

## Proper Fats, Oils and Grease Disposal



Now that the holidays are upon us, you may find yourself at home using your kitchen a lot more than you typically do, preparing meals and treats for you and your family. Florence Public Works would like to remind you that keeping fats, oils and grease out of your sinks is not only vitally important to the health and safety of our sanitary sewer system, but it is also important to keep your own home plumbing clear and free flowing. Don't let a clogged drain spoil your plans this holiday season!

FOG – fats, oils, and grease, is a problem for all of us. When FOG goes down the drain it cools, hardens and sticks to the pipes in your home or business and in the public sanitary sewer system. It builds up in pipes and eventually blocks water from flowing through. When that happens, wastewater can back up into your home or business or cause a sewer overflow. It's messy and it can be expensive, but we can all take steps to prevent FOG.

As we mentioned, pouring FOG down the drain (intentional or unintentional) can cause major sewage backups, clogs and overflows. Instead of pouring cooking grease down the drain, save it in a container, place it in the freezer to harden and then place it in the trash.

FOG can cause serious sewage issues and costly repairs for homeowners. Clogged pipes can also overflow into homes, yards, streets and even the river. Everyday washing of plates, pots, pans and cooking equipment — such as turkey fryers — sends FOG down the drain, which over time will eventually build up in the sewer system, coating the sewer pipes and wet wells of City pumping stations.



While FOG may not seem harmful as a warm liquid, once it cools, it's a different story. As the liquid cools, the fat, grease, and oil congeal and harden, causing

major blockages, not only in your pipes, but in the public sewer system. FOG collects in the piping system over time and can be the cause for major system problems and breakdowns for the Florence wastewater treatment plant.

Here are four ways you can fight FOG:

- Keep your house sink drains fat-free. Cool it, can it, freeze it and place it in the trash. Pour cooled fats, oils and grease carefully into a container with a lid on it.
- It's not just FOG. FOG is also generated by food preparation and from food products including: cooking oil, shortening, butter, margarine, lard, meat fats, food scraps, baked goods, sauces, salad dressings, dairy products and that prized turkey dressing.
- When in doubt, throw it out. Food scraps containing FOG belong in the trash. Even if you have a garbage disposal in your sink, leftover FOG from cooked substances can build up and leave your pipes in need of major cleaning, and possibly, a costly plumbing bill.
- Scrape your plate. Scrape all your remaining food scraps from your plates, pots, pans and fryers into your trashcan before you wash your dishes. Avoid the garbage disposal, and use something as simple as a strainer in your sink to catch unwanted food scraps. Prior to washing your plates and cooking supplies, use a paper towel to absorb excess FOG and toss it in the trash



Remember, grease from cooking, gravy, cooking oil, and sauces may look harmless as a liquid, but when it cools it gets thick and sticky. That means if you pour grease down your drain, it sticks to pipes and eventually causes clogs and messy overflows.

This holiday season give yourself the gift of clog-free pipes and the community the gift of clean water. Put your sink on a fat-free diet. Drop your FOG into the trash.

