



Frequently Asked Questions for (FOG) Fats, Oil, and Grease



Food Service Grease Interceptor and Grease Trap Tips

Hillsborough County's Industrial Pretreatment staff is here to help you maintain compliance with local wastewater discharge requirements. Here are a few tips and guidelines to help you be successful as you operate your grease interceptors and grease traps, oil change, or car wash business in Hillsborough County.

What is grease? Everyone knows that oils and grease are used for cooking, baking and preparing foods of all variety, some for private consumption such as in residential homes and some for commercial consumption as in restaurants and cafeterias. Few people realize that grease, fat and oil are lipid-based compounds that originate from animal and vegetable matter. Lipids are substances, including fats, greases and waxes, combined with proteins and carbohydrates that make up structural components of living cells.

Who generates grease? Greasy wastewater that ends up in the County's wastewater collection system originates from a variety of sources like residential, commercial, industrial, public and private facilities.

What is a grease trap? A grease trap is a device that is installed inside the building or under the sink to separate and retain grease and solid materials from the waste stream while allowing the balance of the liquid waste to discharge to the wastewater collection system by gravity. Baffles in the grease trap retain the wastewater long enough for the grease to congeal and rise to the surface. Traps have a removable lid on the top surface to facilitate inspection and cleaning.

What is a grease interceptor? A grease interceptor is a device that is installed outside the building to separate and retain grease and solid materials from the wastestream while allowing the balance of the liquid waste to discharge to the wastewater collection system by gravity. The capacity of the interceptor provides adequate residence time so that the wastewater has time to cool, allowing any grease time to congeal and rise to the surface where it accumulates until the interceptor is cleaned.

What size grease trap / grease interceptor do I need? Sizing requirements vary. Contact a commercial licensed plumber for sizing requirements. See the Florida Building Code (Plumbing) for additional information.

Why do I have a grease trap when I don't "fry" anything or cook with grease? That's the number one question asked of the grease management team. The reason you need a grease trap or grease interceptor is because of the clean up, not the cooking. When you wash your cooking equipment, hood, pots, pans, plates, dishes, and utensils you are washing fats, oils, and grease (not to mention solids) in the building drainage system. It's the fats, oils, grease, and solids (food stuffs) that damage plumbing systems and municipal sewer systems.

Why is it necessary to pump my grease trap, oil/water/sand separator, or lint trap? Because if you don't clean, pump, and maintain your trap or device in good working order you will allow waste to enter the public sewer system that will clog pipes. When pipes get clogged with grease, lint, sand, or other debris they have the potential to cause overflows. When sewers overflow people and animals are put at risk of disease.

How often should I have my grease device serviced? All grease interceptors and grease traps pretreatment devices shall be serviced at a minimum, once every 90 days. The minimum service frequency set forth in this ordinance shall not supersede any predetermined servicing frequency that are more stringent than 90 days. At no time shall any device's content of deleterious waste exceed 25% of wetted volume of the device. Alternative service schedules for grease interceptors and grease traps are subject to individual review and approval. Users must be able to demonstrate device is capable of extended periods without service and be able to continuously meet the 25 % standard.

Who should I call for service? Look in the phone book's yellow pages or do an Internet search for local vendors. Typically, under the heading of "septic tanks & systems - cleaning & repairing" you will find businesses that will service grease interceptors and traps. Or better yet, ask another food service establishment, similar to your own, what vendor they have used to service their grease separator device. Your vendor should be licensed and authorized to transport and dispose of food and grease based wastes. You should receive a manifest (receipt) for the service which should indicate that the waste has been disposed of in accordance with all local, state, and federal regulations.

What are Best Management Practices? Best Management Practices are practices that a food service facility operator or anyone who cooks or prepares food can utilize to minimize that amount of grease being discharged from their business. The following Best Management Practices for Food Service Facilities are provided to the owners/managers of businesses to assist them in developing procedures and/or practices which effectively reduce the discharge of Fats, Oil and Grease from their wastewater discharge.

