

FATS, OILS & GREASE (F.O.G.)

Under the Pretreatment Policy, all commercial entities discharging fats, oils or grease to the sewer system must install a grease trap or grease interceptor to assist with keeping our sewer lines from plugging. This policy will aid in keeping the sewer rates low, as plugged lines have cost rate payers in the thousands of dollars for repair and maintenance.

Grease is a problem that affects everyone in our sewer district, not just the commercial customers. We want to remind the residential customers in our area that even very small amounts of grease from washing dishes or dumping it down the drain enters the sewer lines and begin to build up on the walls of the sewer pipes. The build-up restricts flow and by its self or in combination with other materials can block pipes completely, causing raw sewage to back up into your home or business or overflow into the streets and streams, potentially jeopardizing the public health and the environment. Grease cannot be diluted with hot water. As the grease cools in the sewer lines, it hardens clinging to the wall of the pipe.

Residential customers can help by disposing of fats, oils or grease in the garbage by scraping plates and bowls clean and wiping the cooking utensil, pots and pans with a paper towel prior to washing. Remember, grease affects all of our rate payers. If you think your facility may need a grease trap or grease interceptor, contact Jon Andersen at (360) 577-2040.

WHAT NOT TO FLUSH – BE SEWER SMART BY FLUSHING ONLY TISSUE

Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG), non-dispersible materials (e.g. diapers & wipes) and solid food waste, blocking sewer pipes are a serious maintenance problem for both the TRRWA and private property owners. These sanitary sewer overflows are a violation of the Clean Water Act. In addition, flushing FOG, non-dispersible materials such as rags, hair, latex, personal hygiene products, cleaning wipes, and solid food waste may inhibit the proper functioning of pump stations and the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Home garbage disposals do not keep grease out of sewer pipes. The combination of grease and solid food waste from garbage disposals and non-dispersible material contribute to blockages in the sewer system. Just because a product is “bio-degradable” does not make it safe to flush. Most “bio-degradable” products like wipes do not readily “disperse” upon flushing and actually remain in a solid-state traveling through the sewer system. Unlike toilet paper or tissue, which is readily dispersible and dissolves quickly into the waste stream. Products that claim to dissolve grease may dislodge a blockage, or temporarily change the form of grease allowing the grease to move further down the sewer line before re-congealing and forming blockages.

Here are some guidelines for keeping sewers flowing:

- Never pour grease down sinks or toilets.
- Pour grease and oil into a can and put it in the trash (freeze the grease).
- Scrape food scraps into the trash. Alternatively, compost food scraps.
- Catch food scraps with baskets or strainers in sink drains and throw scraps in the trash. Do not flush non-dispersible material such as rags, hair, latex, personal hygiene products, cleaning wipes. Dispose of this material in the trash.
- Flush only toilet paper down the toilet.