.
- Keep FOG and cleaners from polluting the public drainage system, creeks and wetlands.

- Never wash or sweep liquids, suds, FOG or debris into storm drains.

Disposing of cleaning solutions or soapy water into gutters and storm drains can harm or kill wildlife, even if it's labeled nontoxic or biodegradable. Even when soap is not used, pollutants such as metals, grease and dirt are washed into drains and are harmful to aquatic organisms and wildlife.

Failure to properly clean and maintain the storm drain system can result in costly overflows, cleanup, business interruptions or closure. If the public drainage system is clogged or damaged, or pollutants reach waterways due to poor maintenance, the owner may be fined and required to pay cleanup costs.

It is the owner's responsibility to know if the debris cleaned from the catch basin qualifies as a hazardous material that must be handled separately from regular waste. Contact the local sewer utility or municipality for advice.

Place **"No Dumping – Drains to River"** markers near storm drains in parking lots and streets as a reminder that all the rain running off impervious surfaces flows directly to our local creeks, streams and wetlands without treatment. Contact the local Public Utility for markers.



# Is your staff trained in Best Management Pract

It's easy to keep FOG out of the sewer and drainage systems if employees are t

## Proper disposal of Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG)

Kitchen FOG belongs in the trash, a grease interceptor or a recycling container. Keep FOG in its place and out of the building and public sewer drainage systems.



Interceptor too full of FOG and not maintained properly; will cause building sewer problems.

- ☐ Recycle cooking grease, oil and food wastes.
- ☐ Contact your waste hauler or a rendering company to get a waste oil container.
- ☐ If containers or bins leak or spill, ask the vendor for new ones.
- ☐ Cover the rendering container (i.e., garbage corral) with a roof if possible.
- ☐ Clean up any spills or leaks immediately using dry methods.
- ☐ Prevent odor, rats and other pests with clean, closed rendering containers and dumpsters.
- ☐ Never dump used cooking oil down the drain.
- ☐ Never use hot water, detergent or degreasers to flush FOG down the drain; this pushes grease into the pipe where it will cool, congeal and clog the sewer.
- ☐ Never dump FOG (or anything!) on the street, parking lot or into storm drains.
- ☐ Schedule frequent FOG pickup or service.
- ☐ Keep records of training, cleaning, service, preventative maintenance and inspections.



***Proper disposal of FOG is easier and cheaper—  
and that's good for your bottom line.***



## ices (BMPs)?

trained in best management practices (BMPs).

### Dry clean up

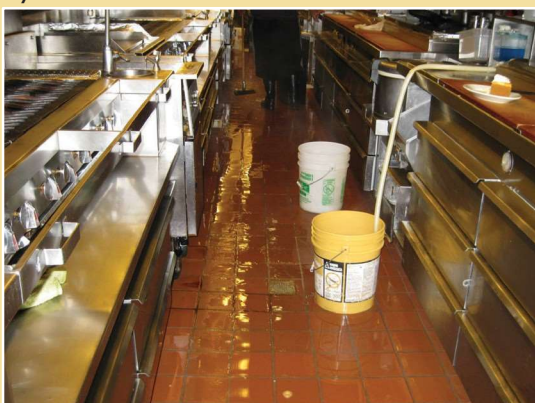
Before washing with water, use dry clean up methods to control FOG and food waste.

- ☐ Scrape or wipe instead of washing food waste from utensils, fixtures and equipment.
- ☐ Use rubber scrapers to remove FOG from cookware and serving surfaces.
- ☐ Wipe down work areas with paper towels.
- ☐ Soak up oil and grease under fryer baskets with paper.
- ☐ Sweep floors before mopping.
- ☐ Scrape food waste into trash bins with plastic liners or into green waste bins, as directed by Solid Waste.
- ☐ Place disposal and recycling containers within easy reach for kitchen employees.
- ☐ Sweep instead of hosing down parking lots, sidewalks and outside areas.

Dry clean up methods have many benefits. Dry floors are safer than slick floors that may cause employees to slip and fall.



Dry wipe before washing.



Sweep floors before mopping.




**Dry clean up saves water and energy costs.**

**Make sure staff and management understand how to use the BMPs and tip**

## **Dishwashing, work areas, floors and spills**

After dry scraping, wiping and sweeping, use these BMPs to keep FOG and food waste out of drains and sewers.

- ☐ Keep work areas clean.
  - ☐ Install properly sized screens, baskets or strainers in sink and floor drains to catch food debris.
  - ☐ Only fill FOG transfer containers halfway so that they are easier to lift. **PREVENT SPILLS!**
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- Keep FOG and food waste out of drains.
- ☐ Wash floor mats and greasy equipment in an area that drains to a grease interceptor—not outside.
  - ☐ Never pour grease or oil into sinks, floor drains or onto a parking lot or street.
  - ☐ When mopping, don't force food debris down the drain.
  - ☐ Keep liquid waste out of trash or dumpster bins.
  - ☐ Train workers to put FOG into recycling/rendering containers without spilling.
  - ☐ Prevent spills through proper storage, handling, and transfer of supplies.
  - ☐ Provide proper equipment to handle FOG.
  - ☐ Be careful not to drop or splash fats, oils and grease.
  - ☐ Keep a spill kit with absorbent materials nearby.
  - ☐ Clean up spills immediately.

**\$ TIP**

***Disconnect the garbage disposal, they are prohibited by law; will save water and energy.***

s in this booklet to keep drains and pipes flowing.

## Storage, trash and recycling areas

Property owners and the owners of food service establishments are responsible for keeping trash enclosure areas from contaminating stormwater.

- ☐ Store waste oil and cleaners in closed containers indoors or under cover outside.
- ☐ Provide dumpsters and bins that are large enough not to overflow.
- ☐ Repair or replace leaky dumpsters, compactors, and trash/oil waste bins.
- ☐ Protect stormwater. Keep lids closed.
- ☐ Transfer containers should only be filled 1/2 to 3/4 when transferring oil waste to outside bin.
- ☐ Keep dumpster and storage areas clean and swept.
- ☐ Hire a contractor to clean-up contaminated trash enclosures. Keep documentation of work done and disposal site.



Trash and recycling areas reflect your kitchen practices.



Standing water due to clogged drains can damage pavement.



*Proper maintenance reduces costly repairs.*

# It's the law, and it's good business

Sewer overflows are harmful to public health and the environment. Federal, state and local laws require FOG control to protect people and water sources. It is the business and property owner's responsibility to comply with the law and ensure that employees and contractors are using BMPs that protect the public sanitary sewer, stormwater drainage systems and water quality. Property and business owners may be held liable for water quality violations, misuse of the public sanitary sewer and stormwater drainage systems, and resulting water pollution.



Grease clog inside a pipe.

## Did you know?

- Storm drains are for clean rainwater only.
- Food service establishments must install and maintain an approved grease interceptor.
- Obstruction of public sewers may result in penalties, fines and other costs.

**The Tracy Municipal Code (T.M.C.) states: “No FSE shall discharge or cause to be discharged into the sewer system FOG that exceeds a concentration level adopted by the council or that may accumulate and/or cause or contribute to blockages in the sewer system...” (T.M.C. 5.26.050)**

For more information, please contact:



**City of Tracy**  
**Utilities**  
Environmental Compliance  
3900 Holly Drive  
Tracy, CA 95304  
(209) 831-6330  
[environmentalcompliance@cityoftracy.org](mailto:environmentalcompliance@cityoftracy.org)  
[www.cityoftracy.org](http://www.cityoftracy.org)

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