

Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG)

How to Prevent FOG from Damaging Your Home and the Environment



Fats, oils, and grease aren't just bad for your arteries and your waistline; they're bad for sewers too.

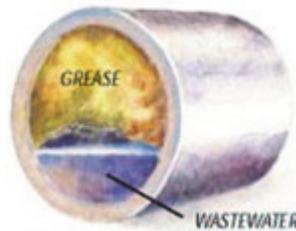
Sewer overflows and backups can cause health hazards, damage home interiors, and threaten the environment.

The second leading cause of all sewer overflows is grease blockages. Grease can get into the sewer from household drains as well as from poorly maintained grease traps in restaurants and other businesses.

Where does grease come from?

Most of us know grease is a byproduct of cooking. Grease is found in such things as:

- Meat fats
- Lard
- Cooking oil
- Shortening
- Butter and margarine
- Food scraps
- Baked goods
- Sauces and soups
- Dairy products



Too often, grease is washed into the plumbing system usually through the kitchen sink. Grease should never be poured down the drain. Many people are unaware that pouring hot water and detergent down the drain only breaks up grease temporarily. Grease then moves further down the sewer line and can cause problems in other areas.

If a small amount of grease gets into your drain, flush immediately with cold water. Home garbage disposals do not keep grease out of the plumbing system.

When grease gets into a sewer line it sticks to the insides of the pipes (both on your property and in the streets). Over time, the grease will build up and eventually block the entire pipe. The results can be:

- Raw sewage overflowing into your home
- An expensive and unpleasant cleanup that often must be paid for by the homeowner
- Raw sewage overflowing into your yards and streets

What you can do to help

- Never pour grease down the sink drains and toilets.
- Pour small amounts of grease into a non-recyclable container (e.g., juice can, empty milk carton). Place the container in the refrigerator to harden the grease before disposal in the trash.
- Before washing, scrape grease and food scraps from plates, pots, utensils, and cooking surfaces.
- Never put grease down garbage disposals.
- Be cautious of chemicals and additives (including soaps and detergents) that claim to dissolve grease. Some of these additives simply pass grease down pipes where it can clog the sewer lines.