

FOG and Interceptors

Interceptors:

There are two types of collection devices for fats, oil and grease:

A **gravity grease interceptor** is a large (500- 4,000 gallon capacity) in-ground collector, and is generally located outside and usually has all kitchen waste streams connected.

A **hydro mechanical grease interceptor** is a much smaller (30-50 gallon capacity) collector, and is generally located inside the kitchen/food preparation area, and is usually connected to all kitchen waste streams except automated dishwashers.

Both systems require diligent effort by restaurant facility managers and staff to ensure that they are regularly maintained and properly serviced. For a grease collection device to work correctly, it must be properly designed, installed, maintained, and serviced regularly.

FOG:

FOG refers to Fats, Oil and Grease from food preparation, food services and kitchen cleanup.

Why is FOG a problem?

Restaurants and food service establishments contribute greatly to the build-up of FOG in the sewer lines because of the amount of grease produced during cooking, food preparation and kitchen clean-up. If your establishment is found to cause a sanitary sewer overflow because you have not controlled grease discharge, you may be responsible for the clean-up costs, any fines resulting from the discharge, as well as the costs associated with property damage resulting from the spill. Your facility's public image will also be impacted with sewer problems.

What is required?

All restaurants and food service establishments in Lake County are required to install, utilize, and properly maintain gravity grease interceptors (Lake County Sewer Use Ordinance 605-606). Penalties for non-compliance range from fines to disconnection of service.

What are some proper FOG handling and storage methods?

- Dispose or recycle cooking oil through a licensed waste hauler or grease recycler. (Not down the drain, a storm drain, or into parking lots.
- Inspect and service your grease interceptor frequently. No more than 25% of the depth of the gravity grease interceptor should be floating oil, grease and accumulated sediment on the bottom of the interceptor.
- Practice "dry clean-up". Use scrapers and paper towels to pre clean serving ware, pots, pans and cooking surfaces prior to cleaning them with soap and water.



“Promoting Water Awareness”

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Interceptors

**Information for restaurants
and food service
establishments**



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Best Management Practices (BMPs)

BMPs to prevent blockages in the sewer system:

1. **Train kitchen staff about how they can help to ensure BMPs are implemented.** Reason: People are willing to support an effort if they understand the basis for it. **Benefit:** All of the subsequent benefits of BMPs will have a better chance of being implemented.
2. **Post “No Grease” signs above sinks and on the front of dishwashers.** Reason: Signs serve as a constant reminder for staff working in kitchens. **Benefit:** These reminders help minimize grease discharge to the traps/interceptors and reduce the cost of cleaning and disposal.
3. **Use water temperatures less than 140 degrees in all sinks, especially the pre-rinse sink before the mechanical dishwasher.** Reason: Temperatures in excess of 140 degrees will dissolve grease, but the grease can re-congeal/solidify in the sewer collection system as the water cools. **Benefit:** The facility will reduce energy costs for heating water, reduce plugging of the sewer lateral, and the need to hire someone to unplug it.
4. **Use a three sink dishwasher system (washing/rinse/sanitizing in a 50-100 ppm bleach solution) where water is less than 140 degrees.** Reason: The three sink system uses water less than 140 degrees, where mechanical dishwashers requires minimum temperature of 160 degrees. The UPC prohibits the discharge of dishwasher water to grease traps. **Benefit:** The facility will reduce energy costs for heating the water and operating the dishwasher.
5. **Recycle waste cooking oil.** Reason: There are waste oil recyclers in northern California. **Benefit:** Recycling is a low cost option, which will reduce the amount of garbage a facility must pay to have hauled away.
6. **“Dry Wipe” pots, pans and dishware prior to dishwashing.** Reason: By dry wiping and disposing in the garbage, the material will not be sent to the grease traps. **Benefit:** This will reduce the amount of material collected in the grease trap and interceptors and will lessen cleaning and maintenance costs of FOG in collection systems.
7. **Dispose of food waste by recycling or by depositing in with other solid wastes.** Reason: To divert food wastes away from grease traps and interceptors. **Benefit:** Recycling or solid wastes disposal will reduce the frequency and costs of grease trap and interceptor cleaning.

Recommended Maintenance Activities

1. **Managers should try to observe all interceptor cleaning/maintenance activities to ensure the device is properly cleaned and operational.** Reason: Grease interceptors service companies may take shortcuts, and not completely clean the interceptor. **Benefit:** Witnessing this activity will ensure you are getting the full value for your money.
2. **Clean under-sink hydro mechanical grease interceptors weekly.** If interceptors are more than 25% full, increase the cleaning frequency. Reason: Weekly (or more frequent) cleaning of the hydro mechanical grease interceptors by the facility's own staff will reduce maintenance costs. If the facility does not have a gravity grease interceptor, the hydro mechanical grease interceptor is the only means of preventing grease from entering the sewer system. **Benefit:** Cleaning under-sink hydro mechanical grease interceptors frequently will reduce the frequency and cost of gravity grease interceptor cleaning.
3. **Clean gravity grease interceptors routinely.** Reason: Gravity grease interceptors must be cleaned routinely to ensure that grease accumulation does not cause the interceptor to operate poorly. **Benefit:** Routine cleaning will prevent plugging of the sewer lateral, and need to hire someone to unplug it.
4. **Keep a Maintenance Log.** Reason and Benefit: The Maintenance Log serves as a record of the frequency and volume of cleaning and maintenance, and helps insure the interceptor is cleaned on a regular basis.

Inspections and Sampling

Periodic inspections and sampling may occur under Ordinance #48 - Sewer Use Ordinance of the Hidden Valley Lake Community Services District.

Article IV, Section 404 Inspections and Sampling:

The District may inspect the facilities of any user to ascertain whether the purpose of this Ordinance is being met and all requirements are being complied with. Persons or occupants of premises where wastewater is created or discharged shall allow the District or its representatives ready access at all reasonable times to all parts of the premises for the purposes of inspections or sampling or in the performance of any of their duties. The District shall have the right to set up on the user's property such devices as are necessary to conduct sampling or metering.

For further information please contact
Lake County Special Districts
Phone (707) 263-0119 Fax (707) 263-3836
230 A Main Street, Lakeport, CA 95453

All information in this pamphlet is available on the Lake County website and has been reproduced for your reference.

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