How often must I clean my grease trap or interceptor? Grease trap disposal for users equipped with grease traps of less than 50 pounds of grease retention capacity (small under the counter devices) are authorized to perform self-cleaning and waste removal. Materials removed from the grease trap shall be disposed of in the solid waste disposal system.

Can I apply for a variance for my grease interceptor pumping frequency? Alternative service schedules for grease interceptors and grease traps are subject to individual review and approval. Users must be able to demonstrate device is capable of extended periods without service and able to continuously meet the 25% standard.

What will the inspector look for and do? The County will conduct unannounced or scheduled site inspections to determine compliance with this ordinance. The non-permitted users are inspected for the proper installation, operation, maintenance, and records management of the appropriate pretreatment device. Wastewater samples may be collected in order to determine compliance with the discharge standards in this ordinance.

What records do I need to keep? A copy of the invoice and/or manifest for services provided reflecting the date of service and volume of waste removed shall remain on-site or available for inspection by the County for a minimum period of 12 months.

Oil Water Separators and Sand Trap Tips

How often should I have my separator/trap serviced? At no time shall any device's content of deleterious waste exceed 25% of wetted volume of the device.

What does the County allow before I have to have my separator or sand trap serviced? Once your separator has accumulated 25% of its wetted depth in petroleum-based wastes (oil, fuel, sand, and/or solvents) you will need to call your selected vendor for servicing of the device. However, regularly scheduled servicing is your best bet to stay in compliance. Most vendors will gladly set up a regular service schedule for you.

Who should I call for service? The Hillsborough County Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) offers a list of recycling sources/vendors on their website www.epchc.org or email EPC staff: epcinfo@epchc.org If you do not have internet access, please ask the inspector for a copy of the list from EPC. Your vendor should be licensed and authorized to transport and dispose of petroleum-based wastes. You should receive a manifest (receipt) for the service which should indicate that the waste has been disposed of in accordance with all local, state, and federal regulations.

Commercial Laundry Lint Trap Tips

Hillsborough County's Industrial Pretreatment staff is here to help you maintain compliance with local wastewater discharge requirements. Here are a few tips and guidelines to help you be successful as you operate your commercial laundry facility in Hillsborough County.

How often should I have my lint trap serviced? That all depends on a few different factors: size of the lint trap, volume of business, and type of screens in use. Typically, a commercial laundry with a 900 gallon lint trap will service their device approximately twice a year, but if your lint trap is smaller; you may have to have it serviced more frequently. Also, if the line trap is small and the screen(s) or basket is removable, you can empty it yourself.

What does the County allow before I have to have my lint trap serviced? At no time shall any device's content of deleterious waste exceed twenty-five (25%) percent of wetted volume of the device.

Who should I call for service? Look in the phone book's yellow pages or do an Internet search for local vendors. Typically, under the heading of "*septic tanks & systems - cleaning & repairing*" you will find businesses that will service commercial laundry lint traps. Better yet, ask another commercial laundry, similar to your own, what vendor they have used to service their lint trap. Your vendor should be licensed and authorized to transport and dispose of laundry-based wastes. You should receive a manifest (receipt) for the service which should indicate that the waste has been disposed of in accordance with all local, state, and federal regulations.

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Disposal locations for home generated hazardous materials



Locations & Phone Numbers of Solid Waste Services & Facilities

● Household Chemical & Electronics Collection

Household chemicals are accepted at three facilities: Northwest (9805 Sheldon Road), South County (Powell Road, east off U.S. 41, a quarter-mile north of Big Bend Road), and Thonotosassa (County Road 579, a quarter-mile north of Interstate 4--Exit 10). Collections are held monthly on the first, second and third Saturday, alternating between the sites. Materials accepted include paint, solvents, pool chemicals, hobby and craft supplies, lawn and garden chemicals. Many of these materials are recycled or used in maintaining County property. Specially scheduled electronics collections also are held at these facilities. Collections are for residents only -- no chemicals are accepted from commercial interests. Call (813) 272-5680.

