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Clean Water Services

# GREASE INTERCEPTORS: TIPS FOR CONTROLLING FATS, OILS AND GREASE (FOG)

Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) are a serious problem**.** Pipes clogged with FOG from food/beverage preparation and clean up are a major cause of sewer overflows. Sewer backups and overflows have a detrimental impact on public health, water quality and business. Food Service Establishments (FSE) can control and manage 90% of the FOG from food preparation, dishwashing and cleaning by connecting all food/beverage service area fixtures and drains to an effectively sized and mainteained Grease Interceptor. This will keep long term business operating costs lower and prevent unexpected service costs.

**Oregon Plumbing Specialty Code (OPSC) ammendment**
As of January 1, 2013, FSEs in Oregon must connect all drains and fixtures in food/beverage service areas to an approved grease interceptor. This applies to all new construction and remodeling that requires a permit. However, the local sewer agency may require any FSE that discharges FOG in non-compliant levels to install an effective FOG pretreatment system which includes a grease interceptor(s) with fixtures and drains connected and an effective maintenance schedule.

**Hydromechanical Grease Interceptors (HGIs) vs. Gravity Grease Interceptors (GGIs)**
An HGI is typically inside and shouldn't be installed under the sink or fixture. GGIs are installed outdoors and must not have any obstruction around the manhole covers that prevent access to maintenance. A water source should be near for effective maintenance. HGIs have smaller FOG storage capacity, so they need more frequent cleaning than GGIs which offer larger FOG storage capacity. OPSC only requires a minimum size, but a better business decision is to size according to anticipated FOG impact and preferred longterm maintenance costs.

**Which size is right for my business?**
The FOG load from each FSE varies due to the type of food prepared, number of meals served, kitchen staff practices and types of chemicals used for clean-up. Increased FOG storage capacity means less frequent maintenance which translates to lower maintenance costs. To compare GRD options, use a food/FOG calculator to estimate the volume of FOG to be captured.

**When to clean?**
The cleaning frequency shall be set just before the FOG effluent exceeds an unacceptable level being discharged to the public sewer system. All internal components in contact with FOG must be visible for physical maintenance.

**Waiting costs money**
Inspections find that many FSEs do not control FOG effectively. This risks unpleasant and costly building sewer backups and the potential to cause a public sanitary sewer overflow. This may also lead to unnecessary penalties and public clean-up costs.

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