

# Fats, Oil and Grease FOG

City of Madison Engineering Division  
Engineering Operations

Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) is the term used to describe materials that when disposed of in the sanitary sewer system, create a hard layer of material that can clog service laterals and main lines.



**Private sewer lateral and City's sewer main affected by FOG**

The presence of FOG in the sewer system affects everyone in the community. These materials enter sewer pipes through restaurant, commercial and residential sinks and can cause different problems.

- FOG sticks to the walls of the pipe and can eventually build up and clog the pipe causing sewage to flow backwards.
- Sewage can flow out of manholes into streets, creeks and lakes, or up floor drains into private properties.
- FOG spills can reach and contaminate green areas, flow into the storm system and eventually reach our lakes and creeks. The contamination created by FOG can damage the habitat of fish and wild life.

Besides preventing environmental and financial problems, measures taken to reduce FOG could positively affect Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) and Total Suspended Solids (TSS) concentrations:

- Reduce to a minimum the amount of food discharged down drains of kitchen sinks and dishwashers. Instruct the kitchen personnel to dispose of this material into trashcans as much as possible. Use dishwasher and sink drainers to capture solid material.
- Maintain grease traps and grease interceptors frequently. External interceptors should be pumped, not "skimmed."
- Garbage disposals contribute excessive organic material to the sanitary sewer system. This can increase BOD and TSS concentrations. Limit the use of garbage disposals in favor of disposing of organic material in trashcans.
- Make sure that plumbing in the food preparation area actually goes to the grease interceptor or grease trap. Make certain that floor drains and sinks do not bypass the traps/interceptors.
- Make sure that the fryer oil is disposed of in the recycling barrel.
- Clean up grease spills with an absorbent material, like cat litter, and dispose of it as dry waste.