Locations and Phone Numbers of Solid Waste Services and Facilities

● Community Collection Centers

Community Collection Centers may be used to dispose of collectible items by those residential customers who receive an exemption from curbside pick-up, and non-collectible items by non-residential customers. All Community Collection Centers are open Monday - Saturday, 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., except Wimauma, which is open from 7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

- Alderman Ford Facility, 9402 S.R. 39, Lithia, Phone: (813) 757-3820. Accepts collectible waste, non-collectible waste, scrap metal, tires and lead acid batteries.
- Hillsborough Heights Facility, 6209 C.R. 579, Thonotosassa, Phone: (813) 744-5533. Accepts collectible waste, non-collectible waste, scrap metal, tires, used motor oil, lead acid batteries and recyclable curbside materials.
- Northwest County Facility, 8001 W. Linebaugh Ave., Tampa, Phone: (813) 264-3816. Accepts collectible waste, non-collectible waste, yard waste, scrap metal, tires, used motor oil, lead acid batteries and recyclable curbside materials.
- South County Facility, 1300 U.S. 41 north of Big Bend Road, Gibsonton, Phone: (813) 671-7611. Accepts collectible waste, non-collectible waste, yard waste, scrap metal, tires, used motor oil and lead acid batteries.
- Wimauma Facility, 1618 West Lake Drive, Wimauma, (1.5 miles north of S.R. 674), Phone: (813) 671-7706. Accepts collectible waste, non-collectible waste, yard waste, scrap metal, tires, used motor oil and lead acid batteries.
- Resource Recovery Facility, 350 N. Falkenburg Road, Tampa, Phone: (813) 744-5591. Accepts yard waste only.

Grease Management Program (FOG) Fats, Oil, and Grease

Dear Wastewater Customer,

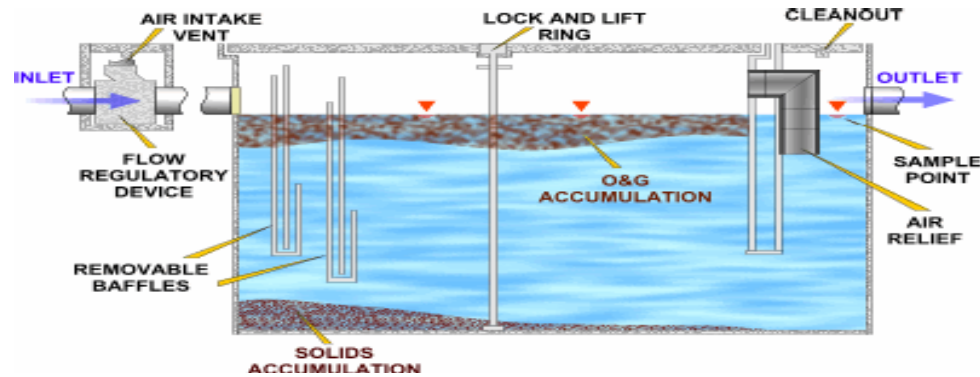
On behalf of the County of Hillsborough, we want to take this opportunity to introduce to you the Grease Management Program. As you may know, one of the remaining major point sources of pollution is overflows from the sanitary sewer system. In most cases, these overflows are preventable. In response to the mandate from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) initiated a statewide program to prevent sewer system overflows, which can contaminate stormwater systems, lakes and other surface waters, and pose public health problems. One cause of sewer system overflows is the discharge of excessive amounts of oils and greases to the wastewater system. Oil and grease creates clogs in the collection system and forms layers in lift stations which renders the float system inoperable.

Our Purpose

To establish uniform maintenance and monitoring requirements for controlling the discharge of fats, oils and grease into the wastewater collection system or publicly-owned treatment works. These users include, but are not limited to, food service establishments, automotive repair and maintenance garages, car wash facilities, and commercial laundries discharging into the publicly-owned treatment works. Objectives include:

