



YORK SEWER DISTRICT

Fats, Oils and Grease

Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) are an expensive and unsanitary problem in our sewers. FOG comes from food scraps, meat fats, lard, oil, margarine, butter, baking goods, sauces and dairy products. While it's unlawful to improperly discard these substances, it's also harmful to the environment. The majority of FOG in our sewers comes from restaurants and other food preparation establishments. However, we can all do our part to minimize and eliminate FOG in our sewers.

The Problem:

When Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) are washed down sinks, floor drains or are otherwise improperly discarded, clogs are formed. In time, these clogs can cause sewer backups to occur. These backups are costly to repair, are harmful to the environment, and can potentially cause health hazards. FOG leads to increased sewer maintenance and wastewater treatment costs, which ultimately means increased costs for ratepayers.

Sanitary Problems:

Sewer backups and clogs attract insects and vermin, which create health hazards for everyone. These backups and clogs can also cause sewer overflows which result in a release of untreated sewage into our neighborhoods and waterways.

Requirements:

It is against the Rules and Regulations of the York Sewer District for any person to discard FOG by any means that allow it to enter our sewers.

In addition, restaurants and other food preparation establishments are required to install grease interceptors (commonly known as grease traps). These grease interceptors are to be installed in the waste line leading from plumbing fixtures or equipment where grease may be introduced to the sewer system. Grease interceptors must be properly sized and regularly maintained. Poor maintenance of grease interceptors is a major cause of the FOG problem in our sewers.

Enforcement:

The District must respond to grease blockages in the sewer in an aggressive manner to restore and maintain sewer service to all affected users. Our response includes removal of FOG blockages, investigating to identify the source of origin, and may result in enforcement actions and the levying of fines and penalties as well as cost recovery associated with removing FOG blockages and sewer cleaning.

What You Can Do:

Everyone can take steps at home and work to prevent FOG from entering our sewers.

- Never pour Fats, Oils, or Grease down into drains or flush down toilets.
- When cooking, pour any Fats, Oils, or Grease into an empty jar. These materials solidify when cooled. Once the jar is full, secure the lid and put it in the trash.
- Avoid letting grease into your garbage disposal. Put the remaining food on plates and utensils in the trash.
- For restaurants, or other food preparation establishments, FOG can be a valuable resource as a recyclable. FOG can be sold to rendering companies for use in soaps, fertilizers, and animal feeds.

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Other Resources:

More tips on how to reduce FOG for residents and restaurants are available on the York Sewer District web site and its Best Management Practices Fact Sheet published by the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Here are some additional tips on how to reduce FOG in our sewer lines and pump stations:

- Monitoring outside grease traps regularly and cleaning them when FOG reaches 25% of the grease trap depth. Monitor inside grease traps monthly and clean them at least once every three months.
- Disposing of waste cooking oil (deep fryer oil) through an established recycling company and never down the drain.
- "Dry wiping" pots, pans and dishware prior to dish washing to minimize the discharge of FOG and solids.
- Disposing of food wastes by solid waste removal or composting rather than using garbage disposals.
- Verifying all grease interceptors cleaning and maintenance activities by a manager or supervisor to ensure that the device is operating properly.
- Keeping a log of maintenance activities to help demonstrate compliance with the use of best management practices.