

# Food Service Establishments Fats, Oil and Grease

**F**airfax County's diverse food service establishments (FSE) are an important part of our community. Properly disposing of fats, oil and grease (FOG) can help protect the county's sanitary sewer and stormwater systems and the environment.

## FOG and the Food Service Industry

FOG is a by-product of cooking produced by FSE and is commonly generated from cooking oil, lard, shortening, meat fats, sauces, gravy, mayonnaise, butter, ice cream and soup. Since FSE are generators of FOG, they are responsible for selecting and implementing best management practices (BMPs) for handling and disposal/recycling of FOG. Proper management of FOG can:

- Increase safety in the work environment
- Help avoid plumbing problems
- Help protect local water quality
- Save money

## Why be Concerned?

FOG poses a serious threat to the public sanitary sewer and stormwater systems. When not disposed of properly, FOG can form large, thick clumps of grease that clog the interior of the public sanitary sewer pipes. Clogged pipes can result in backups and overflows into the stormwater drains, creating environmental and health problems, localized flooding and compliance issues for the FSE. Cleanup can be expensive since the FSE is responsible for costs to repair and/or unclog the blockage. Direct discharge of FOG to the stormwater system or ground can easily pollute our streams, the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay and is therefore strictly prohibited.

## Tips for Managing FOG

- Do not pour or scrape FOG down any drain.
- Locate outdoor grease bins away from storm drains. Ensure that employees can easily access grease bins and that they are placed on level ground in well-lit areas and within reasonable distance of the kitchen door. Grease bins should be properly labeled.
- Properly maintain grease containers and replace containers that have leaks.
- Cover containers with a properly fitted lid to prevent spills or overflow from rainwater.



### DO YOU KNOW?

FOG is a valuable resource. FOGs can be recycled and sold to rendering companies for use in soaps, moisturizers, fertilizers and animal feeds.



### DO YOU KNOW?

Proper treatment of fats, oil and grease can prevent costly sewage backups and loss of business.

- In case of leaks or spills, utilize spill containment products around grease containers to avoid polluting stormwater.
- Clean up any spills or leaks immediately using dry methods. Food grade paper, paper towels or newspapers should be used to wipe up grease. Care should also be taken to avoid washing grease into a storm drain.
- Routinely inspect grease containers and educate FSE staff on spill cleanup procedures. Staff should notify managers when the grease container is full.
- Schedule regular container cleanout or pickup.
- Recycle or sell used oil. Businesses that specialize in handling grease will often recycle grease instead of throwing it away.
- Do not wash kitchen mats, grills and other equipment outside or throw any wash water outside. Greasy equipment should be wiped down prior to washing and wash water should be disposed of down the sink.
- Install and properly maintain a grease trap or interceptor.
- Follow Fairfax County's FOG best management guidance to prevent FOG from entering the county's sanitary sewer system. Tips include separation and proper disposal of FOG and maintenance of grease interceptors connected to the sanitary sewer. These guidelines are written in numerous languages and can be found at: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/wastewater/industrialwaste/discharge.htm#policies>.

If you have questions or would like more information on the proper disposal of FOG, grease interceptors or Fairfax County's pretreatment program, please contact the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services Industrial Waste Section at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/wastewater/#disposal](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/wastewater/#disposal) or call 703-550-9740 ext. 252, TTY 711.



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 To request this information in an alternate format call 703-324-5500,  
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Remove FOG and food waste from floors by wiping, scraping or sweeping before using wet methods.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF CALFOG

Use absorbent paper towels to soak up FOG.