

CITY OF TULSA

FATS, OILS AND GREASE (FOG)



One of the worst things that can happen to a home or business is discovering a sewage overflow due to plumbing problems. More often than not, when those overflows are investigated the cause is clear — fats, oils and grease (FOG) have clogged the pipes and prevented it from performing its duty.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, 47 percent of sanitary sewage overflows (SSOs) are caused by FOG. This is unsurprising when you learn that a single restaurant can contribute anywhere from **800 to 17,000 pounds of grease** per year to our wastewater treatment plants.

How Does FOG Cause Problems?

Think of the pipes in our sewer system as the veins leading to the beating heart of the city — our wastewater treatment plant. When FOG is sent down the drain, particles separate from the water and cling to the walls of the pipes. As this continues, buildup occurs until a pipe is so clogged that it may be reduced to a fraction of its normal capacity.

This reduction in size can lead to backflow and sewage overflow on your property or your downstream neighbor's property. If one of those areas of buildup hardens like plaque, it has the potential to break off and then cause a “heart attack” as it reaches the center of the system. Proper FOG disposal can prevent this kind of buildup and disruption to Tulsa’s wastewater system.

Preventing FOG Buildup in Businesses

For food-handling organizations, taking precautions to avoid sending FOG into the sewer system not only saves the city time and money but can also prevent costly plumbing problems for the business. Following these precautions will help in the effort to reduce sewer issues:

- Keep FOG out of the sanitary system by disposing of it through city-approved methods.
- Meet the FOG discharge limits required by the City of Tulsa.*
- Install grease traps or a grease interceptor if required by the City of Tulsa.*
- Ensure interceptors are at the proper distance (typically a minimum of 10 feet) from the hot water source to allow wastewater to cool before reaching the interceptor.
- Place grease traps in an area accessible for regular inspection and cleaning.
- Set up routine maintenance and service for any traps or interceptors (i.e. fryers, vents, grills, etc.).
- Dry wipe and scrape plates, trays, pots, pans and utensils before washing.
- Clean up spills immediately with disposable wipes or an absorbent (e.g. absorbent pads, oil dry, or kitty litter).
- Dry sweep floors before mopping and dispose of mop water in a mop sink.
- Maintain records on site documenting proper disposal of FOG for at least three years.
- Maintain a temperature of water entering the grease trap of less than 120 degrees. This will prevent hot water coming out of dishwashers from emulsifying the grease and causing it to congeal after the separator.
- Use only City of Tulsa permitted haulers to pump and clean grease interceptors. To see a list of those haulers, go to: www.cityoftulsa.org/government/departments/water-and-sewer/wastewater/grease-handling.

* To learn what's right for your business, visit www.cityoftulsa.org and search for “Plumbing permit request forms” and complete the necessary forms under the plumbing section.

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GENERAL TIPS FOR FOG PREVENTION AT HOME

There are also several things you can do at home to prevent fats, oils and grease from clogging your pipes:

- Minimize the use of soaps and degreasers. Most soaps are based on animal fat or vegetable fats. These types of soap can contribute to a grease-clogged drain. Dishwashing liquid does break up grease, but only to a small extent.
- Refrain from putting leftover food down the garbage disposal. Instead, dispose of food waste in the trash.
- Drain kitchen grease into a jar or can and dispose of it in the trash.
- Wipe off greasy residue with a paper towel before washing dishes.
- Recycle waste cooking oil and grease, and store them in a covered container between uses.
- Dispose of cooking oil, grease or other household pollutants at the permanent collection facility located at 4502 S. Galveston Ave. or recycle fryer oils at any M.E.T. location.

TOP 10 LIST

Items that can cause clogged drains:

- 1** Fats, oils and grease
- 2** Dirt, skin flakes and hair binding to soap scum on pipe walls
- 3** Pre-moistened 'flushable' wipes
- 4** Feminine hygiene products
- 5** Pasta and rice
- 6** Chicken bones
- 7** Coffee grinds and egg shells
- 8** Dental floss and cotton-tipped swabs
- 9** Foreign objects, such as kid's toys
- 10** Cloth rags and other fabrics



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A New Kind of Energy.