

# Food Service Establishments - Fats, Oils and Grease

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Did you know that discharging your fats, oils and grease (FOG) into a City sanitary sewer or storm drain can result in serious fines or can shut down your business?



## What is Rockville doing about FOG?

The discharge of fats, oils and grease (FOG) into the City's sanitary sewer system and storm drains is a rapidly increasing problem. FOG poured down kitchen sinks solidify when deposited into sewer lines, trapping solids and forming hard deposits that buildup and eventually cause blockages and breaks to city pipes. Pipe blockages can result in raw sewage overflowing from manholes, backing up into homes and businesses and overflowing into streams.

To prevent the costs of FOG to businesses and residences the City adopted the *Water Quality Protection Ordinance* requiring that all food service establishments (FSEs) discharging wastewater with more than 100 milligrams per liter of FOG into the sanitary sewer or storm drain install and properly maintain a grease interceptor and practice proper grease disposal. As part of the FOG Program, City inspectors are periodically inspecting all FSEs serviced by the City to ensure compliance with the ordinance and to educate FSE staff on proper grease management.

## What is FOG?

FOG includes any (F)ats, (O)ils and (G)rease used in cooking and meat cutting that come from seafood and meat fats, vegetable and olive oil, shortening, butter, margarine, sauces, salad dressings, and dairy products.

## Who produces FOG?

FOG is produced by restaurants, cafeterias, delis, bakeries, hotel, church, hospital and school kitchens, residential homeowners, and any other commercial or industrial business discharging grease laden wastewater.

## What happens if your establishment is found in violation of this ordinance?

Failure to comply with ordinance requirements may result in:

- Abatement orders and fines, including but not limited to stop work orders, compliance orders and fines of \$1,000 per violation per day.
- Administrative remedies, including but not limited to suspension of water and sewer service and suspension of public works permits such as building permits and occupancy permits.
- Judicial enforcement, including but not limited to civil and/or criminal action proceedings.
- Costs, including but not limited to reimbursement to the City of Rockville for all costs associated with the inspection, sampling, analyses and enforcement actions resulting from the violation, including cleaning out the sanitary sewer or storm drain

## How can you ensure your establishment is not in violation of the City's ordinance?

1. Prevent FOG from being discharged into the sewer by installing a grease interceptor.
2. Ensure your grease interceptor is sized and installed in accordance with The City of Rockville's Plumbing code, Chapter 5, Article XI.
3. Contact the City's Inspection Services Division at (240)-314-8240 to get information on permits needed to install your grease interceptor(s).
4. Contact a grease hauler from our FOG Grease Hauler List to collect and recycle your restaurant's used fryer oil.
5. Establish and perform regular maintenance of your interceptor(s) by contracting with a grease hauler to periodically remove accumulated material from your interceptor or have staff manually clean it out.
6. Record the date that all cleanouts are performed, name of grease hauler/recycler (if used), or employee conducting the cleanout using a The Grease Abatement System Maintenance log and get a manager to sign off on all cleanouts performed.
7. Follow FOG Prevention Best Management Practices to properly dispose of grease at your establishment and assure your interceptor is being properly maintained
8. Post a "NO Grease Sign" on sinks not connected to an interceptor to inform staff that dishwashing of grease laden items is NOT permitted in these areas.
9. Contact the City of Rockville at (240)-314-8870 or write [environment@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:environment@rockvillemd.gov) for any questions or assistance related to managing grease at your establishment.
10. Read about the City's Water Quality Ordinance and compliance requirements for Rockville businesses.

### What are the costs of FOG?

**To your business:** As your sewer pipes back up, the sewage and food particles that accumulate can attract insects and other vermin, cause unpleasant odors, and could release bacteria, viruses and other pathogens that may be hazardous to human health. Property damage can also result from sewage backups and lead to expensive cleanup and plumbing repairs. Health code violations or closures can greatly impact your business.

**To the environment:** Clogged sewers can lead to overflows. As sewage overflows onto streets, it enters the storm drain system and is carried to our local streams and rivers, creating health risks for swimmers, fish and plant life.

**To the city:** Cumulatively communities spend millions of dollars every year unplugging or replacing grease-blocked pipes, repairing pump stations, and cleaning up costly wastewater spills. Increased sewer blockages and overflows can result in severe fines from State regulatory agencies, lead to increased operation and maintenance costs, and increase wastewater utility and sewer fees.