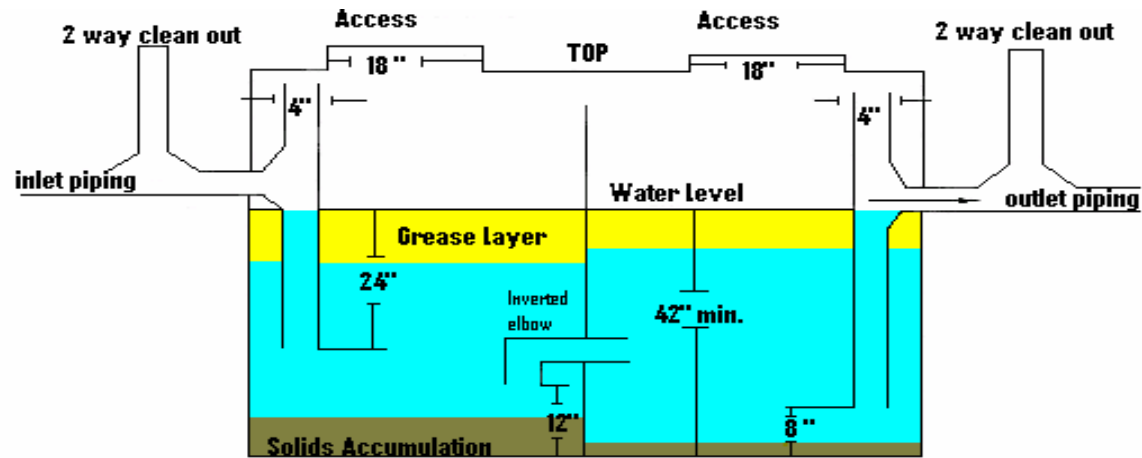
- To control the introduction of excessive amounts of Fats, Oils and Greases into the publicly-owned treatment works;
- To control, reduce and prevent clogging or blocking of the County's publicly-owned treatment works due to grease build-up resulting in sanitary overflows;
- To control maintenance costs and reduce odor and corrosion issues within the publicly-owned treatment works due to Fats, Oils and Grease accumulation;
- To improve user compliance with education materials, use best management practices and other outreach efforts.

Grease Traps and Grease Interceptors



Example Only

Grease Trap - The grease trap prevents excess grease from getting into the sewer system from existing plumbing lines within facilities. Traps are small and are usually installed inside a facility. Generally, they range in size from 5 to 50 gallons per minute (gpm).



Example Only

Grease Interceptor - Grease is actually "intercepted" in these concrete tanks before it reaches the County's sewer main. Grease interceptors should be accessible by two manhole covers. Interceptors and traps cause the flow of water to slow down; allowing the grease to naturally float to the top and solids to settle to the bottom for proper removal.

Grease Disposal Tips
To Help the County's Environment

Hillsborough County needs the help of all of its residents to keep our sewer system running properly. Liquefied fat, oil, or grease (FOG) that is poured down the kitchen sink drain can cause serious impacts. FOG can cling to the insides of pipes and the sewer system. Over time, it can build up and can eventually block pipes completely. If wastewater can't move freely through pipes and out into the sewer system, it can back up into your home and can cause unsanitary conditions and damages that can be expensive to repair. By following the guidelines below, you can help avoid repeated repairs and unnecessary disruptions to residences and businesses.

PROPERLY DISPOSE OF COOKING OIL AND GREASE

Cooking oil and grease are wastes that the County's sewer system cannot handle and should not be discarded down the drain. Dumping grease, fats, and oil can clog sewer lines, causing sewage back-ups and flooding. Sewage back-ups can damage personal and public property. Here's how you can help.



DO NOT dump cooking oil, poultry fat and grease into the kitchen sink or the toilet bowl.

DO NOT use hot water and soap to wash grease down the drain, because it will cool and harden in your pipes or in the sewer down the line.



DO place cooled cooking oil, poultry and meat fats in sealed non-recyclable containers and discard with your regular garbage.

DO use paper towels to wipe residual grease or oil off of dishes, pots and pans prior to washing them.

RECYCLE USED MOTOR OIL

When poured down house or storm drains, used motor oil may travel to your local stream, bay, or harbor, where it can harm underwater vegetation and aquatic life.



DO NOT dump used motor oil into street or house drains.



DO put used motor oil in a sturdy container, such as a plastic milk jug, and take it to your local community collection center.