

# Best Management Practices for Fats, Oils, and Grease

Help Keep Our Environment Clean, Keep F.O.G. Out of Our Sewers



## What is F.O.G.?

Fats, oil, and grease, or "FOG", typically are by-products of cooking. They usually are found in such items as food scraps, meat fats, margarine, butter, cooking oil, dairy products and sauces.

The City of Washington has a "Grease Trap Policy" that regulates commercial establishments, such as restaurants, cafeterias, and supermarkets, that contribute FOG to the city's Sanitary Sewer System. However, residential customers also are significant contributors. Even though the City does not have a grease trap policy to regulate residential customers, there are limits for the amount of oil and grease that can be put into the sewer system. The limit is one hundred milligrams per liter (100 mg/l), or in simpler terms one (1) pound of oil and grease for every ten thousand (10,000) gallons of wastewater.



## **Fats, oils & grease**

Many community sewer systems attribute the cause of ninety percent (90%) of all backed up sewers and sanitary sewer overflows to blockages caused by FOG. After oil and grease is dumped into a sink or toilet, it begins to cool and gel, sticking to the walls of the drain pipes and sewer lines. Over time, this buildup can reduce the inside width of the pipe to a point that the pipe cannot carry the wastewater being dumped into it. Once this happens, pipes and manholes begin to overflow, dumping raw sewage into homes, yards, streets and storm drains. These overflows can damage property, harm the environment and create health hazards.

### **What can you do to keep "FOG" out of our sewers?**

- Never pour fats, oils or grease into sink drains.
- Never use a toilet as a wastebasket.
- Use a "Dry Cleanup Method": Use a paper towel or rubber spatula to scrape wet scraps from pots, pans and other cooking utensils into a can or trash for disposal. Solid waste can accommodate ten percent (10%) liquid, so these scrapings, as well as gravies and other oily sauces, can be sent to the garbage can.
- Put food scraps in the trash can, not the sewer system.

If you have questions concerning "FOG" and its effects on the Sanitary Sewer System, call the Water Resources Division at 252-975-9686.



*A message from the City of Washington*  
[Public Works Department](#)