

## Grease Trap/Interceptor Management

If your food service establishment discharges fats, oils, or grease (FOG) in wastewater from dishwashing or other cleaning activities you are required by the City of Lawrence and plumbing code to install and maintain a grease interceptor to eliminate the discharge of FOG. Controlling FOG makes good business sense. A blockage caused by FOG can shut a business down for several days and cost thousands of dollars in lost profits and cleanup expenses. A little preventative maintenance will help ensure that you are in compliance with City Code and avoid this costly problem.

It is important to clean your grease trap/interceptor regularly to prevent fats, oil and grease (FOG) from mixing with water that is discharged to the sewer. **Grease is considered a prohibited discharge under chapter 19 article 5 of City of Lawrence Municipal Code as it will cause blockages in sewer lines.** The cleaning frequency required for grease traps/interceptors in food service facilities is highly variable based on the grease interceptor you have and restaurant operations. Typical maintenance frequencies imposed by many municipalities include pumping outdoor gravity grease interceptors a minimum of every 90 days and completely emptying and cleaning indoor grease interceptors at least once a month. However, more frequent cleaning intervals may be necessary to prevent your grease trap/interceptor from operating poorly or improperly. FOG can have a detrimental impact not only on your facility, but the environment, and public health as well. FOG clogged lines can back sewage up into your establishment and overflow out of manholes. This can lead to surface water contamination and human exposure to raw sewage. If you see floating grease or grease deposits in a cleanout “downstream” of your trap/interceptor, you need to increase the cleaning frequency. Controlling FOG makes good business sense.

### Sources of Fats Oil and Grease

FOG can come from a variety of sources, many of which we forget contain FOG. Examples include:

<p><b>Baked Goods</b> <b>Batter</b> <b>Butter &amp; Margarine</b> <b>Cooking Oil</b> <b>Dairy Products</b></p>	<p><b>Fried or sautéed Foods</b> <b>Lard</b> <b>Mayonnaise</b> <b>Meats (including trimmings &amp; skins)</b> <b>Pastries</b></p>	<p><b>Peanut Butter</b> <b>Popcorn(Buttered)</b> <b>Salad Dressings</b> <b>Sauces &amp; Gravy</b> <b>Shortening</b></p>
--	---	---

### Recommended Maintenance Schedule

Indoor small grease interceptors, less than 100 gallons, may require inspection and/or cleaning weekly to monthly depending on the amount of grease entering the drains. Not properly cleaning and maintaining a small grease interceptor will lead to grease pass through, clogged sewer lines and higher sewer rates for everyone. Read your manual for specific cleaning instructions and methods to set a schedule.

Outdoor Gravity Grease Interceptors typically require inspection and cleaning at least quarterly (every 90 days) by a professional service company. It is recommended to inspect the cleaned interceptor after they are done before it is refilled with water.

### Maximum Intervals by Grease Interceptor Type: All Maintenance should be recorded on a log or manifest.

Outdoor Gravity Interceptor 500 gallons and up should be pumped and inspected at least quarterly.

Indoor grease interceptors (hydro-mechanical) should be cleaned at least monthly, unless you can show the capacity does not reach 25% during that interval, or your manufacturer maintenance specifications are being followed. A schedule should be determined based on weekly monitoring of levels to judge accumulation rates of grease and solids.

Automatic Grease Removal Devices should be maintained daily as directed by the manufacturer. For any grease interceptors, the total volume of grease and solids should never exceed 25% of the total volume of the tank. If you can see floating grease, grease deposits or grease build up downstream of your grease trap or interceptor, the frequency of cleanings should be increased.

## Implement Best Management Practices and Employee training

Keeping as much fat oil and grease out of the drain and interceptor makes your maintenance job easier.

- Dry Scrape or wipe plates and utensils into garbage or compost prior to washing
- Ensure employees never dump grease or oil down the drain – post no grease signs near drains
- Keep dry absorbents ready for any grease or oil spills
- Do not use garbage disposals, use a strainer over the drain. Solids should not go in interceptors.
- Keep hot water temperature below 140 degrees Fahrenheit

## Tips on routine maintenance

- It is recommended that a professional service be used to ensure proper maintenance. This is necessary on outdoor gravity grease interceptors.
- Read your manufacturer specified maintenance requirements and follow them.
- Since grease traps/interceptors may have an unpleasant odor. It is recommended that you have them cleaned prior to patrons visiting your establishment.
- Use Allen screws for securing the lid of your trap/interceptor instead of the conventional Phillips or slot screws. Phillips or slot screws may become stripped over time.
- Keep an extra gasket on site for your grease trap/interceptor's lid to prevent leaks and odors in the event of a gasket failure.
- Develop and keep a grease trap/interceptor cleaning procedure and maintenance log sheet posted near the grease trap/interceptor and require employees to follow procedures and to promote proper documentation after each cleaning.
- Facilities experiencing high employee turnover or other factors making regular trap/interceptor maintenance difficult should consider using a professional service.
- Keep cleaning documentation on file to show consistent cleaning in the event of an inspection or overflow incident.

## Tips on cleaning your grease interceptor (less than 100 gallons)

- Prior to cleaning a grease interceptor (less than 100 gallons), let ice melt into the sink connected to the device. This will reduce odors and cause the grease to congeal, making grease removal easier.
- Remove grease periodically (weekly or more often is suggested), using a scoop. Remove only the grease and leave the water behind.
- At a minimum, clean and empty the entire contents of the grease interceptor once a month.
- Remove the grease, water, and any accumulated sludge on the bottom of the interceptor.
- Remove the cleanout at the end of the grease interceptor and perform a visual inspection to check for any grease deposits/build-up inside the pipe.
- Clean any greasy deposits from the piping so you can observe when new grease deposits form, and flush with hot soapy water before closing the cleanout.
- Make sure the flow directing baffles inside your grease interceptor are properly replaced after each cleaning.

**25% Rule** – interceptors should be cleaned by the time the grease layer and solids layer occupy 25 % of water capacity depth.  
**(grease layer depth + solids layer depth) / total liquid depth** gives the percentage.  
.25 = 25% This is typically when there are 3" or less of floating grease accumulated.

