

# Fat-Free Wastewater System

## How to Prevent Fats, Oils, and Greases from Damaging Your Home and the Environment

Fats, oil, and greases are not just bad for your arteries and your waistline; they're bad for the wastewater system, too.

Wastewater overflows and backups can cause health hazards, damage home interiors and threaten the environment. A common cause of overflow is collection pipe blockage by grease. Grease gets into the pipe from household drains as well as from poorly maintained grease traps in restaurants. The District has firm grease trap maintenance program for restaurants. **This notice is to reduce grease load from our residential customers.**

Where does the grease come from?

Most of us know grease as the byproduct of cooking. Grease is found in such things as:

- Meat fats
- Lard
- Cooking oil
- Shortening
- Butter and margarine
- Food scraps
- Baking goods
- Sauces
- Dairy products

Too often, grease is washed into the plumbing system, usually through the kitchen sink. Grease sticks to the insides of collection pipes (both on your property and in the streets). Over time, the grease can build up and block the entire pipe.

Home garbage disposals do not keep grease out of the plumbing system. These units only shred solid material into smaller pieces and do not prevent grease from going down the drain.

Commercial additives, including detergents that claim to dissolve grease just pass grease on down the line to cause problems there.

**Travis County  
WC&ID #17  
266-1111**

**The results can be:**

- Raw wastewater overflowing in your home or your neighbor's home;
- An expensive and unpleasant cleanup that you must pay for;
- Raw wastewater overflowing into yards, streets and parks;
- Potential contact with disease-causing organisms; and
- Operation and maintenance costs for the District which cause higher bills for you.

**What we can do to help!**

The easiest way to solve the grease problem and help prevent overflows of raw wastewater is to keep this material out of the system in the first place.

**There are several ways to do this.**

- Never pour grease down sink drains or into toilets.
- Scrape grease and food scraps from cooking surfaces into the trash for disposal. Hot grease can cool in a can.
- Do not put grease down garbage disposals. Put baskets in sink drains to catch food scraps and other solids.
- Speak with your neighbors about the problem of grease in the wastewater system and how to keep it out.

**GREASE:  
SCRAPE IT, WIPE IT,  
AND TRASH IT.**