

## ***FOG Reduction Practices Continued***

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- ~ Don't remove drain screens.
- ~ Don't flush FOG through sinks or drains using hot water, emulsifying detergents or chemicals. Flushing with hot water or chemicals will push the FOG further into the sanitary sewer where they will form blockages that can cause overflows into numerous homes and businesses.
- ~ Do dry-scrape cookware, utensils, dishes, etc. into trash bins to remove food scraps, fats, oils and grease prior to washing. The largest source of FOG comes from washing greasy cookware and dishes.
- ~ Do use paper towels to wipe down work areas. Cloth towels will accumulate grease that will eventually end up in building drains from towel washing and rinsing.

## ***Grease Trap & Interceptor Maintenance Inspections***

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The Department of Building Construction & Inspections performs routine maintenance inspections of food preparation businesses to minimize FOG discharges into building and sanitary sewers. These maintenance inspections verify the proper maintenance and cleaning of grease interceptors and grease traps. Please contact the Department of Building Construction & Inspections at (804) 501-5869 if you would like to obtain a FOG inspection checklist or if you have any questions regarding the FOG inspection program.

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***Henrico County  
Department of  
Building Construction  
& Inspections***

**Grease Interceptor  
&  
Grease Trap  
Maintenance**

**Eliminating  
Fats, Oils & Grease  
(FOG)**



## **What Is FOG?**

Every commercial cooking operation produces waste products of Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG). FOG are byproducts of cooking that can be found in:

- Food Scraps
- Butter & Margarine
- Meat & Dairy products
- Lard & Cooking Oils
- Baking Goods
- Sauces

FOG typically enters a facility's plumbing system from washing pots, pans, plates, utensils, cooking equipment, cooking surfaces and floors. FOG that is repeatedly washed down sinks and floor drains will accumulate in plumbing drain pipes and County sewers. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that up to 50 percent of sanitary sewer system overflows are caused by excessive deposits of FOG. The EPA also reports that FOG is the secondary cause of another 25 percent of sewer system overflows. Excessive accumulations of FOG prematurely corrode sanitary sewer lines resulting in costly repairs and replacements of underground sewers. FOG can block drains and main sewer lines and potentially become an environmental and public health risk.



*Grease buildup in sanitary sewer*

## **Maintenance of Grease Traps & Interceptors**

Grease traps and grease interceptors are designed to prevent the accumulation of FOG in building drains and sewer systems. The Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) requires the installation of grease traps and grease interceptors for any fixtures or equipment located in food preparation areas that discharge grease-laden



*Unmaintained grease interceptor*

waste. The USBC further requires that all grease traps and interceptors be properly maintained so that they continually prevent FOG from entering the building sewers and public sanitary sewer systems. Violations of the USBC are Class 1 misdemeanors that are punishable by a fine, upon conviction, of up to \$2500. Property and business owners that are convicted are required by law to abate the violation in addition to paying the fine.

Grease traps and interceptors that become clogged turn septic, causing odors that attract insects and rodents. Recommended guidelines for assuring the proper maintenance and operation of grease interceptors and traps include the following:

~ Commercial food preparation businesses should ensure that all grease-bearing drains discharge to the grease trap and/or interceptor.

These may include mop, wash, prep, utility or pre-rinse sinks; can washers; and floor drains. Toilets shall not be connected to grease traps or interceptors.

~ Establish regular inspections, pump out and cleaning schedules to prevent blockages of the building and public sanitary sewer system. A list of available local companies that provide grease interceptor and grease trap cleaning and maintenance can be obtained from the Yellow Pages of the local telephone directory or by calling (804)501-5869.

~ Maintenance logs should be kept of any cleaning, pumping, skimming or repair to the grease traps/interceptors.

~ Train employees on the location, purpose, function and proper maintenance of grease traps and interceptors.

## **FOG Reduction Practices**

The Department of Public Utilities assesses a strong waste surcharge on the monthly water and sewer utility bills of food preparation businesses that discharge FOG into the sanitary sewer system. Implementing the following FOG reduction practices along with performing regular maintenance of grease traps and interceptors can eliminate the extra surcharges.

~ Don't wash or dump FOG from cooking or any under-counter grease traps down sinks or drains.

~ Don't use sinks to dispose of food scraps.